

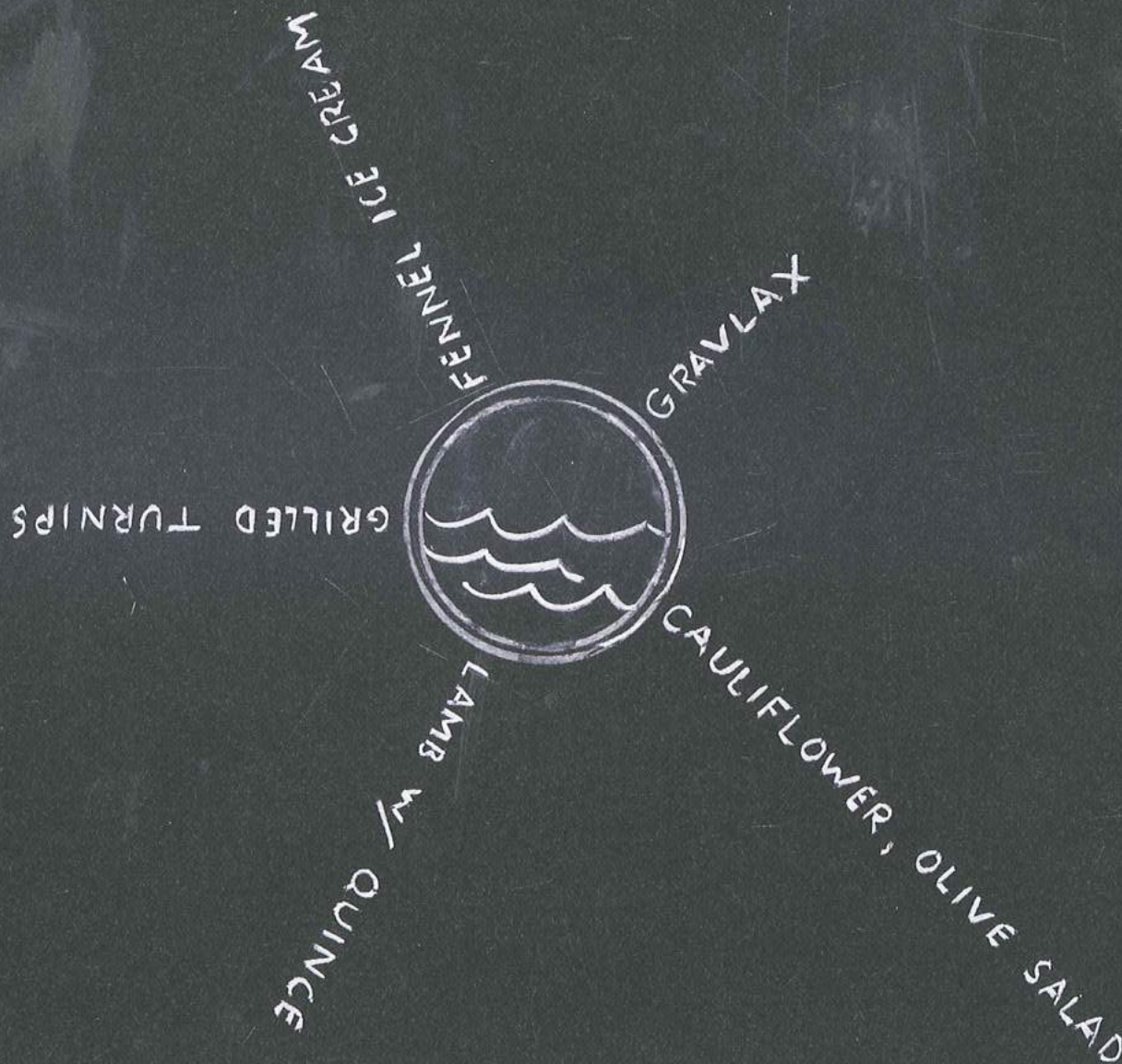
# DINER JOURNAL

---

---

№20 WINTER 2012 ♦ THE MENU ISSUE ♦ NO ADS

\$11





TO THE DINER JOURNAL! 4 ISSUES/YEAR  
\$50 (DOMESTIC) \$70 (INTERNATIONAL)



**DINER JOURNAL**  
**ISSUE No. 20**

**Intro . . . . .** 3  
*Nick Perkins*

**The Way It Is . . . . .** 6  
*Sarah Magrish Cline*

**Harley Spiller Collection.. . . .** 12  
*Rory Gunderson*

**Cookbook .. . . .** 15  
*Leah Campbell*

**EIDIA.. . . .** 20  
*Ted Mineo*

**For Starters.. . . .** 28  
*Albert Mobilio*

**One More Time ... . . . .** 32  
*Dennis Spina*

**Recipe Appendix.. . . . .** 35  
*Scarlett Lindeman*

**Eulogy for Joe Dressner. . . . .** 46  
*Andrew Tarlow*

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Alexandra Citrin** is an illustrator living and working in Brooklyn. She draws regularly for Capital New York and the New York Observer, and would live off smoked sable and dim sum alone if health weren't an obstacle. [alexcitrin.com](http://alexcitrin.com)

**Sarah Magrish Cline** is intrigued by screenprinting, transparency, repetition, gift economies, brand culture, fluorescent ink, cooperative ownership, foraging, sharing meals, in-between spaces, print publications, and the right to useful unemployment (thank you Ivan Illich). [magrish.org](http://magrish.org)

**Rory Gunderson** is a photographer and writer based in New York. When he's not taking photos, he enjoys edible gardening, science fiction, cycling and hanging out in grocery stores. [rorygunderson.com](http://rorygunderson.com)

**Robyn Jordan** is an artist who mainly makes mini-comics, and teaches art at a school in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. Her partner is a chef, and she loves to eat, talk about, and draw food. Her work can be found at comics shops in NYC and California, and at [robynjordan.com](http://robynjordan.com)

Artist/confectioner, **Ted Mineo** mines for undecidables while torturing language and objects in Brooklyn. Eat Family Nuts and visit [www.tedmineo.com](http://www.tedmineo.com).

For appetizers, **Albert Mobilio** suggests salty verses such as *Bendable Siege*, *The Geographics*, or *Me with Animal Towering*. For a main course, there's *Touch Wood*, braised, sprinkled with paprika, and recently published by Black Square Editions. Desserts are best consumed at the New School's Eugene Lang College where he teaches, or in the pages of Bookforum, which he helps edit.

**Christina Paige** is a graduate of the International Center of Photography's program in Documentary Photography and Photojournalism. She was chosen as one of Photo District News' 30 Emerging Photographers for 2008, where she was described as finding "grace and bits of humor swirling in the maelstrom of everyday life." Before becoming a photographer, she worked as a clinical social worker with Spanish-speaking communities in California and Massachusetts. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband and daughter. [www.christinapaige.com](http://www.christinapaige.com)

**Nick Perkins** is a sous chef at Diner and Marlow & Sons. He remains a child at heart.

**Sara Moffat** has been part of the Diner family for 6 years. She is now travelling and checking out the rest of the world.

**Dennis Spina** currently lives and works in New York City. He works at the Roebing Tea Room where he is the chef. He is also patiently waiting to be exposed as a fraud and a hack, and a cat person.

**Avery Thatcher** is an artist and designer living in Portland, Oregon. She has recently started wearing sweatpants in public now that she is in a relationship. You can find her line of hand-made wallpapers at [www.jujupapers.com](http://www.jujupapers.com).

**Joshua Wiles** was born in San Diego, California and now resides in Brooklyn, New York.

**Diner Journal**  
85 Broadway  
Brooklyn, NY 11249  
(718) 486-3077

*Publisher*  
**Andrew Tarlow**

*Editor in Chief*  
**Anna Dunn**

*Recipe Editor*  
**Scarlett Lindeman**

*Photo Editor*  
**Julia Gillard**

*Managing Editor*  
**Leah Campbell**

*Contributing Editors*  
**Sarah Gaskins**  
**Bobbi Jeanne Misick**  
**Fallon Flaherty**

*Art Director*  
**Becky Johnson**

[contact@dinernyc.com](mailto:contact@dinernyc.com)  
Write to us! Share your thoughts.

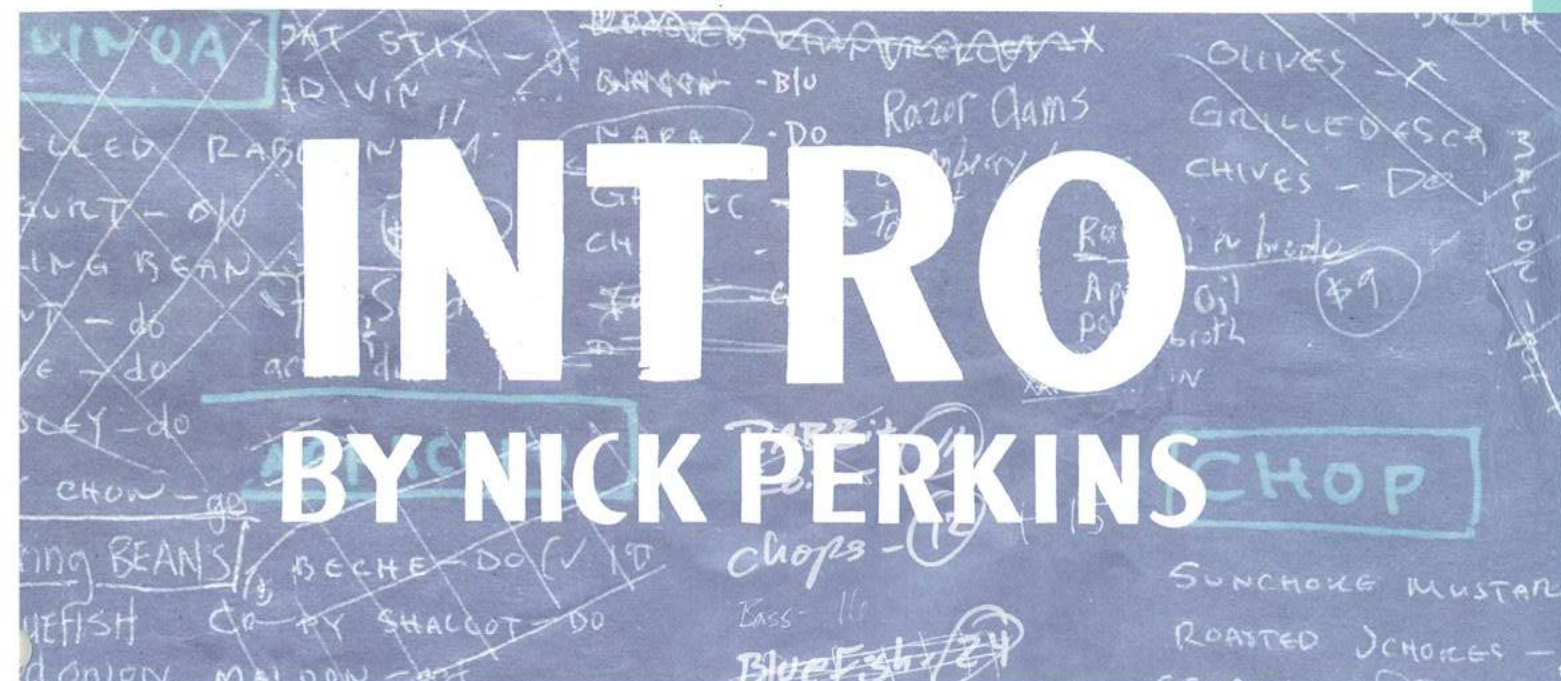
**Subscribe!**  
Diner Journal is a quarterly publication. Four issues/year cost \$50 (domestic) or \$70 (international).

**Thank you!**  
**Alexis Ostrowski** for the cover design,  
**Joe Saenz** for sharing his wisdom about cheese, **Rebecca Federman**,  
**Jonathan Pace**, and **Amy Geduldig** for assistance with the NYPL Archive, and **Mike Lesyshen** for technical support.

PRINTED BY THE PROLIFIC GROUP IN WINNIPEG MB  
CANADA UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF CHRIS YOUNG.

When I was a kid, my parents threw dinner parties. These were not lavish, fancy affairs but evenings with neighborhood friends around a big table accompanied by plenty of food and drink. Both of my parents were great cooks, and they churned out vast quantities of well-seasoned, flavorful food with seeming ease, managing throughout the production of these feasts to host guests and care for three rambunctious children, myself included.

meal itself oscillated wildly between our refusal to allow adults into the kitchen and the fact that none of us had any idea how long it took to roast a five pound piece of beef. Production delays throughout the day always pushed the start time back by hours, and once dinner actually did get underway, our home kitchen's lack of sufficient platters prevented the transition from soup course to salad course without the intervention of a parent at the



At some point, my brothers and I attempted to duplicate these dinner parties, and while my parents and their collaborators never planned or carefully scripted these evenings, we poured ourselves into the planning of our soirees. The location was simple, our house. The guest list, the same cast of characters who regularly attended our parents parties. But the menu was to be an elaborate edifice around which we planned the evening, and so we constructed laboriously detailed menus with many courses, featuring all of the things that we felt most epitomized the grandness of a proper dinner party.

Each place setting would have a menu, with a name at the top to indicate where each person should sit. These took as long to prepare as the food itself, all drawn and colored by hand. Each place setting was also accompanied by a carefully folded, three-dimensional napkin, and usually surrounded by an excessive assortment of silverware. According to the menu, first there would be passed appetizers, then soup, followed not long after by salad. Finally, a large, festive roast of some sort accompanied by many sides and then dessert.

In the end, these grand plans were logistical nightmares that required parental assistance at nearly every juncture: we were all too young to drive, and so had to be driven around town from place to place chasing after an ever-evolving list of ingredients. The actual cooking of the

dish sink. But ultimately with much gentle guidance and assistance, we pulled it off, delighting in our ability to execute a menu of our own creation.

Several years ago, I arrived for my Marlow & Sons kitchen trail at 4pm, and was ushered through a brief tour of the basement kitchen, given a work space and a bit of simple knife work by the sous chef for the evening's service. After this last bit of setup, I got a rundown of the dishes that would be coming off of the garde manger station that I would be trailing for the evening: chilled peach soup, chicory salad, string bean salad, liver pate and a crostini that included whipped ricotta and seared stone fruit. For the most part, this was pretty standard restaurant operating procedure. I was fairly certain that I would like it here before the night was through and ask for a position.

Certain things about the place were clear to me immediately: the food was simple, brightly colored and cleanly flavored; the two cooks working that evening were the most intelligent, focused individuals I had ever encountered in a kitchen anywhere; and the ipod went from my favorite Ween album, "Chocolate and Cheese" to my favorite Frank Black album, "Teenager of the Year".

After a few hours of busy service, the restaurant began to calm down. The sous chef broke away to place the fish order for the next day and the sauté cook ripped

off a large sheet of butcher paper from a huge roll that the servers used to cover the table tops. Setting this down on one of the metal prep tables, he began copying the names of the dishes and then listing their components: greens, nuts, herbs, dressing, carefully rewriting the evening's menu for the next day's service. Enthralled, I went over to watch him, peppering him with questions about the subtle changes he made as he recopied the menu:

**Q:** *Why are you changing the greens on the salad?*

**A:** *We'll be out of chicory by tomorrow night, will need to find an adequate substitution or dream up an entirely new dish.*

**Q:** *Why are you changing the soup?*

**A:** *The peach is just a little bit too much, I think we should poach rhubarb and counter all the sweetness with a bit of acidity.*

**Q:** *Why are you leaving the pasta blank?*

**A:** *Because we're out of tomatoes and we won't be getting a produce delivery tomorrow.*

And so it went on like this, exciting for me, and punishing, I'm sure, for Michael Mangieri, who patiently responded to my barrage of questions. But here was this living document, that evolved a little or a lot every day, all as a result of the availability of its components, the ingenuity of its creators and the abilities of its executors.

Every meal service at Diner and Marlow begins with a large piece of butcher paper listing all the dishes we'll be serving, starting with the small apps, and ending with the larger, more expensive, entrées. This is the battle plan for the coming service, the map of the evening. Everything that will be served on each plate down to the smallest herb and crumb is written here. If a change is made to a dish, this is where it is documented. On each master-menu, the names of each dish are written out—broccoli soup, mustard greens, wild striped bass, pork chop—and under each headline is a list of the dish's components. A pasta dish might read as follows:

fettucine  
toasted garlic  
razor clams  
pancetta  
scarlet runner beans  
parsley  
piave cheese

Every day starts with a meeting between one of the sous chefs and the cast of cooks who will be working that particular service. Each person is told which dishes will be coming off their respective station and which components they will have to have on hand to execute the service. At the end of the shift, this menu is copied over, and each cook indicates the ingredients that are left from the evening with either a "DO" or "X."

The chef and sous chefs are ultimately responsible for ordering all the food stuffs and codifying the menus for each service. There are four of us and while we communicate constantly regarding menu development, we all subtly pull the menus in different directions. Some menu choices are made out of necessity, such as when we need to move through a large volume of a specific product. The night hurricane Irene came through New York, we had to sell as much chicken and fish as we could before we closed our doors for two days. Menu? Heirloom tomato salad with peaches, grilled half chicken and seafood chowder. Other changes result from attempts to explore new ingredients and techniques. Lately we've been ordering game birds in just about every size and shape (grouse, pheasant, partridge, guinea hen) and have been investigating the more uncommon wares of our seafood purveyors.

Available ingredients are the primary determinant of change on the menus. Produce, fish and meat deliveries occur on different days, meaning that the contents of the walk-in coolers is never static. Take the above pasta dish—most likely, this dish sold well, so well maybe that there are no razor clams left and only enough scarlet runner beans for four orders of pasta. But there's still plenty of pancetta left, which is too good (and expensive) to waste so the dish must be reconfigured. One option might be as follows: fettucine, garlic, pancetta, egg yolk, arugula, parsley, piave. Usually, a specific menu item spends 2-4 days on a particular menu. Some are scrapped after one evening if they fail to inspire, while others remain essentially unchanged for two or three weeks. This whole process is driven most acutely by the way our restaurants order produce. The vast majority of our produce comes from three farms, one cooperative and an assortment of foragers, who all deliver once or twice a week. Their product availability is seasonally driven which means that one week we might receive four cases of arugula, while the next will bring only the heartier greens, as the weekend's heat withered the delicacies.

Sexy, perishable ingredients get gobbled up shortly after they arrive. Ramps, softshell crabs, foraged mushrooms, fresh peas, pistou basil, gooseberries, etc. will usually be featured prominently on both restaurant menus shortly after they slide down the delivery hatch. Other ingredients that require more imagination or are less perishable usually spend days in storage before attentions are turned their way, unshapely squash, cabbage, fennel stalks bereft of frond and bulb, swiss chard stems, to name a few. At the end of a long weekend, the menu and its creators are challenged in different ways. By Sunday, all the delicate greens are gone, forcing the development of "salads" comprised of thinly sliced cabbage (never sexy, extremely versatile) and apple and celery root cut into matchsticks. All the fish that's left are the scrap pieces, and not much of it, requiring that they be stretched in chowder or stew. The seasons are another crucial determinant: unloading huge volumes of one specific ingredient and forcing a menu comprised of a few things prepared in as many ways

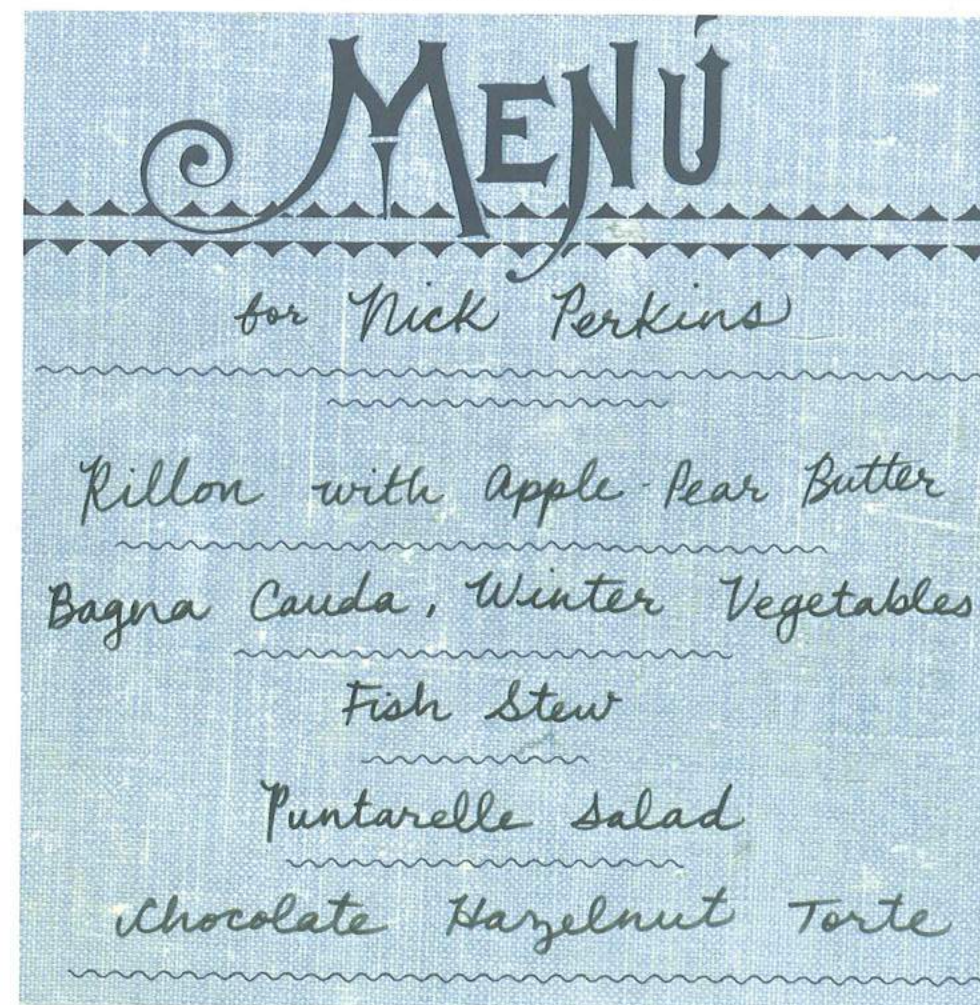
as possible. Late summer corn always jumps to mind or mid-November when delivery trucks seem to exclusively bear apples and root vegetables. And some evenings a menu sells evenly, while on other nights all the cooks must come together to assemble two hit dishes that everyone wants. Servers too must wrestle with how to present a menu to diners that might not reflect traditional notions of appetizers and entrees. Sometimes it's comprised of whole roasted fish and massive steaks which lend themselves to sharing and feeding the whole table. At other times a constellation of smaller offerings are required to feed and sate.

The evening after I trailed at Marlow I returned very late to the small studio apartment that I shared with my brother and demanded that we go for a long walk immediately. He obliged, as he so often does, and we spent the next 2 hours walking around the track at McCarren Park, talking about everything I had seen that evening. I realized that my excitement was not unlike that which I had felt when we were kids discussing our dinner party exploits. Except that here, rather than being a matter of conjuring up lavish and (wildly impractical) feasts *ex*

*nihilo*, the creative process is one of ongoing adaptation and editing, guided by careful consideration of parameters beyond our control. These parameters are not so much constraints as conditions of possibility: the raw materials in house at that particular moment and the ability of a group of individuals to dream up a collection of dishes and prepare their requisite components before they need to be explained in detail to the service staff, who in turn have to grasp them to the extent that they can be coherently conveyed.

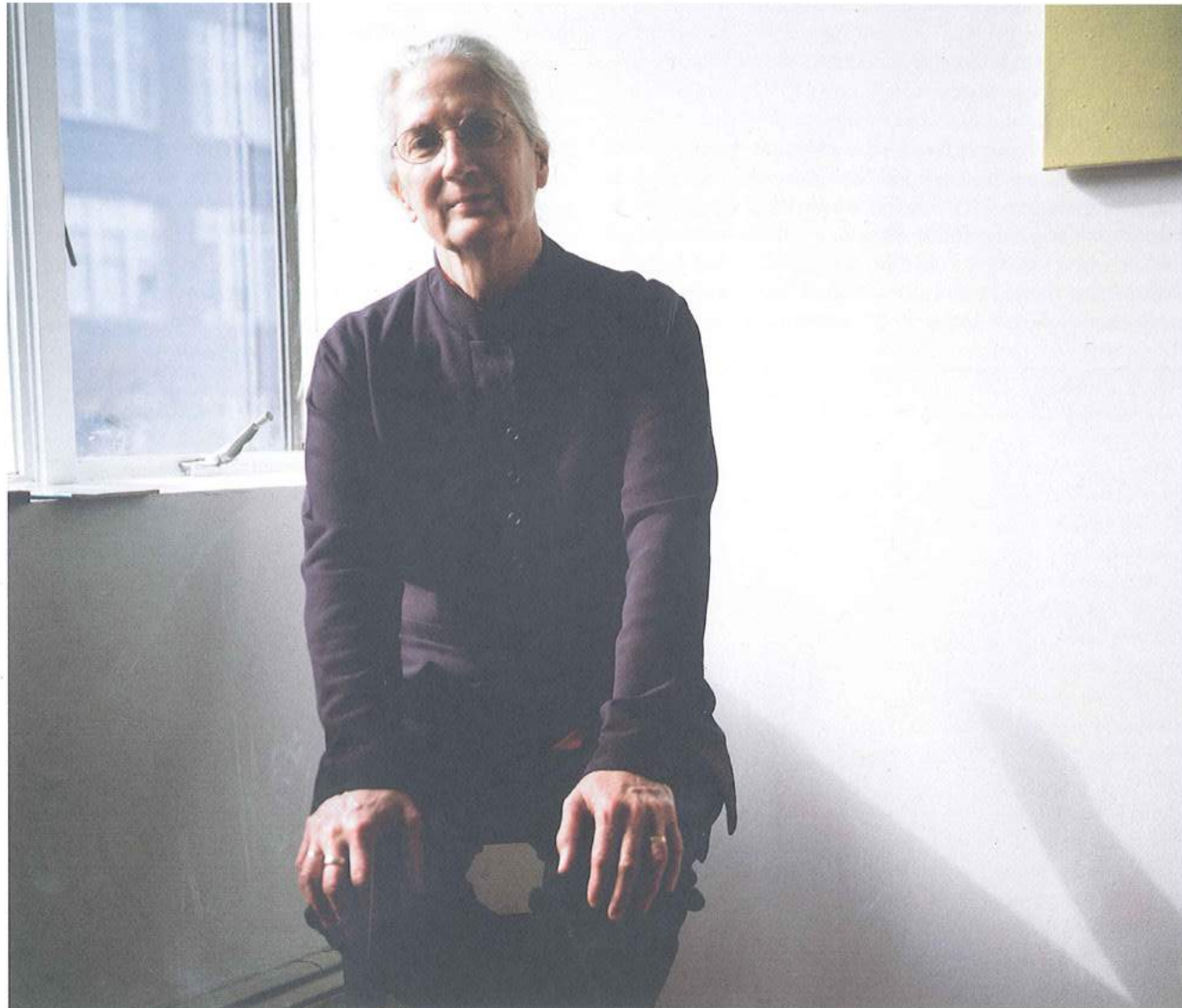
At this point I've logged a little over two years in the kitchens of Marlow and Diner and I've copied and collaborated in the writing of our menus hundreds of times. And every time I do, participating in the evolution of these "living" menus continues to surprise me. Here's a document that has been copied over many times by countless others over the course of 13 years and bears the evidence of being gently and forcefully pushed, pulled and changed. I remain in awe of the fact that there's no limit to what that menu can be. Every day, I get to participate in the planning and execution of another kind of collective imagination, of a dinner party.

Menus for this issue were created by Scarlett Lindeman, lettered by Sara Moffat, and designed with inspiration from historical menus from the New York Public Library's Archive.



# THE WAY IT IS

## A conversation about menu design with Patricia Curtan



PORTRAIT BY Joshua Wiles

Patricia Curtan is an artist, designer and printmaker. She has had a long association with Chez Panisse Restaurant in Berkeley, California as cook, co-author, designer and illustrator. She has designed and printed letterpress and linoleum block special occasion menus for Chez Panisse over four decades. The menus have been collected in the book "Menus for Chez Panisse" published in 2011, by Princeton Architectural Press.

by Sarah Magrish Cline

**Diner Journal:** During the time frame covered by "Menus for Chez Panisse" you have literally had your hands in many pots at the same time. It is an interesting mix because it is not quite a marriage of theory and practice, more like a marriage of practice and practice. How does being a cook inform your artistic practice and vice versa?

**Patricia Curtan:** Tremendously. I am more of a cook than anything else. Cooking is everyday, all the time. If you are a cook you are always thinking about food; the next thing you are going to cook, what is about to be ready in the market. You are always foraging in your mind.

I know the ingredients so well, through my hands, through working them. You just internalize them all. I have always had a garden. Where ever I go I plant a garden, sometimes I stay for a little while so I can get a good garden going, sometimes not. So through the kitchen and the garden I really know those fruits and vegetables. That is what I am drawn to making images of, a botanical take on things. The knowledge, familiarity and love of fruits and vegetables absolutely informs all of the imagery.

I'm self-taught with drawing and printmaking. When I started doing these it wasn't that the only thing I liked was a very simple treatment, that was all I could do. And gradually they got a little more complicated, the drawing got a little better, my techniques evolved and I could do more. But I think that evolution comes from close observation, of what they are, what you see, what you know about it. If possible I prefer to work from life, drawing something that is right in front of me. I use things from my garden so there is an immediacy about that too.

I have always been drawn to botanical renderings because of their "precisely the way it is" quality, this is the actual, this is exactly how it grows. I find that beautiful, very fascinating. If I have it right in front of me I am not interested in styling it. I don't think any of this can be improved upon in any way. I just want to see if I can be faithful to that beautiful thing. If it has holes in the leaves then my drawing has holes in the leaves. That is part of its beauty.

When I have something that I am trying to draw and it takes me a long time I just have to look at it for awhile until I tune in and really see it. I might move it around until I see some aspect where I think, ok, that looks really beautiful. Then I'll start drawing. And I will just try to be faithful to what I am seeing -- the way it is.

An aspect that I hope comes across in this book is that it's not just what I am doing but what I think anyone does who works at learning a craft over a long period of time. That craft can be cooking or art. The important part

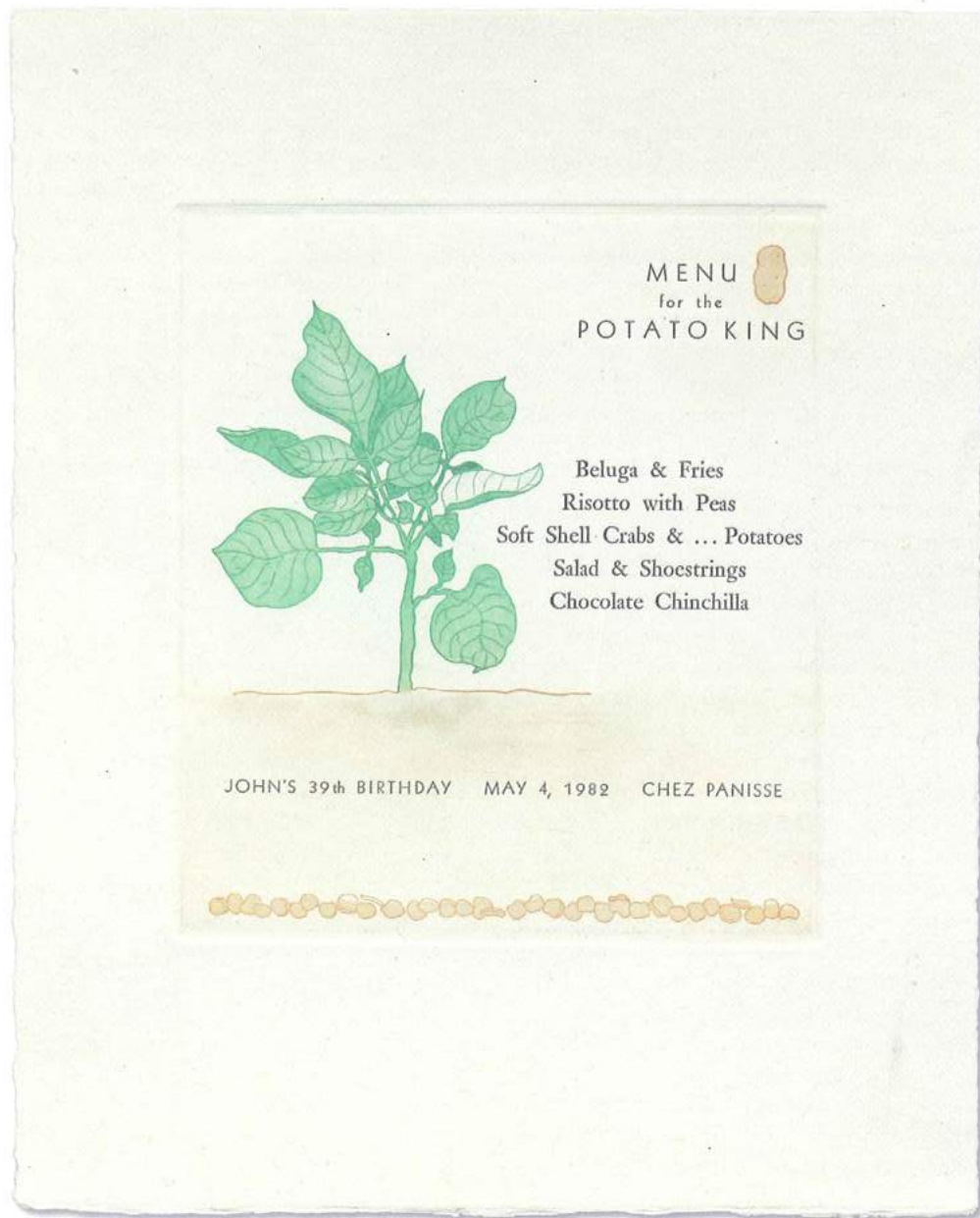
is that you learn by just doing it, and continuing to do it, building on what you know, adding to your techniques and then taking a step further. You build it up. It is a practice and the practice is so beautiful and so satisfying. You have these really exciting moments when you discover something but mostly it is just the practicing, just continuing to do this thing. And you will just naturally get better. You see it better. I do think you internalize all that. You get that muscle memory. Your hands know what to do. Like chopping with knives, you are thinking about what you will do with what ever it is you are chopping but you aren't thinking about the chopping itself.

**DJ:** How does being involved in such a deep way with the Chez Panisse community inform the art and design work you do for them?

**PC:** Chez Panisse is very much a community. The people around the restaurant who work there and dine there tend to stay a long time. They get deeply involved -- it is a passionate place. For me, because I have been at Chez Panisse so long, not doing the same thing but consistently in connection, it is both professional and very personal and familial. Alice and I have been working together for 40 years. We have a real aesthetic connection and have influenced each other a great deal. We both respond to simpler things and the beautiful aspects of food. The connection to nature is very direct.

We enjoy a way of working together that is rare. I work very independently on the print, graphic and book work. As a designer and print maker I am in this great position where there is no design approval at all. I never have to show her what I'm doing; I never tell her what I'm doing. I just know she is going to like it. We established that way of working very early on. It has become seamless. It is harder to please yourself than somebody else. It is a collaboration. That is how Alice and I think of it. We are partners in this project we are working on. We know what each other is capable of.

And I have other collaborators, like my good friend Kelsie Kerr who I am working with on an upcoming book, a sequel to the Art of Simple Food: The Art of Simple Food 2. This book will be about connecting the kitchen to the garden. The first book was really about the basic techniques of cooking. This one is not a gardening manual. It is not as specific as that, but the first half of the book presents general techniques for gardening and growing food. Decisions you might make, how to think about it, how to get started. The second half of the book will be recipes, specifically what you can do if you have a garden.



DJ: Who else is working in a way that excites you right now?

PC: One of the most inspiring things that I have experienced recently happened on Bob Cannard's farm in Sonoma. Kelsie Kerr and I were working on the current book and went to visit Bob's farm. He has been growing fruits and vegetables for Chez Panisse for quite a few years now. We went up to talk with him about soil and compost. We showed up late in the afternoon and sat out on his porch in the golden light. It was at the end of the work day. For the last few years he has had an intern program. They stay for three months working on the farm. The interns were all concluding their day and checking back in. Here they are,

these very idealistic, energetic, passionate young people who are excited about simple honest good farming. They are learning from someone who is quite a character and really excellent at what he does.

He is training a generation to be a new kind of farmer. And it just filled me with hope. Here are these wonderful people working together...and it is all about food. They want to live differently. And they are not just isolated on the farm. They are very connected to restaurants and markets and the cities they are close to; places which they will go back to and figure out how they can continue to live differently. I have a feeling that they will end up working together. It is very hard to get a piece of land and farm on your own but cooperatively it is doable.

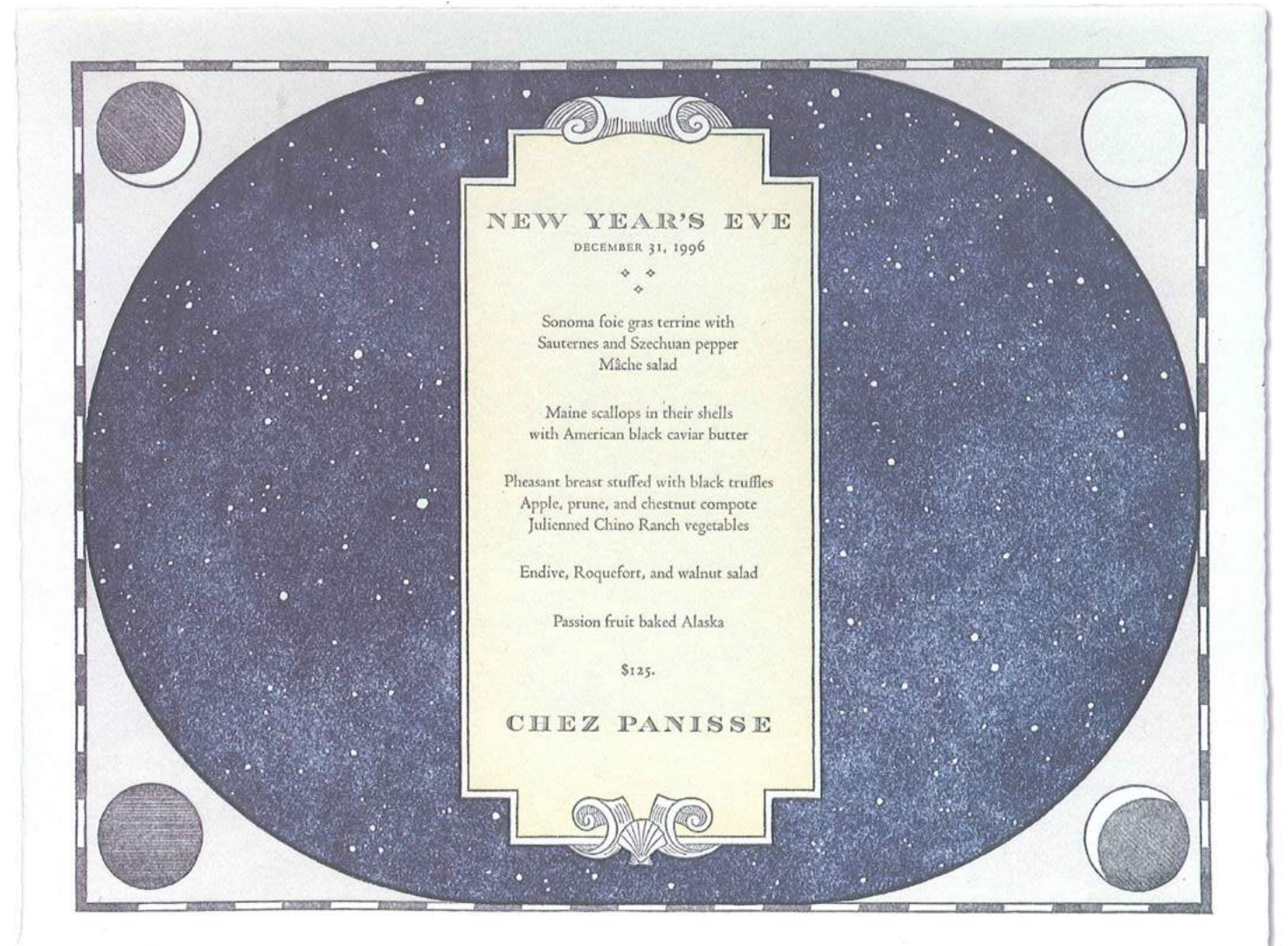
They want to do meaningful work and live close to the land and work together. And that is not artwork exactly but a very beautiful community of people that is forming.

DJ: Cooking and printmaking are both very bodily / sensual activities—but in quite different ways. You speak to that a bit in the book when you talk about the transition from the chaos of the kitchen to the stillness of your studio. Can you speak to that difference a bit more? How do they challenge you in positive and perhaps less positive ways? Is there a similar philosophy behind food & printmaking?

PC: To do serious work, to do good work, to do thoughtful work, you have to be able to focus. You have to be able to concentrate. It can be really challenging in the busy, high-stress environment of the kitchen. But you have to be able to carve out that space mentally. It is a skill you have to learn. It is very physical, you are using your whole body. In the kitchen I really enjoyed the collaboration, the

exchange, of everybody adding to something to arrive at the final product. Working as a studio artist is completely different in that you are very much in your own mind, in solitude. And it took a long time to get comfortable with that, to feel satisfied with that. I sometimes want to do more collaborative work. One of the things that is nice for me is that I work at home so I can go from the studio to the kitchen. When I need a little break I can do that, or I can go out in the garden.

The quality of attention, and focus, concentration is really similar between the studio and the kitchen. Linoleum block printmaking is very methodical, you can't change your plan halfway through. I really enjoy the process of cutting the blocks. I work under a glass so I can see the fine work. Once you start doing that the rest of the world goes away and you are all right there with the edge of that knife. It is almost like meditating. You can get lost for many hours at a time printing.



DJ: There is a quote by the artist Kiki Smith about print-making:

*"Prints mimic what we are as humans: we are all the same and yet every one is different. I think there's a spiritual power in repetition, a devotional quality, like saying rosaries."*  
—Kiki Smith, quoted in the *Daily Princetonian*, December 11, 2003

...and it occurs to me that this applies to cooking as well.

PC: Yes, there is a very pleasing aspect to working the press too. The press I have is hand-fed so there is this rhythm to the machine, this cycle. You put a piece of paper in, it closes and prints, it opens back up, you take that one out, and you put the next one in...you have this wonderful rhythm and sound and motion and speed. You get in sync with the machine itself and the whole magic that happens when you put in a blank piece of paper. Those aspects are a joy, a really pleasing activity.

DJ: You've obviously mastered a certain way of working. How do you keep asking questions as a designer/artist after you have achieved that level of mastery?

PC: Once you have certain skills you don't have to work at building them anymore. Once you know how to roast something you don't have to think about that part, you can just think about what you want to do with it. I think you're always continuing to see things a little different. Where you are in your life, what you are thinking about, what your take is at any given time. And what is influencing you, or inspiring you.

I think the parallels to cooking are close because you never cook the same thing twice. It is similar but different. It always changes. Right now in this book I am going back to similar themes or representations of things I've done before but I am in a different place, that was then and this in now. Not only do I need to make it look different but it necessarily will be different. Because you can't really repeat yourself. It is a natural outcome of continuing to work. The work will change.

DJ: You have developed a very recognizable style and way of working over the last 30+ years. Whose work do you think you have influenced along the way?

PC: I have no idea really. But I can tell you who I am influenced by.

I am really influenced by the Japanese printmaking aesthetic, the color woodblock style, in combination with early books from Europe. The first century or two of book-making in Europe is what really influences my choices of typography, letterforms, arrangement on the page. I don't think that stuff has ever been equaled. When I was

first learning how to print those were the sources I would go to and look at for beautiful headings, or blocks of text, how to arrange things. I love old herbals and botanicals. I have looked at lots and lots of those. They have influenced me tremendously. And a lot of those were single color woodcuts.

A friend of mine, E.M.Ginger, who photographed all the menus for the book, just had access to this amazing book called the Bessler Hortus. The Bessler Hortus was made over a period of ten years and it records all the plants in a single monastery garden. They are black and white engravings of just amazing stuff. It was made in 1630 or so. The skill is phenomenal. The big images are copperplate etchings of the plants, so each spread is one page with the image and another page is typeset with all the botanical information about the plant. On the plate pages they did notes in calligraphy because it was too hard to put the lettering in with the plate.

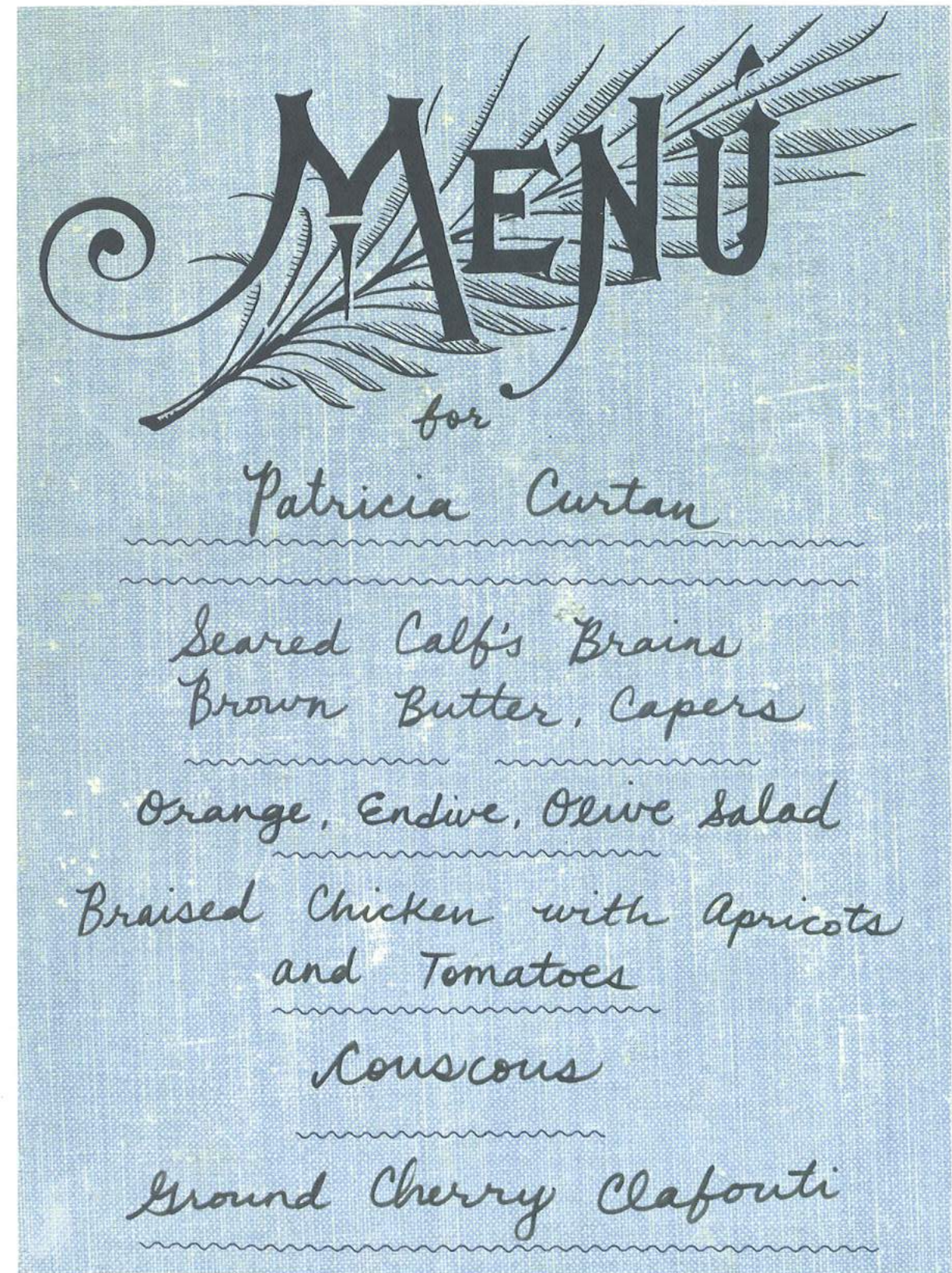
She is making an iPad app of this whole book. It is going to be fantastic. I love looking at those early books, those rendering of plants, how they did the leaves etc. It helps you see how you could incorporate that line, that view.

DJ: Have you ever failed to get a menu out on time because of the process? How do you balance vision and function?

PC: No. I don't think I ever failed to get a menu out on time. But I have had to realize a day or two in front of the deadline that I am not going to be able to do what I planned and I have to make an adjustment. And of course there are the all-nighters, occasionally. I don't do that anymore though. After awhile you get better with your time management and more realistic with what you can do and how long it is going to take you to do it.

I was growing my method and skill sets as I went along so the complications got built in later. You learn. It is a very gradual, organic way of figuring that out, knowing what you can do, trying to do the next new thing, making it work. There were definitely some long nights and days. And understanding husbands, you know. The person who really saved my life when I was young, when my kids were in school, was my friend who had two kids the same age as mine and they all went to the same school. We would do favors for each other all the time. I would call her up at 2:30 in the afternoon and say "Sally, I can't pick up the kids. Can you do that?" And she would. She would take them home and then I would have the next three hours to finish the menu and get it to the restaurant. You need people like that in your life.

Plates from "Menus for Chez Panisse":  
MENU FOR THE POTATO KING 9.625x12 IN.; ETCHING AND AQUATINT  
NEW YEAR'S EVE 1996 13x10 IN.; LINOCUT; JAPANESE HANDMADE PAPER



# PORTRAIT OF A CHINESE TAKEOUT MENU COLLECTOR: ARTIFACTS FROM THE HARLEY SPILLER COLLECTION

by Rory Gunderson



What is almost certainly the largest collection of Chinese takeout menus in the world sits on two opposite shelves doubly stacked in plain, densely packed, white boxes in Harley Spiller's apartment in Queens.

Harley started collecting takeout menus in the 80s when he first moved to New York to take a museum job. "My starting salary was \$9,200 a year so I had to forgo newspapers and magazines and Q-tips and pare back on reading material. Takeout menus were free, hanging on coat hooks, and I didn't know anything about Chinese food. I was a meat and potatoes kind of guy growing up. Pizza was my vegetable."

Harley remembers the first time a paper menu was shoved under his apartment door and thinking he was about to be robbed. Most of these door-sliders end up in the trash, but for Harley it was just the beginning. Soon he counted over a hundred menus, originally just for "bathroom reading material." But once alphabetized, the pile crossed over to something of potentially far greater interest.

Harley, calls takeout places "bulletproofs," plastic covered menus "hardcovers," and the cheap takeaway menu included in delivery bags "paperbacks." He explained the virtue of pen point clustering on a sit-down menu: a sign of recommended dishes. Harley has spent much of his life appreciating the largely understudied world of menus with no apparent preference for the famous or the institutional ones among them.

Owing to a strict self-imposed no stealing rule, "hardcovers" are understandably harder to come by, but have been on occasion given to him by restaurateurs aware of his reputation, and perhaps eager to be remembered in Spiller's menu time capsule.

Like other boys his age, the adolescent Spiller collected football cards. "Everyone loved me because I would trade three good players for one player with a weird name. Roman Gabriel and Emerson Boozer, guys with the fucking great names." So even at a young age, it's clear that for Harley the phrase, "one man's trash is another man's treasure," would become a guiding principle in his collecting enterprise.

Harley admits the unusual and sometimes amusing English translations are a part of the charm of those Chinese menus catering to a non-exclusively Chinese clientele, but doesn't want the obvious joke to undermine his genuine appreciation for these menus and their linguistic nuances. Instead he points to the interesting differences in how various cultures breakdown food categories. From an elaborate and popular tourist menu from China, Spiller reads, "Stewed camel's hump, stir-fried camel's hump, red braised shark's fin and fried sheep's tail." Everything but the last item in the list is exactly what it sounds like. The fried sheep's tail is in fact, as Spiller explains, "a poetic name: it's white egg and sweet mashed beans." In the same menu he points out how savory noodle dishes, sweet pastries and bread dishes are lumped together by their common ingredient and accordingly labeled as "flour foods."



PHOTOS BY Rory Gunderson

In addition to China, Spiller's collection contains material from Hong Kong, Israel, the Philippines, Jamaica and even a transcontinental cruise ship that printed their Chinese menu on decorative squares of tablecloth.

A menu from a high-end Hong Kong international banquet hall is written in eight languages and organizes its food by season instead of food type. "Spring, winter, fall instead of beef, chicken, vegetable, rice, flour dishes." Harley explained the restaurant's bottle-keep policy: "If you don't finish your wine, they will put a name tag on it. You've got a year to come back. Three hundred and sixty-six days later the staff will drink it. They will also store your tea. You bring in your favorite tea and they have it steeped properly and ready for you."

When appreciated as artifacts, the menus, even the most disposable amongst them, can be revealing historical documents. "The West Indies and South America have a long association with the Chinese, because when the Chinese were destitute, they were brought over as indentured

servants to dig guano (feces of seabirds, bats and seals) for fuel, so Chinese food is commonplace in Trinidad and Peru." Guano played an important role in the emerging gunpowder industry used in military and mining efforts.

Another menu from the collection, a World War II-era Chinese-American menu, displays a prominent 'V' for victory and encourages customers to buy war bonds, "These are Chinese-Americans trying not to be outsiders." Menu makers were perhaps anxious to separate themselves from Japanese-Americans who had unwillingly become associated with Japan's role in the war effort.

In a more recent example, a post-9/11 Chinese-American takeout menu for "Wok 'N Roll" displays a clip-art image of a smiling Chinese chef in front of a translucent American flag set against the outline of the Statue of Liberty and the Twin Towers in Manhattan's skyline. Above it all: the words "God Bless America" in bold red letters.

Menus, whether from high-end banquet hall or cheap take out kitchens, can offer an important window into cultures in a specific place and era. Like an illustrated fairy tale or a superhero comic book, menus are time capsules, which may help explain what is often felt but not often discussed or easily understood.

Collectors like Harley remind us of the often-arbitrary value of certain objects and of the importance of being our own curators, deciding for ourselves what is valuable and why. If all our mantles and trash-bins looked the same, then what would be left behind for the museums of tomorrow? Sometimes, it seems, you have to be willing to give up a few good cards to get just one with a really weird name.

IMAGE FROM Harley Spiller Collection





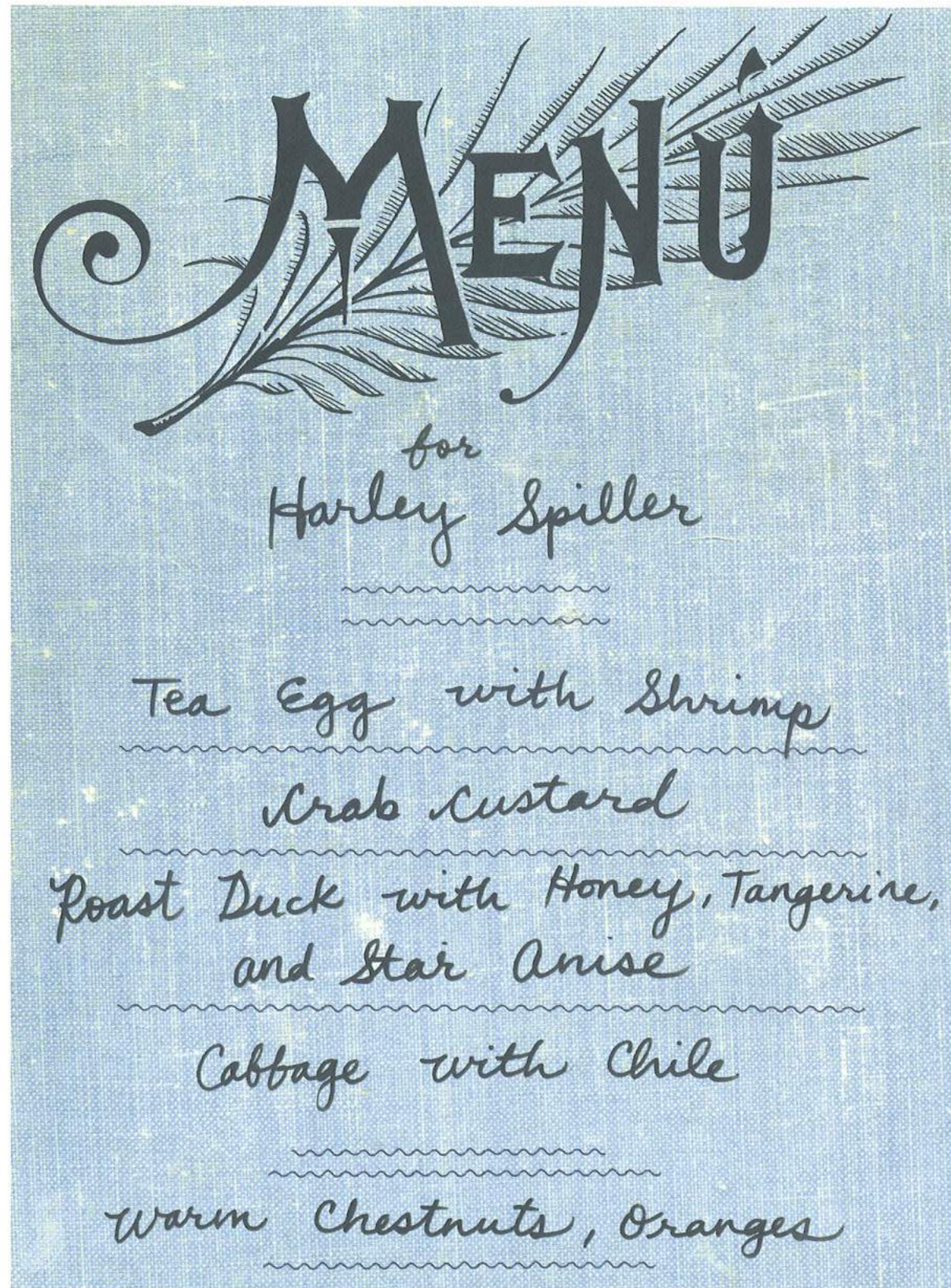


ILLUSTRATION BY Robyn Jordan



In September, I got an email from Marta Teegan. She and her partner Robert Stelzner own a grocery shop called Cookbook in Echo Park, Los Angeles. She inquired about carrying Diner Journal there. I knew they were doing something kind of wild, making a weekly menu of prepared foods to sell in the shop inspired by a favorite cookbook, and that they had similar ideas about good food and where good food comes from. After a little back and forth we sent them twelve journals. Then in November, at the laundromat, I was reading an interview and thought of Marta. I wondered what would happen if I contacted her, and we put that in the Diner Journal, and then Scarlett, who is our recipe editor and also runs the prepared food program at our butcher and grocery shop, would in turn make a menu for Marta... a feedback loop of ideas and ordinary inspiration, women on the coasts with emptied San Marzano cans to their ears and a string in-between.

Hi Marta,

I hope you're well, and enjoying the Diner Journals!

So our next issue theme is, roughly, menus. And while we were in the brainstorming process I read a quote in an Ann Beattie interview in the *Paris Review* and thought of you and Cookbook. I'm wondering if you would consider doing a brief email exchange over the next two weeks or so with me to be published in Issue 20?

Below is the quote that made me think of you, as an author and as the co-owner of a very different kind of curated grocery store. I wondered what you would think of it, and of course I would be into telling you more about what it made me think about too and the questions I have for you about what you do at Cookbook.

"I don't begin with a preconceived notion of where a piece of writing is going to end. If you go around filling a grocery cart, you figure, I'm cooking for tonight. You are not often fooled in the grocery store as to what your approach should be. But I'm fooled by stories sometimes, thinking that I'm picking up something for the night, and it turns out that I'm shopping for a week or a month. I'm always happy when that happens. It's not consistent fun like being on a roller coaster, but I can hardly think of anything that pleases me more than writing a sentence that surprises me."  
-Ann Beattie

hi, Leah:

yes, i would absolutely like to work with you.

At first glance, A PRECONCEIVED NOTION stands out most in the Beattie quote. Cookbook started with NO PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS! i simply liked all of the round shapes of the letters in the word itself...

so, how best to start?

I'm open to wherever you feel. I'm seeing this as something in-between an interview and a collage. Like drawing figure eights between the two coasts. So what was food shopping like when you were growing up?

I grew up in the Caribbean - food shopping involved trips to the not-so-nice smelling su-

permarket for powdered milk and boxed cereal. Otherwise, we had lots of great produce from our family farm plus fish from the sea!

What do you like to cook at home?

We love cooking out of the Moro cookbooks, especially fish. We also love to cook greens, beans, sausages, and potatoes, often all in one bowl.

As for that preconceived notion... I think what Beattie's suggesting is that there are some tasks (writing), more than other tasks (grocery shopping), which have the potential to, like, make arise a moment of inspiration/creation that surprises us because it appears to come from somewhere else, or from something more than our conscious efforts. Is that how you read it? Is this what inspiration feels like for you, and is it any different between writing and making food?

Ever since I started to grow my own food, my cooking has focused on the ingredients themselves, allowing them to guide me. While I may have a specific recipe in mind, I never really know what I will end up cooking until I've selected my ingredients - rather than force them into something they're not, I'm happier to let them determine the direction to go in. Like Beattie, I'm often pleasantly surprised by the results of this ingredients-driven approach to cooking.

Can you tell our readers in your words what you do at Homegrown and Cookbook?

Homegrown allows me to teach people how to grow their own food. Several times a year, I hold classes on raised bed gardening and container gardening. Cookbook is a neighborhood green grocer specializing in responsibly produced, super tasty food. We sell seasonal produce, pasture-raised meats, fresh bread, milk, butter, eggs, and other pantry essentials. We also select a cookbook to cook out of each week for our prepared foods menu. We recently acquired a classroom space next door where we offer a variety of food-related classes, including gardening (see Homegrown above), vegetable-based dyes, still life painting, and more.

How did you and Robert start Cookbook? You mentioned you like the letters in the word cookbook...

Indeed, we chose the name years ago, based on the graphic potential of all those round letters! We originally thought we were going to open a small lunch counter, but the right space never opened up for it. When we saw a for lease sign in a small storefront on the main drag in our neighborhood, we immediately saw the potential for a market that would provide our neighbors with easy access to delicious ingredients to cook with. We also strongly believe that producers of responsibly grown foods should be able to make a living doing so - our market has given us a great opportunity to support them.

If your interest in the name was purely graphic when did you decide to make prepared food from cook books? What was that process like?

Once we leased our storefront space, I set to work on developing the prepared foods menu. I wanted to figure out a way to reference the name of our store - one idea was to select a handful of recipes from various cookbooks to create a set menu, but since this type of store was new to our neighborhood, we frankly had no idea what people would respond to. By cooking out of a different cookbook every week, we've been able to offer a wide variety of foods and in the process get to learn our neighbors' tastes.

Hi Marta,

Hope you're well. It's raining here but it's 60 degrees so we really have nothing to complain about. Today the office smelled like grilled cheese all day bc of something the pastry chefs were making, heaven and hell.

Here are the questions we have from all that you've given us already, what do you think?

It's funny that you began your journey teaching people how to grow produce and now you sell it to them. Is this simply an effect of urban living or is was there a paradigm shift somewhere along the way? Or does this feel like a natural progression?

Teaching people how to grow their own food is good for many reasons, but I'm most interested in people learning first hand how labor intensive farming is and how much better fresh produce tastes. It is my hope that growing one's own food will encourage people to appreciate, value, and expect good food at all times.

So this all started with a quote about writing. You are also an author, and your concept at Cookbook seems rooted in breaking some barrier between page and plate. Would you say this seems to mirror pushing the boundary of plot of land to green grocer?

Indeed, breaking down the barrier between page and plate is very process oriented, similar specifically to the process of growing food. Caring for fruits and vegetables, watching them develop, imparts a knowledge and appreciation that is unattainable through eating alone. I'd say that we are still very connected to the land at our green grocer - with our produce in particular, we work with growers who allow their fruits and vegetables to stay on the vine as long as possible in order to develop the best flavors. While we may not always have the most beautiful looking produce, we always have incredibly delicious produce, direct from the field. I would argue that this is the next best thing to homegrown fruits and vegetables.

You have a classroom where beyond food preparing you teach still life painting... can you speak to the connection between art and food? How they have evolved or converged over the years for you professionally and personally? What other non-food related classes are offered in the classroom?

My partner, Robert, and I are both trained art historians. While we no longer work directly with art, we are nevertheless still interested in art, design, and visual culture in general. We are likewise very interested in food histories.

Both food and art have an ability to convey a great deal of information about people and places at any given time - in this sense, I think we are both interested in art and food as a means of communication. Our classroom space is not equipped with a kitchen, so it forces us to explore food beyond cooking - this includes still life painting, vegetable dyes, food histories, and artist talks.

So what's in the future for Cookbook?

We are in the process of building out our own kitchen, which will allow us to make so many more things! We will also have a small restaurant in front where our friends and neighbors can have a glass of wine and a bite to eat.

# MENU

for  
Leah and Marta

Gravlay

Cauliflower, Almond, Olive Salad

Lamb with Quince

Grilled Turnips

Fennel Ice Cream

# MENU

for  
Melissa and Paul

Pandelion Salad

Chestnut Crepes,

Hard-Roasted Wild Mushrooms

Cardoons, Salsify, and Mustard  
Greens in broth with a Poached Egg

Skate with Butter and Capers

Fresh Figs, Maracopone, Honey

## On November 16, 2011, I sat down with the artist collaborative EIDIA (Paul Lamarre and Melissa P. Wolf) to talk about art, politics, food, and New York City.

EIDIA's home base is EIDIA HOUSE, which is currently at 14 Dunham Place in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. They describe EIDIA HOUSE as "a meeting place for ideas and a forum for artists, scholars, poets, writers, architects and others

interested in *idée force*- the arts as an instrument for positive social change." It's also a meeting place for fascinating objects. Not only does it contain installations and objects from EIDIA's multidisciplinary practice, it also houses the exhibition initiative *Plato's Cave*, a skylit, tiled underground vault where

artists are invited to create installations that draw inspiration from Plato's Allegory of the Cave. It was a rainy Wednesday. Mayor Bloomberg had ordered the NYPD to evict Occupy Wall Street protesters from Zuccotti Park the morning prior.

-Ted Mineo

**Diner Journal:** You've been collaborating as EIDIA since 1986, revising your EIDIA Manifesto a few times along the way. Does working together get more complicated or less complicated over time?

**Paul Lamarre:** It's become less complicated, a lot less complicated. Over the years the heavy lifting of coming to understand the other's point of view and ways of working becomes easier. We understand and are more tolerant of each other's style and foibles. And time gives you an advantage, as you can know what the other is thinking in advance how they will react to a certain idea.

**DJ:** Do you have a system for how to divide labor among yourselves?

**Melissa P. Wolf:** Yes. For the most part, I'm behind the video camera when we do documentaries or interviews, and I'll do the editing, for the most part. And Paul is the public face; he looks good on camera, and is more of a performer.

**PL:** I'm the pitchman, and I don't mind being in front of the camera, whereas Melissa doesn't like to be photographed.

**DJ:** When you refer to yourself as a pitchman, I'm reminded of your "Hot Dog" piece, in which you literally brand hot dogs with an EIDIA logo. This gesture is obviously cheeky, but can you describe how EIDIA is or isn't like a brand?

**PL:** What I am most happy about is that we brand (literally) more often than not, objects that already exist in the world—it's an attempt to change how an object is perceived. I could brand your shoes and you now would be

wearing an original EIDIA work of art. You would never look at those shoes again in the same way. And every artist has to be a bit of a pitchman; you've got to be able to talk about your work, even if you don't want to talk about it. But we're not a factory. Andy really wanted to be a factory. We approach it in a way that's antithetical to being commercial. I think if we wanted to be real wealthy artists selling products, we could be. I used to sell peaches when I was a little kid. I'd have quart bags of peaches in my bicycle's basket, and I'd go door-to-door selling peaches. I knew at a young age that I could sell. I used to sell seeds in packages. We'd help build my mother's garden every year and I'd go selling seeds.

**MW:** And when Paul's talking about himself as a pitchman for our project, he's also talking about the interview process. For example, you have to pitch the interviewee on the idea of the project, to get them excited.

**PL:** For the *Starving Artist's Cookbook*, I realized that we'd have to be very tactful about how we approached each artist. They're cooking, they're nervous, they're in front of the camera, bright lights are on. So you have to make them comfortable and remove distractions. After 200 interviews, you get good at that. For 'the nea tapes', we had to be political in our interviewing. You're interviewing lawyers, congressmen, regular Joes off the street, and you have to develop a certain tact or empathy. For an interview, you've got to get that person's trust.

**DJ:** How does the introduction of filmmaking equipment alter the experience?

**PL:** It can have a huge effect. We used to have to shoot with big tungsten lights, and when they came on, it always



PHOTOS BY Christina Paige

freaked the artist/chef out. But what you do is induce conversations to help them relax. After a while they could forget about the camera to some extent. But they were always most relaxed when it was over and their dish came out the way they hoped it would.

**DJ:** Given the wide variety of people you interview, how do you alter your personal presentation in order to gain that trust?

**PL:** For example, if I'm interviewing an artist on the Lower East Side about censorship for the nea tapes, I dress down. You know, sneakers. But if we're getting on the train to Washington to interview a congressman for the same project, I have an Armani suit, I have good shoes that are shined, along with a tie that has the American flag on it. It's kind of joke, but it's a serious joke. I looked like a congressman. So we were able to walk right in to the halls of Congress and look the part. And that's part of gaining the trust.

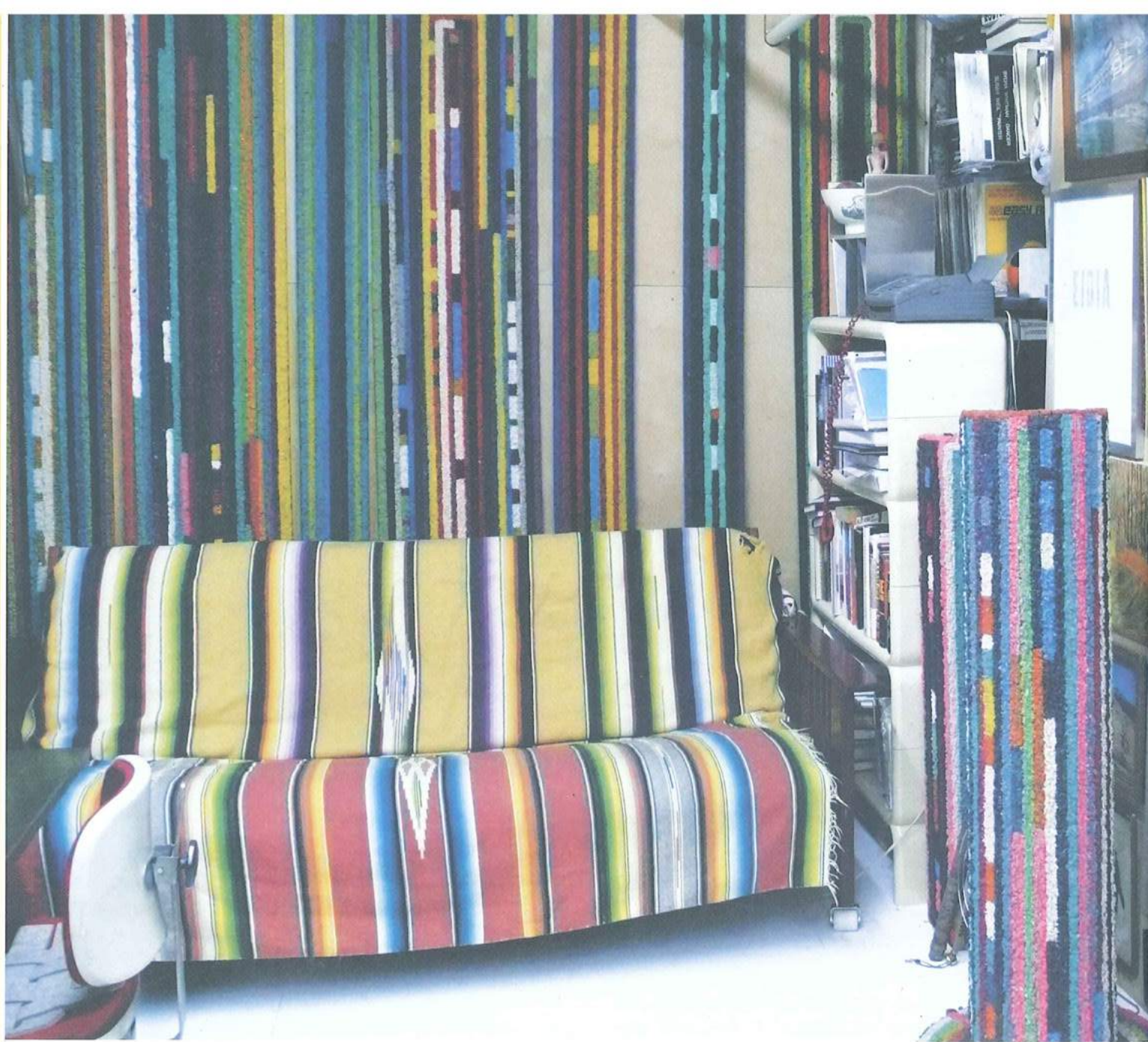
**DJ:** Does that ever break down? Have you had people turn you down for interviews?

**PL:** Rarely. Once, I made a mistake when we got Tony Podesta, a very famous art collector and brother of John Podesta (Bill Clinton's Chief of Staff). I ended up not doing the interview. Podesta told me, "I don't know if you're going to like what I have to say. I like privatization of the arts. And I don't think we need the NEA funding that much."

And with the *Starving Artist's Cookbook*, there were other people who wouldn't be in the cookbook because they were so big. I asked Joseph Beuys, and he said, "Paul, you should make the cookbook about me!" And Daniel Spoerri, also a big cooking artist, he wouldn't do it. He said, "This should just be about me". So I'd get that once in a while. Julian Schnabel said, "Paul, I'm just not starving." Jean Michel Basquiat said, "I'll do it, Paul, but I'm sort of rich now."

**DJ:** So there's a shift in what people are willing to share, as they achieve a certain level of notoriety?

**MW:** Yeah, I think at that time, there was concern on the part of some of those that were going through the superstar thing in the 80s. They felt like they were exposed enough, and that this wasn't a venue that they wanted to be exposed in. And it just wasn't as common back then. There



wasn't a Food Network. No one was really doing this at the time we were doing it. Also a lot of people really hated that "starving artist" title.

**DJ:** How did you choose the title?

**PL:** I always loved the Impressionists, and the idea of the starving artist. And, for a time, I was a starving artist. There were times, in my twenties, when I was really hungry. I lived in a tent for a year. I had a fight with my dad, and left, and I realized that I didn't know how to cook. So I had to learn how to cook. The first thing I cooked for myself was scrambled eggs. I was really proud of myself.

**DJ:** How did you cook them? A can of Sterno?

**PL:** No, I had a little Coleman stove. And some little pots and pans from Woolworth's... So I was into the idea of the starving artist, but we also used it to learn how to cook. We launched it when we were living at the Chelsea Hotel. I was making Beans and Onions for *The Chelsea Tapes*, another video series. It's an autobiography of an artist living at the Chelsea. I had met Melissa at the New Museum, at an opening when it was on 14th Street and 5th Avenue. Marcia Tucker had it in this little closet. So Melissa became the camera person, and I was making Beans and Onions. And we just said, "Beans and Onions, starving artists, Bean and Onions! We should do a cookbook!" And I wanted to know what other artists were eating. Here I am, beans and onions—

**MW:** Canned beans.



**PL:** Yes, canned beans, and I made Paul's Coffee, too.

**DJ:** Yes, when I saw that one, I realized that I do coffee the same way. So if you were making this to learn how to cook, which dishes or techniques have stuck with you?

**PL:** Oh, so many. We use the book about once a month, for a recipe. For one of our last artist's dinners here for Brad Buckley's project for Plato's Cave, we made this wonderful dish, Lomi Salmon, by Keiko Bonk, a Hawaiian artist in the East Village. You take the salmon, and mush it with your hands, combine it with tomatoes and onions, chill it, and put a nice heavy salt in there, and it's killer. It's just so delicious, and it's very physical, using your fingers. Melissa made it. And for the last dinner, we did Orange and Garlic

EIDIA HOUSE  
PHOTO: © 2010 Paul Lamarre

Salad, which is by Baldo Diodato, who was both a famous chef in Italy and also a famous artist here. You just rub garlic onto the orange slices, let it marinate then salt and pepper it. It's delicious.

Now I cook to keep myself from making more art objects. I mean just how much do we think this earth can tolerate in terms of 'more and more stuff'? Are artists no different than being a small factory? I actually cook in the evenings to unload my creative energy—so I am NOT making more physical art objects. At night, Mel and I cook and eat most always at home.

**DJ:** Did you encounter bad cooks while making the cookbook and videos?

**PL:** Our worst was Noel Mapstead. He was living in this wonderful Eakins studio from the forties. He would go get fluffy doughnuts out of the dumpster—

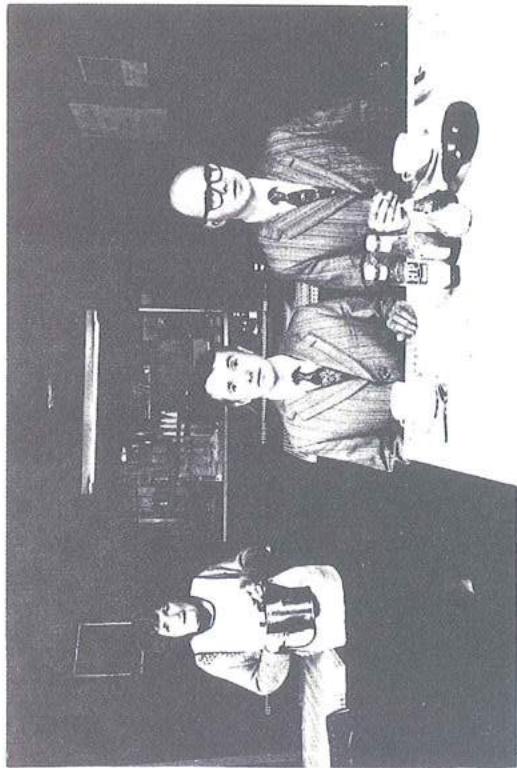
**MW:** At one point, he was living in his car, collecting bottles. This was before he got the studio. Then he got the studio and he was still collecting bottles. His rent was about a hundred dollars a month, because they were going to tear down the building.

**PL:** He had no heat, so he would sleep and cook in the fireplace to keep warm. And the food that he would make was Spaghetti and Mayonnaise. That's probably the worst dish we had.

**DJ:** What sort of artwork was he making while he was eating this?

**PL:** He was doing paintings, which weren't bad, and these little ceramic figures. He would do it with dung firing. Dung firing is where you pick up horse shit or cow shit, dry it out, then you break it all up. He'd get it in Central Park. He'd do these firings on his roof. He'd take the dung, put the ceramic object in this pile of dried dung, make a big mound, and fire it up. It fires good, bake it through, and it fires your ceramics.

**MW:** And that sort of added to the appeal of the spaghetti. (Laughter)



Gilbert & George, photo by Herbie Knott

**GILBERT & GEORGE**

12, FOURNIER STREET, LONDON E.1.

MARCH 8<sup>th</sup> 1988

Dear Paul and Melissa,  
Please find enclosed  
a "portrait" for your book. Please credit  
the photographer HERBIE KNOTT. Title of  
portrait is -:

GILBERT & GEORGE AT THE MARKET CAFE, 1987.

Our statement for you book is -:

"WE HAVE NO INTEREST IN COOKING, OR IN  
ANYTHING ELSE FOR THAT MATTER."

Good luck with your book.  
All the best to you and love  
to Sur Rodney  
Gilbert & George

**MUSSELS MANNA FROM HANNAH**

- |                      |                                 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 3 lbs. mussels       | 2 teaspoons parsley chopped     |
| 3 tablespoons butter | 4 teaspoons ground fennel seeds |
| 2 onions, sliced     | salt and freshly ground pepper  |
| 2 carrots sliced     | 3 cups heavy cream              |
| (thinly lengthwise)  | 2 yolks of egg slightly beaten  |
| 1 bay leaf           | 1/2 cups white wine.            |

Preferably have someone else wash and scrub your mussels carefully while you do the rest. First slice the two onions and cut carrots very thinly lengthwise in about three inch strips. Put them both in a large pot with melted butter, wine, parsley, salt and pepper, bay leaf, and the pulverized fennel seeds, (with a mortar and pestle). Cover, and cook a few minutes at low heat and then bring to a boil, add mussels and reduce heat to medium. Cook about 10 minutes until mussels are spread open, drain and remove from pot with the onions and carrots. Place in serving bowl and cover to keep hot. Boil liquid and then add cream until sauce returns to a boil and then remove from heat, adding the beaten egg, and return the sauce to the heat and cook until the sauce slightly thickens. Strain sauce if necessary and pour over mussels serving at once.

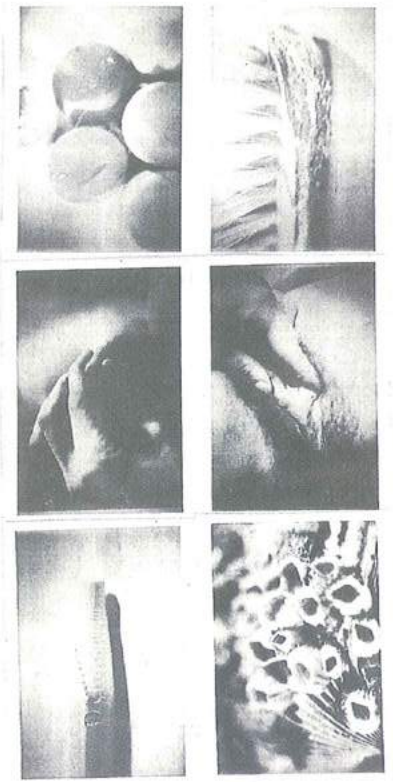
\*\*\*\*\*

**Hannah Wilke**

Artist: conceptual performance, sculpture  
Instructor in Sculpture and Ceramics at the School of Visual Arts, NY  
One person exhibitions: Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, 1972, 74, 75, 78, 85; Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, 1974, 76; Marianne Deson Gallery, Chicago, Ill., 1977; P.S. 1 Institute for Art and Urban Resources, So Help Me Hannah, N.Y. 1978; Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, D.C. 1979; Performalist Self Portraits; Gross Gallery, U. of Arizona, Tucson, 84.



"S.O.S. Starification Object Series", 1975, 1/35 black and white photograph.



5 Schneemann

from "SAW OYER WANN" (one unit of twelve) Chromacolor prints 216" x 88"

**EMERGENCY SAUCE SCENERIOS FOR UNEXPECTED FRIENDS AND LOVERS**

No matter how paltry or terrible your provisions, they can be vitalized, if you have the following available for a sauce: Japanese soy sauce, fresh oil, yogurt, garlic powder, curry powder, cinnamon, honey or maple syrup.

**vegetable sauce**

Friends arrive unexpectedly; in the fridge you find a withered head of broccoli (or lettuce, carrots, sprouts, half a zucchini, etc.). Quickly refresh the old vegetables in cold water while you mix: 1 tablespoon yogurt, 1 teaspoon soya sauce, 1/2 teaspoon curry powder, 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder. Mix well, put in a small, appealing cup or ashtray. Set ashtray dip in center of large plate, surround with the revived vegetables.

**fruit sauce**

Friends arrive unexpectedly; in the fridge you find a grapefruit, half-eaten apple, handful of grapes... Peel and separate grapefruit slices, slice apple, cut grapes in half.... Mix 1 tablespoon of yogurt, 1 teaspoon honey or maple syrup, sprinkle cinnamon. Place in decorative ashtray in center of large plate, surround with circle of fruit.

**crackers sauce**

Friends arrive....there is nothing in the fridge... On a shelf you find half a package of crackers (if they are limp, spread them on a baking dish or frying pan, place in oven for 10 minutes at 350 degrees. Prepare either of the above sauces... place in ashtray or cup, in center of plate, surround with...crackers...

\*\*\*\*\*  
Carolee Schneemann

Carolee is a painter, performance artist, filmmaker and writer. Consistent with her use of varied media has been the inclusion of controversial themes: feminist history, sexuality, body as a source of knowledge, the integration of ordinary life with the art process.

**SOUP DES JOURS**

Choose a large round pot (e.g. Le Creuset). Start with water from soaking seaweed (Mekabu is especially good) or from cooking 100% buckwheat soba. Add any vegetables (roots and/or leafy ones and/or mushrooms: burdock, carrots etc. first; at the last minute radish, turnip tops or even fresh carrot tops put through the Cuisinart) and/or beans, cooked rice, etc. but don't add any oil. Keep on the stove, not necessarily on fire except when warming up or adding new root vegetables. Change the flavor each day by the addition of leftovers or an entirely new ingredient such as freshly chopped (in a Cuisinart) parsley or mustard greens. Before each serving add Bragg's Liquid Aminos or some other vegetable protein or tamari to taste, and freshly ground pepper. When it gets too dry or becomes too thick add more liquid and vice versa. It is especially good served with freshly cooked or leftover soba or rice.

\*\*\*\*\*

**John Cage**

JOHN CAGE, BORN SEPTEMBER 5,  
1912, STILL COOKING

Starting Artist's Cookbook (1991) Paul Lamarr and Melissa P. Wolf

**DJ:** And what did you learn about shopping, or about artists' daily routines? Did you pick up any models for how to 'be' in the world everyday? Things that you've applied to your own lives?

**MW:** Sure, especially what Louise Bourgeois did: make style from every thing that you do, to present a style.

**PL:** And another lesson that I took away from everybody, from both wealthy, established artists and poor artists, was to be frugal. Everybody likes a deal. You can buy great food and spend a lot of money or you can buy great food and spend a little bit of money. It's about doing more with less. It's things like, "Oh, I got this chicken on sale."

**MW:** John Cage said that they'd give him carrot greens and other greens that people didn't want, that were cut off from other things.

**PL:** Yes. And so many of these artists had a certain kind of style. Like Arman, a very famous artist, he made Sardines and Eggs for us. The sardine, you know, it's about as long as your hand, about six inches long, and the way he handled it in the pan, turning it with the fork and knife, with the eggs- had such style to it. He told us how he used to be a spear fisherman when he was young, underwater, in Nice. He'd spear game fish and when he caught them, he'd sell them right out on the docks. That's how he used to make a living. So here's this big famous artist, and the style remained - he's still that young kid, eating sardines and eggs.

**DJ:** Paul, in the piece "Baking Bread", you compare baking bread to your early work with ceramics ("the wedging of clay, building of forms, and final kiln firing"), and you talk about the loaf (transubstantiation aside) in an almost magical way. By way of texture, smells, and flavors bread is treated as a vessel for information about the person who made it. You've said about your baking, "If successful, an audience would truly see 'who' this artist is." What is it about food that allows for such revelations?

**PL:** Sharing food and drink, ('breaking bread' as they say) always is a main-communicator. It can bridge differences and it can take you places like nothing else can. It can be a major tool in diplomacy, and actually give you a glimpse into some one's soul. Music and singing too can do that, as can art, but food—we all must eat! And having to 'must' eat, means, at times, having to 'must' cook. So you expose yourself whether you like to or plan to or not.

**DJ:** You've written that *The Starving Artist's Cookbook Video Series* was initiated to document a communal aspect of the artist's lifestyle that you saw as coming to an end because of a tendency toward privatization in New York's art world. What can we learn about politics from the social spaces created around eating?

**MW:** You are what you eat.

**PL:** Food and eating rituals take many forms: having a dinner for an art collector has a different political energy than having some artists or family members over for dinner. It's all different. Cooking for your kids is different from cooking for a lover, and eating alone and cooking for yourself is always different than cooking for others. Food and cooking is always charged with different meanings, due to the context of how it is to be eaten.

**DJ:** This idea of an artist's style being evident in their cooking and in their daily routines makes me wonder whether one's politics might have the same relationship to a daily routine. How do your politics determine your artistic practice?

**PL:** I think we're both naturally political. My father was a union organizer and a carpenter, and I grew up with that. He'd be on the phone, talking to other union members, saying, "We've got to be there on the strike. Bring your shovels, bring your sticks, we're going to be there." And Melissa's the same way. So whether it's *The Starving Artist's Cookbook*: how does the artist live? What is the society's impact on the artist's life? How is culture supported? And now you've got Occupy Wall Street, and we're down at Occupy Wall Street. That has changed the face of Manhattan.

**DJ:** How has it changed how you feel about art and about being an artist?

**PL:** We've always turned to Pierre Bourdieu, and *idée force*, the concept that ideas have force and power. What's nice about Occupy is that you take a lesson from that. For example, I have my own private language, my own little language, and the Occupy people, they're waving their fingers in the air, they're establishing new symbols, and they're creating a language! That's such an impactful idea. You can go into a meeting with one of these idiots running in the Republican primary, and you can do an Occupy intervention - you can do a "mic check"! And who knew? Of course, that does go back to the Bolshevik Revolution, and also to '68 in Paris- these things do have a history. It's good to be reminded of that. And we're always working on ideas that will change the face of things. You're seeing that with technology. I'd like to invent a software that had an international impact.

**DJ:** New York City (specifically the art scene in downtown Manhattan) has played a major role in your work. How has living in New York affected your practice?

**PL:** New York is great because it changes fast, and it changes thoroughly. You've got the East Village scene, the Soho art scene, the galleries in Chelsea, then the Lower East

Side, Williamsburg and now Bushwick. Each shift keeps you young, and it keeps you in the center of things.

**MW:** And everyone wants to come here. New York is not like America, but it is America.

**PL:** We go to galleries less because so much art is now simply made to generate capital. The Chelsea art scene, and the evolution of the big money 'art fairs' are so much larger, than say the East Village scene of the 1980s. We think more globally and internationally now than we did in the 80s or 90s. Plus we can go out to the Philadelphia Museum of Art and see Marcel Duchamp's *Etant Donnes*.

**DJ:** How much of a model is a Duchamp for EIDIA?

**PL:** He and Joseph Beuys are my two biggest influences.

**DJ:** What kind of pressure do EIDIA's more political works place on the other work you make?

**PL:** I can answer your question two ways: Given that so much art is consumer market driven, if you create overtly political work, the marketplace is suspect if you decide to venture in and join it. There is always a compromise for being political. Serrano told us that if it were not for the controversy surrounding *Piss Christ*, he would never have garnered international success. We create one type of art to take a break from others. Though we always feel like 'soldiers in culture wars' always, we do like to enjoy ourselves as well, have some fun within our short lives—making art that moves you politically and making art that makes you laugh a bit. Each kind of art that you create defines its own place in the world, if at all. Many works of art can rarely see the light of day.

**DJ:** Subtle wordplay and puns are strewn throughout your work; how do you think about the language that you use?

**PL:** We look for double meaning in things. We love puns, and irony. Like our *Plato's Cave* project, and our manifestos. Our *We Apologize* book was funny. It was for us, but it's also us mocking ourselves, apologizing for all the bad art that we've made over the years.

**DJ:** What counts as "bad art" for you?

**PL:** It's tongue in cheek, we were like, "Oh, Paul and Melissa, the art world didn't take us seriously" - and maybe we didn't take ourselves seriously - or maybe we're uberserious too. Like here (flips through the *We Apologize* book) we made Jackson Pollock wine and Jackson Pollock bread.

**DJ:** What's Jackson Pollock bread?

**PL:** We actually found his recipe from the Pollock-Krasner

house. We learned that Jackson Pollock used to live in this little place on Macdougall Alley. It was at the time lived in by Gina Fiore. Gina made a gallery in there and she told us that Lee Krasner used to stay there. And we wanted to do an installation in a place where Lee Krasner had stayed. Krasner had apparently took refuge from Pollock there when he had fallen off the wagon, started drinking again. Helen Harrison, who runs the Pollock-Krasner estate, came to one of the shows and gave us the formula for Jackson Pollock's bread, which included sugar. I made the bread, using his recipe, and it was just terrible. So I had to go back to my own recipe.

**MW:** And we did the floor tiles, too. We found out that when he visited his teacher, Thomas Hart Benton, in Martha's Vineyard, Benton had what they called a "splatter floor."

**PL:** Like the pattern you see on linoleum -

**MW:** But from the Colonial era. So doing some research, we were able to find tiles from the 1940s that were based on that.

**PL:** So we made monoprints, where we stomped the colors into these twelve by twelve flakeboard tiles, and those were our Jackson Pollock floor tiles. That's the other thing - do we want to become a factory, and make Jackson Pollock floor tiles, and spend my life making floor tiles? See what I mean? (Laughter)

**DJ:** I love that you imagine that as a possibility. You create a superstructure for each of your projects and are willing to extrapolate out from the starting point in any direction.

**PL:** Yes, that's the thing: the longer you work on ideas, the more the house is built for those ideas. Like Joseph Beuys and his Free University. The more he worked on these ideas, and put them into a political context...

**MW:** Into the Green Party, which he helped found.

**PL:** The more he was able to shape the idea of a university, a real place, for the artist as a big player (in society).

**MW:** The ideas were hugely influential, like a virus. His students riffed on them in their own ways, and they're still around. The Green Party is still active. It's pretty amazing.

**PL:** Yes, ideas have a contagion.

# For Starters

*Fresh lettuce*, almost comic in its insouciance, understandably put out, if not downright, dismayed by an earnest *farmstead cheese*, lightly grilled, singed the soft brown of autumn fields. Will the *red wine Dijon vinaigrette* restore the leaf's good humor? Or does the evening stretch before me, grudging, interminable?

*Goat cheese ravioli*, its fold a kind of embrace and who doesn't hope for as much in their own life. *Fried shallots*, limp yet stalky, testify to the force or is it farce of habit—I'm here waiting, ever dutiful. *Toasted pine nuts*—beads from a broken string of expectations. The bartender seems to be a woman of many moods, well acquainted with the elusive nature of conclusion.

*Crispy cauliflower farro cake*. I know you know I'm an attentive sort. Thoughtful at the margins, but not so good when asked to delve. *Hen of the woods mushrooms*, though, spark childhood memories not so much of childhood, but of books and fairy tales in which birds perch in trees that resemble people who resemble trees. Up from newly scuffed earth, the scent of *smoked bacon*, *charred balsamic onions* rises.

*Cold steamed spinach noodle salad*. Half an hour and I'm wondering about Wyoming; it's far away. There are geographies at the end of a fork. *Chickpeas*, *sesame*, *chilies & lime*, this is how I mark my time.

## Dinner

*East coast halibut*, unforgiving fish eye. Storms and tears—you can't swim in either. The *lentils* neatly spooned, form a pile of stones around the plate's garden: *root vegetables*, and *scallions*. When the bartender suggests another round, I sit up straight and settle myself neatly on the barstool. Steady against any waves. The glass I hold is a life ring, even as I siphon off what threatens to spill.

*Pressed young chicken* with *brown butter escarole*. I thought she was you—as she pushed in through the door. But she's not. Your height, though. Your cheeks, bright as *glazed radishes*. And your hair, too, the worn blond color of *lemon-honey jus*. Meets two men already seated and air kisses both of them. Pressure of lips carefully calibrated; pressed only so much, just enough.

*Grilled lamb*, the peppery bite of *soy cumin marinade* reconnects you to your senses. We live in our bodies. In the place where they are weight and mass. Other bodies sometimes intersect. Sometimes not. I can imagine you whispering the words "Persian rice," and I might respond, "spring garlic." We could talk this way. Say "sautéed collards" elongating the vowels together. I catch the bartender's eye, which now meets mine somewhat mournfully.

*Slow rendered*, an alluring prospect. For *duck breast*, in this case, or affection in general. Low heat, incrementally applied. Still watching the door while pretending not to. I wouldn't want you to arrive and see how eager, how angry I am. *Barley groats*, *shitake mushrooms*. Biblical grains and sacred fungi. Alleged to be a virtue, patience like *caramelized red wine sauce* drips, drips, drips.

## Sides

*Potato and summer truffles*. Summer trifles? Too many seasons to keep track of. The burdensome awareness of weather, the planet's course around the sun. The world goes round while we're neck deep in dirt. My minutes on the meter are about to expire. Ten more before free parking goes into effect. I'll risk it. If you came in and didn't see me you might turn heel and leave.

*Smoked*, perhaps in some wintry cabin in distant hills, *paprika fries*. Lazy puffs from the chimney; branches heavy with snow. Blood-iron dust blows in across the scene. Just as the spice releases its flavor when heated, the booze causes a sense of longing and nostalgia to well up. This third vodka and tonic may be my last. She brings me the side dish complimentary—a prize for my humiliation. Everyone in the restaurant knows I've been left out to dry. The bartender keeps faith with our silent compact: I am here to serve as well.

## Dessert

*Blueberry pie*. Simplicity, tradition and finality. This is how it ends, with berries. With the circle, the radii measured and taken. The slice of life. All the while, I stand outside the warm circumference. I may be loosing my poise—at the bottom of my drink a lime is a castaway on melting rocks. Or maybe the barstool has become unstable. Either way I remain alone, head down, tangential.

*Gingerbread steamed pudding*. Gingerbread. Steamed. Pudding. I may cry.

*Flourless* (or hourless? an eternity of) *chocolate cake*. A hand on the back of my neck, a familiar hand. You say sorry, "The trains...." I say, "The trains. The trains are always fucked." Without flour the cake doesn't rise. It's dense, lacking fluff. As if the cakiness has been spared and what you have is the idea of a cake. A table is readied and the bartender removes the basket of half-eaten fries. She has a lot of customers now and doesn't acknowledge what has passed between us. After we're seated, I start pouring water, trying to feel purposeful. My words come thickly so you do most of the talking. After all, you say, it's only been twenty-minutes and twenty minutes isn't much, after all. And it's true, I say, that's not very late. We take menus from the waiter—printed on parchment-like paper. Rough-cut edges. The print intentionally uneven. Only twenty minutes, I'm thinking. What's wrong with me? *Farmstead cheese*, I read those words and my thoughts drift: a grassy field, the noonday sun above.

by Albert Mobilio





# MENU

for  
Albert Mabilio

Welsh Rabbit

Pumpkin in Mustard Oil

Quail Stuffed with  
Chicken Liver and Pancetta

Red Wine Lentils

3 milk Cake

Oh boy, the first Roebling Tearoom Bastille Day celebration—what a brilliant idea. The menu read as a series of jokes. A Le Pen joke here, a Daft Punk joke over there somewhere. We had two drinks, “The Rimbaud,” some sort of fruity cocktail with a base of Mount Gay Rum and a “Stiff Verlaine,” which didn’t have any fruit. Or was it vice versa? Incidentally, there was no formality to the menu, zero, which I imagined would be simple enough. I would write a menu full of absolutely adorable French things and come that Saturday it would be a fucking breeze to execute perfectly and flawlessly. That being the exact model in which one should never replicate or rather, operate... What could possibly go wrong?

There was a moment, I would not call hilarious but perhaps utterly tragic, I found myself sweating way too much in Union Square looking for a rooster to boil. It was 800 million degrees, and I had to have a rooster, like a real fucking rooster. It was 3:30 pm, just sweltering, movie hot... on the day of the first Bastille.

Duck you can eat with a spoon seemed so simple when I wrote it down. It ended room temperature (not ideal) and covered in currants (also not ideal). 60 oysters up. Ok. I may just walk out, tell everyone it’s over. I’m done. Fuck you, I’m out of here.

I’ve never had an especially bad time in France. Maybe Marseille—terrible times, dog bones in a loft, crushed 40s of Kronenbourg, just miserable, hot, it’s always hot. But in general the French vibe works. Wines all day, cigarettes, fancy dogs, parasol stores, killer vibes for a tourist. A bar with four or five bar stools just filled with plants, maybe 300 square feet, ferns, succulents and other various plants just fucking everywhere, a large maybe grey, long haired cat moving around inside, and of course an absolutely stunning woman sitting way nice, casually pounding some wine. A tourist is a goner in a place like that. Most of time you can’t quite be sure if it’s a ruse. I have a picture of a tiny dog, a Jack Russel terrier, looking just so, sitting in midday light, tied up by a tiny delicate string, plopped down in front a scarf store. Just scarves.

Through out the year at the bottom of each night’s menu is a vague (read French) and mostly incorrect countdown to Bastille Day. Not much thought is put into the menu during the long bleak winter in between, but it’s always on the mind (tete). And each year it seems the menu grows larger

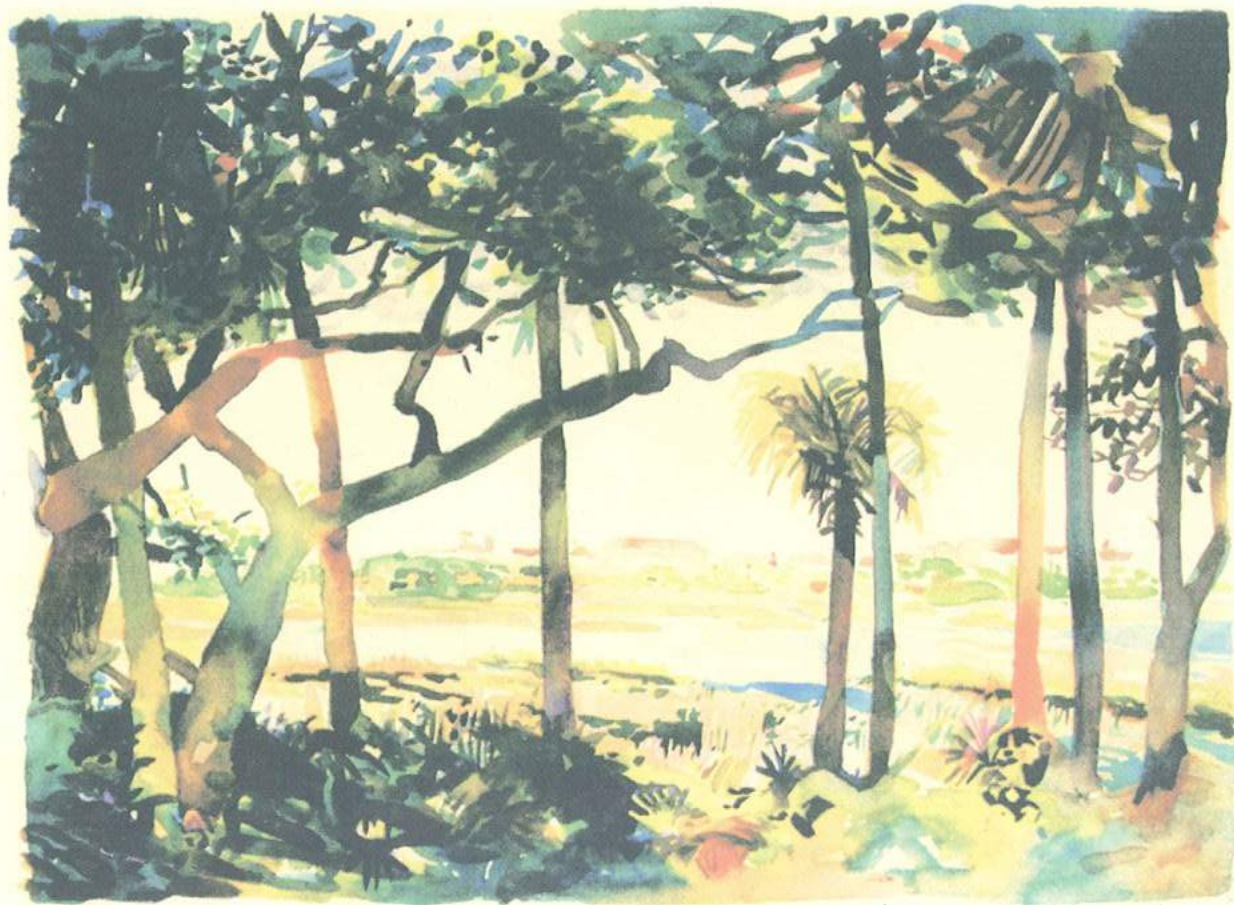
ONE  
MORE  
TIME

by Dennis Spina

and formally more out of control. The counting down is a slightly aggressive peck on the nose. Soon, it hints, we will furiously dunk some duck breasts with rope tied around them into a pot of rolling trotter stock while the clock ticks and the tickets click.

Two weeks prior to the event, I will begin with a book that for months if not a year, I’ve been silently obsessing about. Most years it’s Paula Wolfert, but I think now perhaps I have used her up. Last year I went pretty deep, which I am sometimes wont do, and chanced onto a recipe for “SUN KING” in, *The Hundred Glories of French Food* by Robert Courtine. What a great name, S - U - N - K - I - N - G. Mostly, if not only...Risotto with foot juices of a pig, shaved black truffles, peas and sweet breads. Just one big soft mess. Let’s say loosely based on a recipe (but not really) from Louis XIV-ish’s reign/party. Sun King, that was his exquisitely curated nickname. Very un-Wolfert.

Looking and finding is at the core of our Bastille Day. What a win to find something so absurdly named and prepared that it could only exist for the purpose of being dedicated to an anomaly. Corn Washington. A recipe so ridiculously named and assembled, it needs to be given its due. Taken from the only corn recipe in Larousse. Sooooo New World, corn... repugnant/gross. It’s all these various stages of reductions only to be finished through cheesecloth or a fine sieve a la minute, and topped with a red wine poached egg meant to evoke a still bruised wet heart. The dead heart is my addition.



*Hors d'œuvre*

- TOMATOS WITH ARMAGNAC 10.
- GIZZARDS WITH SALAD 10. QUAIL ESCABECHE 10.
- CORN WASHINGTON WITH RED WINE POACHED EGG 7.
- TARTAR 12. RILLETES 10.
- CLAM AND TOMATO CONSOMME 6.

*Ala Carte*

- CELERY HEARTS IN MEAT GLAZE 6.
- STRING BEANS THE TOURAINE WAY 6.
- CORNMEAL PORRIDGE 5.
- CUCUMBERS 5.
- DUCK FAT POTATOS 5.
- RATATOUILLE 6.
- WHITE ANCHOVY 5.
- FRENCH FRIES 5.



*Entrees*

- FISH WITH TANDOORI BUTTER AND GERMANIC CABBAGE 18.
- SWEET BREADS WITH PEA SHOOTS 20.
- PRIEST'S PURSE 15.
- DUCK ON A STRING WITH CUCUMBERS 17.
- PIG FOOT 17.
- LIVER RAVIOLI COOKED IN MEAT JUICES 15.
- LE CHEESE 15.
- RUMSTEAK CHATELLIER 18.
- LAMB 20.
- SOUSED BLUEFISH 19.
- AUTOROUTE PASTA 14.
- COTE DU BOEUF FOR TWO 80.

*BASTILLE*

MENU FROM: Roasting Tea Room 2010

MENU FROM: ROASTING TEA ROOM 2010

The research is swift, a couple hours a day in the stacks of the obvious. *The Cooking of Southwest France*, by Paula Wolfort. Elizabeth David always, for her slurry-not so precise, "may have had one too many" kind of stuff. She loves, and we appreciate her for it, just pouring wine into things, more than one dish fait accompli with a glass of wine being poured into the bowl. Alice B. Toklias sometimes will throw a curve ball, more entertaining, party favors, but black butter is a winner. Just the name rings it for me. Jeremiah Tower was as it seems addicted to champagne at one point, mid Stars, hence his urge to only use "fine" things. String Beans the Touraine Way, is just a great name, from Jane Grigson's vegetable book. I think they are real bechamelly, or I KNOW they are. *When French Women Cook* has nice one for when you can't get some good verjus, which is actually never a problem. Just substitute armagnac and pour it over some very good tomatoes and voila.

From the Menu

**Duck on a String:** Clever name? Maybe my favorite. Duck breast on a string, dunked into either a steaming pot of broth or dangled over some coals until you think it is done. A string around a duck breast just seems so absurd, it has to be done. We generally present the string to the customer for inspection and to make sure they know that there was indeed a string. Any other way would be foolish of course.

**The Perfect Little Gizzard** should taste like a tiny pastami. Carelessly researched on my behalf, we've had made them on the previous Bastilles only to be told they tasted like little roast beefs. A seemingly mild observation and perhaps insult, but compelling enough. We never really eat a lot of gizzards, I suppose. Classically gizzards are a very real threat.

**Steak Cooked on One Side** was a thing for a while but has since gone out of fashion for good reason. It really doesn't make any sense, kind of very odd. We tried.

**Wanderer's Chicken**, now that they call gypsies wanderers. For nostalgia's sake—I really don't have any fond memories of food from my childhood but this—vivid memories of being a stupid kid in a train station and eating this grilled chicken with mars bars that the wandering people were selling. Let the chicken sit out all day and braise on some sterno after grilling it.

**Anchovies that have been Sitting by a Fire:** Also not just a clever name. They are anchovies that in a perfect world have been sitting by an open fire in a jar for days. Here they sat by the really hot part of the grill that's been malfunctioning so it puts up some smoke and flames.

**Autoroute Pasta:** A buddy of mine once came out of this road stop with this thing on a plate somewhere like two hours outside of Paris. What in gods name... Morels? Really? You know, some food they served at the gas station. Whole wheat pasta, fresh peas, crème fraiche, mushrooms and walnuts on the go. The whole thing just baffled me. Real forks, knives, plates. I settled for the spinning Croque Monsiuer under the heat lap. Bad move.

**Tomatoes in Armagnac:** Just that. Very good tomatoes sitting in a pool of the stuff. Sea salt, olive oil. My take, the olive oil isn't in the recipe. Again, only if you can't find verjus anywhere, which you can, just look.

**Liver Ravioli in Meat Juices:** Another odd nod in *Larousse* to the Italians. Sure, liver puree in pasta dough, drenched in melted beef or pork aspic.

**Soused Swordfish, or Drunk Swordfish:** This is actually not funny at all but actively amazing. The stewing juices from ratatouille mixed with harissa and topped with tabil. Tabil is caraway and coriander, Turkish for "table" or "seasoning." Can't be sure.

**Preserved Pigeon:** Just another delightful name. It's pigeon or squab or whatever poor little thing cooked then covered with hot vinegar and raisins, pinenuts and stuff. It is a straight rip off from a perfect place called Le Baratin, in Paris, where the chef cooks with the door open. The pigeon is at once gross and amazing and served cold which is the real shocker.

Executing the menu has slowly become harder, if more rewarding, given the fact that I have become better cook. Each year goes by, my cooks are better, I'm better, the front of the house is better. So why not make this as hard as fucking possible on for everyone that is willing? Then we will put on the disco ball.

# MENÙ

for  
Dennis Spina

Tomatoes in Armagnac

Fig and Walnut Toast

Aioli with  
Leeks, Carrots, and Onions

Garbure  
Walnut Pear Cake

## RECIPES WINTER / 2012

SCARLETT LINDEMAN

These are menus contemplated and pondered. Endless bins of fresh fennel were dreamt of. The only limitation was my own sense of prudence. Nevertheless, writing a menu for someone has its own set of challenges. A menu is a progression and the dishes, conceptually, should speak to the person you are writing it for. They could be evocative of a certain feeling or style aiming to resonate with that person. If the menu is not a parade of their favorite dishes, it should at the very least, contain something they would like to eat.

Whether the menus in this issue of Diner Journal become reality or not, they begin as fantasy. What's compelling to me about conjuring these menus vs. a menu written for restaurant service, is that there is no real-time, there's no chipped plates or missing fish spatulas, and if you're bored by mache, you don't have to serve it.

Imagining dishes for Melissa and Paul's menu, I watched the worn videos of John Cage making macrobiotic soup in his NYC apartment and felt there must be some sort of an artistic sentiment found within the menu; organic, foraged, a bit hippie. For Patricia Curtan, I thought of our nation's Mediterranean, California, and of the beautiful simplicity found in a platter of oranges and olives. For Joe Dressner's menu, all courses should go well with wine, of course, and be extra celebratory, for he will be missed. These menus are especially considered, as edible accolades, patterns of honor. -SL

## MENU FOR MELISSA AND PAUL

### DANDELION SALAD

- 2 bunches dandelion greens
- lemon
- olive oil
- salt
- 1 hunk Parmesan cheese

Wash dandelion greens well. Trim off any gnarled bottoms and slice into manageable pieces, 4 to 6 inches in length. Dry dandelion leaves in a salad spinner. Plate in a chilled bowl, drizzle with lemon juice, lots of olive oil, and sea salt. Peel peels of Parmesan over the top.

### CHESTNUT CREPES, HARD-ROASTED WILD MUSHROOMS

#### For the crepes:

- 1 cup chestnut flour
- 1 cup flour
- 4 eggs
- 4 cups milk
- 1 t salt

#### For the mushrooms:

- 2 # wild mushrooms, any mix of chanterelle, wood-ear, black trumpet, hen-of-the-woods
- 1 bunch thyme
- olive oil
- salt and pepper
- 1 quart cream
- ½ # butter
- 1 hunk Pecorino cheese

Whisk together all crepe ingredients and let sit for 30 minutes. In a flat cast iron pan, wipe a dab of butter all over the cast iron with a kitchen towel. Heat over low-medium heat, for 2 minutes. When the cast iron is hot, drop in ¼ cup of crepe batter, tilting pan from side to side to spread batter over the surface. Let cook for 30 seconds, then

flip over with a metal spatula. Let cook 30 more seconds until golden and toasted. Remove from the pan and place on a parchment-lined sheet tray. Continue making crepes in this manner until all batter is used. Set aside.

Clean and trim mushrooms, then cut into same size pieces. Toss mushrooms with olive oil, branches of thyme, and season well with salt and pepper. Spread out onto a sheet tray, or two, and roast in a hot oven until beginning to caramelize and starting to crisp, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, start reducing cream and butter in a small saucepan, over medium-low heat. Once the cream has reduced by half and mushrooms are cooked, fold mushrooms into the cream mixture and cook until warm and coated. To plate crepes, place a spoonful of creamy mushrooms on the center of each crepe and fold over and then again to make a triangle. Spoon a little cream over the top and finish with grated Pecorino.

### CARDOONS, SALSIFY AND MUSTARD GREENS IN BROTH WITH A POACHED EGG

- 10 stalks of cardoon
- 4 quarts good chicken stock
- 12 sticks of salsify, peeled and held in acidulated water
- 1 bunch thyme
- 1 bunch mustard greens, trimmed of their stems
- 6 eggs
- 1 lemon, halved
- olive oil

Trim and scrape cardoons of any fibrous tips or bottoms. Cut and trim into 2 by ½ inch batons. Place cardoons in a pot with cold water. Bring to a boil. Drain the water. Repeat boil with fresh cold water, until cardoons begin to tender and all of the bitterness is removed, 2 to 4 boilings. On the last boil, make sure to season the water with salt. Remove cardoons

from the water and set aside. Cut the salsify into sticks approximately the same size of the cardoon pieces. In a pot, combine the salsify, cardoons, stock and a bunch of thyme and bring to a simmer. Simmer vegetables until tender. Meanwhile, poached eggs and hold in an ice-bath until ready to serve the dish. In a medium pot, heat stock with the cardoons and salsify. Cook the mustard greens into the stock, making sure it's seasoned well with salt. Add a squeeze of lemon juice. In each bowl, ladle in some of the stock, cardoons, salsify, and mustard greens. Top with a poached egg and lots of good olive oil.

### SKATE WITH BUTTER AND CAPERS

- 4 skate wings, trimmed and clean flour, to dredge
- olive oil
- salt and pepper
- 6 T butter
- 2 T capers, drained and rinsed
- 1 lemon, halved

This is a very simple and delicious dish. Get a frying pan hot with a thin layer of olive oil in it. Dredge skate wings in flour, shaking off any excess. Pan fry the skate wings two at a time; flip the wings onto their other sides, when golden. Drain any excess oil and add a large spoonful of butter to the pan, letting it sizzle and brown around the skate. Add a pinch of capers and fry in the hot butter. Season with salt and pepper, add a squeeze of lemon, swirl to combine and transfer the skate wing with its butter caper sauce to a plate. Repeat with the other skate pieces and serve, immediately.

### FIGS, MASCARPONE, HONEY

- 1 quart fresh figs
- 2 cups mascarpone
- 1 cup cream
- 3 T honey

Halve figs. Whip cream until stiff peaks are formed, fold in the mascarpone. Scrape mascarpone mixture into a bowl and pool honey on top. Allow guests to dip halved figs into the bowl and eat.

## MENU FOR LEAH AND MARTA

### GRAVLAX

- 2 salmon fillets, 3-4# each
- 2 cups salt
- 1½ cup sugar
- 1 bunch dill
- creme fraiche
- cornichons
- lemon

"Gravlax" literally translates to grave salmon, referring to the Scandinavian method of curing fish by burying it underground. Remove the skin from the fillets and any pin bones with needle-nose pliers. Mix together the sugar and salt. Sprinkle salt-sugar mixture all over the fillets, on both sides. Set a salmon fillet in a ceramic baking dish, press sprigs of dill onto the fillet and top with the other fillet, making a big salmon dill sandwich. Place another ceramic baking dish on top of the fillet, press down, and weight it with something heavy. Place dish in the refrigerator. Let salmon cure for five days. Every day, flip the fillet on the bottom to the top, so it cures evenly. After five days, remove salmon from the cure, rinse, and let dry in the refrigerator overnight. When ready to prepare, thinly slice gravlax. Serve on a plate with a dollop of creme fraiche, cornichons, more fresh dill, and lemon zest. Serve toasted bread on the side.

### CAULIFLOWER, ALMOND, OLIVE SALAD

- 3 heads cauliflower
- 2 cup almonds
- 1 cup Castelvetro olives
- olive oil

### ground chile de arbol

### lemon

### sea salt

Prepare the heads of cauliflower for roasting. Cut cauliflower into fork-size pieces, reserving ¼ of one of the heads to slice thinly, raw, in the salad. Toss pieces with olive oil, salt, and pepper and roast on sheet pans in a hot oven until crispy and caramelized. Set aside. Pit olives. Set aside. Toast almonds until fragrant and golden brown then toss, straight from the oven, in a bowl with a splash of olive oil and salt and toss to coat. Add 1 cup of the almonds to a blender and add ¼ cup of water and ¼ cup of olive oil, along with a pinch of ground chile de arbol, a pinch of sugar, and a pinch of salt. When ready to assemble the salad, smear a dollop of the almond butter on a plate. Place the roasted cauliflower on top. Scatter some whole almonds and olives over the plate. Thinly slice raw pieces of the set-aside cauliflower on a mandoline, toss with lemon, olive oil, and salt and scatter on top of the salad. Drizzle the plate with more olive oil and serve.

### LAMB WITH QUINCE

- 2 # lamb shoulder or shanks
- 2 medium onions, sliced
- 4 T butter
- 1 small knob of ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 pinch saffron
- 2 cloves
- 2 large quinces
- 1 lemon
- 1 cinnamon stick
- ½ cup water
- 3 T honey

Season lamb meat with salt and pepper. In a medium pot over medium-high heat, brown lamb meat on all sides in a glug of olive oil. Add onions, butter, ginger, saffron and cloves and cook for 5 minutes. Add enough water to come up halfway up the lamb pieces, bring to a simmer and cover to pot, cooking over low-heat for about an hour, hour

and a half. Add water if it becomes too dry. Meanwhile, peel, core and quarter quince. Drop them into a small pot of boiling water with the juice of 1 lemon, a cinnamon stick, and 1 cup sugar. Simmer quince for 10 minutes, until beginning to cook but still firm. Remove quince from it's cooking liquid and add to the lamb braise with honey. Cook for 15 more minutes until both lamb and quince are tender and sauce is reduced. Serve with lots of good bread to sop up the sauce, grilled turnips and a big green salad of mixed lettuces and herbs, on the side.

### GRILLED TURNIPS

- 6 large scarlet turnips
- olive oil
- salt and pepper
- honey

Grilling brings out the natural sweetness in turnips and cooks them quickly so they don't lose all of their crunch. Slice turnips into 1 inch thick slices. Toss with olive oil. Grill turnips on a hot grill over glowing coals. Flip turnips to the other side after 1 or 2 minutes. Just sear the other side, then transfer to a bowl. Turnips will continue to cook and soften. Drizzle in a little more olive oil, salt, lots of black pepper, and a drizzle of honey. Toss and plate onto a platter.

### FENNEL ICE CREAM

- the stalks of 6 to 8 fennel bulbs, chopped
- 3 cups milk
- 1½ cup sugar
- 3 cups heavy cream
- 1 vanilla bean
- large pinch of salt
- 12 egg yolks
- ½ cup Pernod

Warm the fennel stalks with the milk, sugar, half of the cream, the vanilla bean, scraped with its seeds, and salt

in a medium pot until warm. Steep mixture for 30 minutes, then strain through a fine-mesh strainer. Whisk together egg yolks and the rest of the cream, until very smooth and well-combined. Pour a splash of the warm fennel cream mixture into the egg yolks to temper, whisking to combine. Continue to add all of fennel cream into the egg yolks, whisking well to combine. Pour mixture back into a pot and heat over medium heat stirring constantly until mixture thickens slightly and coats the back of a spoon. Pour mixture through a strainer again, and chill in an ice-bath, adding the Pernod at the last minute. Freeze the mixture in an ice-cream maker, according to the manufacturer's instructions. Especially wonderful served as an affogato with a shot of Molinari liqueur.

## MENU FOR ALBERT MOBILIO

### WELSH RABBIT

- 3/4 # sharp cheddar cheese, grated
- 1/4 cup beer
- 2 T butter
- 2 t Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 t salt
- 1 t mustard
- dash of Tabasco

Combine all ingredients in a small saucepan. Over medium-low heat, warm ingredients, stirring well until mixture melts into a smooth sauce, about 5 minutes. Pour sauce over good bread, toasted. Lots of cracked black pepper on top.

### PUMPKIN IN MUSTARD OIL

- 2 1/2 cups olive oil
- 1 cup dry mustard
- 2 chiles de arbol
- 1 T peppercorns
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 large Red Kuri squash

In a small saucepan combine olive oil, mustard, chiles, peppercorns, and bay leaves. Stir to combine. Place over very low heat, stirring occasionally. The mustard has a tendency to burn, so keep a close eye on it. It should heat until fragrant and warm, about 1 hour. You'll know it's ready when an entrancing aroma fills the kitchen. It should smell nutty, almost vanilla-y. Remove from the heat.

Cut the squash in half, trim ends, and scoop out all the seeds. You can rinse the seeds, remove the strands, dry, and toast in a oven with salt and olive oil, if you like, or discard. Cut squash into 1/2 inch wedges, no more than five inches across. Toss wedges with some of the mustard oil, coating well and season with salt. You may have some oil left over. Roast squash on sheet-trays in a hot, 400 degree oven, until beginning to caramelize, 5-10 minutes. Serve squash as is or in a salad with spears of treviso, chopped toasted almonds, and a drizzle of yogurt.

### QUAIL STUFFED W/ CHICKEN LIVER AND PANCETTA

- 16 quail, two-per-person
- 1/2 cup of grappa
- 3 juniper berries, crushed
- sprigs of thyme and rosemary
- 2 T salt
- 16 cleaned chicken livers
- 32 strips of pancetta, cut thinly
- kitchen twine

First marinate the quail with the grappa, juniper, herbs, and salt. Toss well to combine and let sit overnight. Then sear off the chicken livers. Season chicken livers with salt and pepper. In a hot sauté pan with a little olive oil, quickly sear one side of each chicken liver until just brown, no more than 15 seconds, then remove liver from the pan. When livers are cool enough to touch, slip a chicken liver inside the cavity of the quail. Wrap a strip of pancetta around the quails middle and another running perpendicular, like a present. You may be able to tuck the

loose ends of pancetta strips underneath themselves, creating a nice, taut, package. You can also secure the pancetta with kitchen twine, for added insurance.

When ready to cook get an oven ripping hot. In a saute-pan, sear a quail on one side in a little olive oil. After a minute or two when one side is a nice golden brown, flip the quail and slip pan into the hot oven. Cook for 5 to 8 minutes and remove. Let the quail rest for 5 minutes, before serving, with any residual juices.

### RED WINE LENTILS

- 2 small onions, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 ribs celery, diced
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 bunch thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 cups lentils, any kind
- 3 cups red wine
- water
- salt to taste
- black pepper

In a medium pot, sweat vegetables, herbs, and a small handful of salt, in olive oil over medium heat until soft and translucent, about 10 minutes. Add lentils, red wine, and water to just cover. Simmer lentils until soft but still retain their shape. Season with more salt, if needed, and fresh black pepper.

### 3 MILK CAKE

For cake:

- 7 oz flour, plus extra for pan
- 1 t baking powder
- pinch of salt
- 4 oz unsalted butter, softened
- 8 oz sugar
- 5 eggs
- 1/2 vanilla bean, scraped

For milk syrup:

- 1 12oz can evaporated milk
- 1 14oz can sweetened condensed milk
- 1/2 cup buttermilk

For whipped cream:

- 2 cups cream
- 2 T sugar
- 1 t vanilla extract

For the cake: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt in a bowl and set aside. Place the butter into the bowl of a stand mixer and using the paddle attachment, beat on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add in the sugar and paddle for a minute or so, scraping down the sides of the bowl, if necessary. Add the eggs, 1 at a time, and mix to thoroughly combine. Add the vanilla bean scrapings and 1/2 of the flour mixture, whisking together to combine. Add in the rest of the flour and mix until combined. Pour batter into a buttered and floured pan, 9 by 13 inch, and spread evenly. Bake 20 minutes or until lightly golden.

Remove the cake pan and allow to cool for 30 minutes. Poke the top of the cake all over with a skewer or fork. Allow the cake to cool for an hour. Prick the cake all over with a skewer, so the milk syrup can soak into the cake. Whisk together evaporated milk, sweetened condensed milk and the buttermilk in a small bowl. Pour the sweet milk mixture over the cake then refrigerate overnight. The day of serving, whisk the heavy cream, sugar and vanilla until stiff peaks are formed. Spread on top of the cake and chill until ready to serve.

## MENU FOR JOE DRESSNER

### POTATO PANCAKES, CREME FRAICHE, CAVIAR

- 8 Russet potatoes, peeled
- 1 large beet, peeled

- 1 large white onion
- 1 cup flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 t baking powder
- 1 nutmeg seed
- salt and pepper
- olive oil
- 2 cups creme fraiche
- 1 oz beluga caviar

On a box grater, grate potatoes, beet, and onion on the largest-hole side. With a clean kitchen towel, gather the grated mess together and squeeze all of the water out. Add flour, eggs, and baking powder to the potato mixture. Grate 1/4 of the nutmeg into the mixture, with a microplane. Season with salt and pepper and stir well. Heat olive oil in a frying pan, about 1/2 inch deep. Drop tablespoons of the mixture in the hot oil and flatten with a spatula. Fry for about 2 minutes on the first side, then flip onto the other side and cook until golden brown. Transfer the pancakes to a paper towel lined plate, to drain. Then serve with dollops of creme fraiche and spoonfuls of caviar.

### RABBIT SAUSAGE TERRINE

- 1 rabbit, de-boned, fat, liver, heart, and kidneys reserved
- 3 juniper berries, ground
- 1 bunch thyme, leaves picked
- 1 bay leaf
- 5 shallots, sliced
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1/4 cup dried cherries
- 1/4 # pancetta, diced
- 1 # pork sausage
- 1 egg
- 2 T gin

Cut the rabbit into small chunks, making sure no bone shards have been left behind. Set aside. In a saucepan over medium heat, cook rabbit kidneys and heart with shallots, garlic, herbs, pancetta, cherries, seasoned well with salt and pepper. Cook mixture until it fries in the pancetta fat, and turns a nice

golden brown; at last minute, add livers. Let mixture cool, slightly.

In a food processor, add the cooked mixture and pulse until smooth. Add the cubed rabbit meat and process until coarsely ground. Scrape the mixture into a large bowl and add the sausage, egg, gin, seasoning with salt and pepper. Using your hands, thoroughly blend the ingredients together until quite homogeneous. Spoon the mixture into a rectangular ceramic terrine pressing it down firmly. Tap the terrine mold downward on a hard surface to further pack down the mixture. The mixture should come up a half an inch to the top of the terrine mold. Cover the terrine with its lid or wrap the entire mold tightly with plastic wrap. Place the molds in a large pan and fill with water till it comes up the side of the terrine molds. Cover the pan with aluminum foil. Cook pan in a 300 degree oven for 35-45 minutes. Test for doneness by inserting a thin metal skewer into the middle of the terrine. Let it sit for 5 seconds then quickly remove and press it to your bottom lip. If the skewer is hot or medium hot, remove terrine. If terrine is lukewarm, cook for 10 more minutes. When done, remove the terrine from the water bath and cut a piece of cardboard to the size of the terrine. Cover it in aluminum foil and set on top of the terrine. Weight the cardboard inserts with something heavy and let cool in the refrigerator, for at least a day.

When ready to unmold, let the terrine come to room temperature for an hour. Slide a knife around the sides of the terrine and turn over onto a flat surface, a cutting board, for example. Cut thin slices of the terrine. Serve on a plate with a salad of watercress, dressed with lemon and olive oil, a couple grains of crunchy sea salt, and freshly grated horseradish over the top. Bread too.

### PEAR AND SUNCHOKE SALAD

For the butter:

- 1 cup hazelnuts, toasted until golden and fragrant
- 1/2 cup hazelnut oil

½-1 cup water  
salt  
sugar

**For the salad:**

3 pears, ripe but firm  
6 large sunchoke, washed well

First make the hazelnut butter: Add hazelnuts, hazelnut oil, ½ a cup water, a pinch of salt and sugar to a blender. Blend nuts into a smooth, thick butter, adding additional water in tablespoons if needed to get it moving. Taste and season with more salt, if needed.

On a mandolin, slice pears and sunchoke into thin slices. Toss in a bowl with a little lemon juice and a little olive oil. Season with salt. On a plate, spread some of the hazelnut butter and mound a pile of the sunchoke and pears on top.

**BRAISED OXTAIL**

3 oxtails cut into sections  
½ cup olive oil  
2 onions, quartered  
2 carrots, cut into 2 inch pieces  
2 celery ribs, cut into 2 inch pieces  
small handful garlic cloves  
1 bunch thyme  
2 bay leaves  
2 chiles de arbol  
3 cups red wine  
salt and pepper

Season oxtails on both sides with salt and pepper. In a large shallow pot, in a ½ cup of olive oil, brown oxtails on both sides until a deep, dark brown. Remove oxtails from the pot as they brown. Add the onions, carrots, celery, garlic, thyme, bay, and chiles de arbol. Sauté until they begin to soften and caramelize. Add the wine to the pan, deglazing and scraping up the brown fond on the bottom of the pan. Transfer the oxtails, the vegetables, and any liquid to an oven-safe pan. Add enough water to come almost all of the

way up the sides of the oxtails. Slide pan into a 300 degree oven and cook slow and low for 2 ½ to 3 hours, until the meat is completely tender but still holds onto the bones. In a food mill, mill all of the vegetable chunks into the sauce. When ready to serve, heat the oxtails with some of the sauce in a hot oven, basting and glazing the meat with the sauce until the meat is hot and the sauce is reduced to a shiny glaze. Serve on top of saffron risotto.

**SAFFRON RISOTTO**

1 onion, diced  
8 T butter  
2 cups arborio rice  
2 large pinches saffron  
½ cup white wine  
1 quart chicken or beef stock  
2 T additional butter  
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

In a medium pot, sweat onion until soft with the butter. Add the saffron and rice, toasting the rice, stirring occasionally, about 2 minutes. Add the wine and cook until reduced. Season the rice with salt. When wine is completely reduced, add in two ladles of stock. Cook, stirring occasionally, until stock is absorbed. Continue to add in stock, a ladle-full at a time, as it is absorbed by the rice. When rice is al dente, add one more ladle of stock and cook for 2-5 more minutes. When liquid is almost absorbed, add in a spoonful of butter and a handful of Parmesan cheese, stirring rapidly until the rice is glistening and velvety. Spoon rice onto a platter, make a well in the center, and place braised oxtail with some of its juices, on top.

**CHEESE AND QUINCE JAM**

A variety of nice cheese at room temperature will bring the meal to a close. Joe Saenz, our cheese monger, suggests something like these: La Tur, a pasteurized goat, cow, and sheep

blend from Alta Langa, Italy. Spring Brook Tarentaise, an Alpine-style raw cow's milk cheese from Spring Brook Farm, VT. And Bayley Hazen Blue, a raw cow's milk cheese from Jasper Hill Farms, VT. Serve with quince jam.

**QUINCE JAM**

9 quince, peeled and cored  
2 cups sugar

Spread sugar in a thin layer over the bottom of a roasting pan. Nestle in quince, cut-side-down. Cover pan tightly with aluminum foil. Roast quince in a 250 degree oven for four hours. Quince should turn a bright orange-pink color and collapse into gelled jam. You should stir the mixture once it's out of the oven, pack into a container, and let cool.

**WINE-POACHED PEARS WITH ROSEMARY AND YOGURT CREAM**

6 ripe but firm pears, peeled  
4 cups red or white wine  
1 cup water  
2 cups sugar  
1 branch rosemary  
½ vanilla bean  
1 cup creme fraiche  
1 cup yogurt

In a medium saucepan, heat wine, water, sugar, rosemary, vanilla bean, and a pinch of salt until simmer. Add the peeled pears and simmer over low heat until pears are just soft enough to pierce, about 15 minutes. Remove pot from the stove and let cool, with pears in it. Whisk together creme fraiche, yogurt, and a tablespoon of sugar. When ready to serve, let pears come to room temperature and serve one to a plate, with a drizzle of the yogurt creme.

**MENU FOR NICK PERKINS**

**PORK RILLON WITH APPLE-PEAR BUTTER**

**First make the butter:**

½ a case of apples or pears  
(about 40), a mix of both is best  
2 cups sugar  
1 cinnamon stick  
½ vanilla bean, scraped  
1 lemon, juiced

Making this butter takes a lot of patience and a whole lot of fruit. It reduces like you can't imagine so start with as many apples as you are willing to peel, it's worth it. Peel and core all of the fruit. Slice into large pieces, add the other ingredients, and pile into a large, deep pan. Cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil. In a 350 oven, roast pans for an hour. Stir fruit, then roast an hour more, covered. Remove foil from pan, stir mixture. It should have collapsed into a soft mush. You can stop now and have applesauce, or keep going. Lower oven to 300 degrees. You'll have to stir often, about every 15 minutes, for the next 2 hours. The mixture will continue to reduce and start to brown. Keep going. It will get to a point where it starts sticking to the sides and the bottom of the pan. Stir more often. The stuff stuck to the sides will probably begin to burn; be careful not to mixture the burnt into the butter when you are scraping down the sides of the pan. When the mixture is a very dark brown, sticky, and bubbling, stop. Let cool and transfer to a container. It should be very thick and almost tacky, like a caramel.

**To make the Rillon:**

4 pounds fatty pork belly,  
cut into 2 inch cubes  
2 T salt  
1 T pepper  
1 bottle red wine  
3 bay leaves  
2 chiles de arbol, crushed  
4 garlic cloves

Preheat oven to 300. Toss pork with salt and pepper. Let sit in refrigerator overnight. The next day, preheat oven to 300. Toss pork chunks with garlic, bay leaves, chiles, and red wine and place in a large roasting pan. Roast pork, stirring every 15 minutes, for an hour. The pork chunks should cook slowly, release their fat, and continue to cook and caramelize in the reducing wine. When the chunks are golden and the wine is reduced to a glaze, about 2 to 3 hours, remove pan from the oven and cool slightly. Serve two pieces of warm rillon per person, on a small spread of apple-pear butter.

**BAGNA CAUDA**

¾ cup olive oil  
3 T butter (can be omitted)  
2 garlic cloves  
1 t capers, rinsed  
12 anchovy fillets  
3 T parsley, finely chopped  
radish, radicchio leaves,  
escarole hearts, celery,  
cauliflower

In a small saucepan, warm olive oil and butter over low heat. Smash garlic cloves and capers and mash to a paste with 1 teaspoon salt. Rinse, de-bone, and finely chopped the anchovy fillets. Stir garlic and anchovy into the warm oil, stirring well and mashing up to fully incorporate. Let pot sit over a pilot light, or very low heat, until flavors permeate oil, about 5 minutes. Stir in parsley and serve bagna cauda with a platter of halved radishes, radicchio leaves, escarole hearts, sliced celery, and pieces of cauliflower, to dip.

**FISH STEW**

2 cups aioli  
½ t cayenne  
½ t smoked paprika  
1 large pinch saffron  
1 fennel bulb, bulb chopped,  
fronds reserved

1 leek, thinly sliced and rinsed  
1 shallot, thinly sliced  
1 orange  
1 bunch thyme  
1 large pinch of saffron  
2 T tomato paste  
1 cup white wine  
1 large potato, peeled and cubed  
8 cups fish stock  
2 # halibut fillets, cleaned,  
trimmed, and cut into large chunks  
1 # shrimp  
½ # each scallops and mussels

First make the rouille: Whisk the aioli with the cayenne, paprika, saffron. Set aside.

Then, the fish stew. In a large pot over medium heat, sweat fennel, leek, and shallot in olive oil. Season well with salt and pepper. Tie together a bouquet garni of strips of orange rind, a bunch of thyme, and the fennel fronds. Add to the pot with saffron and tomato paste, stirring to incorporate; let bloom in the oil for one minute. Add white wine and potato. Bring to a boil and add the fish stock. Bring back to a boil, then reduce to a simmer, and simmer away for 15 minutes. Add all of the fish and simmer for 5 more minutes. Season to taste and serve with lots of crusty bread and the rouille, on the side.

**PUNTARELLE SALAD WITH LEMON AND ANCHOVY**

Puntarelle is a stalky Italian weed that looks like dandelion leaves sprouting from a fennel bulb. It can be extremely bitter but once soaked in ice water, it curls, crisps, and turns mild and sweet. Tossed with a lemony vinaigrette, it's as crunchy and addictive as potato chips.

2 heads of puntarelle  
2 lemons  
10 anchovy fillets  
2 garlic cloves  
1 T salt  
2 cups olive oil

## MENU FOR PATRICIA CURTAN

First prepare the puntarelle. Chop off any dark green leaves. The puntarelle ribs can be snapped off of the stalk like ribs on a celery plant. Snap one off at a time to work with. Cut off the tough bottoms and split the rib down the middle lengthwise. Cut the rib into knife size lengths, and then slice lengthwise into thin julienned strips, as long and as thin as possible. The tips that look like asparagus tips are also good to eat, slice them thinly as well. Place cleaned puntarelle in a large bowl with lots of ice water. Stir and let sit for at least an hour, if not two, until the ribbons tighten, curl, and lose their bitterness. Remove the puntarelle from the ice bath and dry completely.

Meanwhile, pound anchovy, garlic, and salt to a paste in a mortar and pestle. Whisk paste into the oil to combine. To dress the salad, toss the puntarelle with some of the garlic, anchovy oil, and lots of lemon. Season well with salt. It should be tart, fishy, and wildly refreshing.

### CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT TORTE

- 1 2/3 cups hazelnuts
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 5 large eggs, separated
- 3 oz. dark chocolate

Preheat oven to 375. Toast the nuts until golden brown, then cool. Grind the nuts with the sugar in a food processor until they are ground into a coarse meal. Combine the meal with the egg yolks and whisk together. Beat the egg whites until they form stiff peaks and carefully fold into the nut-yolk mixture. Add a pinch of salt. Pour into a greased 10-inch cake pan. Bake for about 30 minutes until the cake releases from the sides of the pan and the center is firm. Remove pan from the oven and let cool for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, melt the chocolate over a double boiler and then drizzle all over the torte. Serve.

### SEARED CALF'S BRAINS, BROWN BUTTER, CAPERS

- 1 calf's brain, cleaned of any extraneous membrane and rinsed in cold water
- 3 cups flour
- olive oil
- 8 T butter
- 3 T capers
- 1 bunch parsley, leaves plucked halved lemons

Cut the calf's brain into 2 inch chunks. Dredge lightly in flour, then sear in a hot pan with a little olive oil, in batches. Once one side is golden, flip and let sear on the other, seasoning with salt in between. One both sides have a nice crust, drain off the oil in the pan and add a large hunk of butter. Let the butter turn golden and nutty; once it starts to brown quickly toss in some of the capers and parsley leaves and deglaze the pan with a squeeze of lemon. Transfer the brains to a shallow bowl and continue with the second batch. Serve on top of toasted bread, making sure to get some of the pan drippings, capers, and parsley, along with pieces of brain on each toast.

### ORANGE, ENDIVE, AND OLIVE SALAD

- 4 oranges
- 2 heads of endive
- 1 cup Kalamata olives, pitted
- 1 small red onion
- lemon halves
- olive oil
- salt

Lop the top and bottom off of each orange so they will sit flat on a cutting board. Following the curve of the orange, carefully cut off the peel and the white pith, using a sawing motion, cutting down to the base of the orange.

Turn the orange a bit and continue to cut from top to bottom until all the peel and pith is removed. Use a paring knife, remove any remaining pith. Then, cut the naked oranges horizontally into thin slices. Fan the slices out onto a plate. Cut slivers of red onion and sprinkle over the oranges. Cut the endive into wide wedges and place on top. Anoint salad with the olives. Sprinkle a little lemon over the top of the salad, drizzle lots of good olive oil, and sprinkle with sea salt.

### BRAISED CHICKEN WITH APRICOTS AND TOMATOES

- 1 chicken, cut into pieces, carcass saved
- 2 t ground cumin
- 2 t ground coriander
- 1 T salt
- 2 shallots, sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1/2 cup dried apricots
- 1 can peeled tomatoes, drained and rinsed
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1/2 cup almonds, toasted

Sprinkle chicken pieces with cumin, coriander, and salt, and rub each piece well. In large pot, brown the chicken pieces, carcass included, in olive oil, until the skin is crispy and golden. Remove chicken pieces from the pot and set aside. Add the shallot, garlic, and cinnamon stick to the oil and sauté until soft and beginning to turn golden. Add the apricots, chicken stock, and tomatoes, breaking up the tomatoes into pieces with your hands. Bring the liquid to a boil and nestle the pieces of chicken, including the carcass, into the liquid, adding any residual juices from the plate. Simmer the stew over low heat for 30 minutes. Let cool for 30 minutes on the stove top, taste and season, then transfer pot to the refrigerator and let chill overnight. The next day, the stew will have completely

congealed and the flavors will have melded. Over low heat, warm the stew slowly. Discard the chicken carcass. You can now pull the meat from the bones, shredding it and reincorporating it into the stew, or leave pieces intact. Serve the chicken in its sauce over warm couscous and sprinkle with chopped almonds.

### COUSCOUS

Couscous is rough granules of durum semolina. The traditional variety requires a special steaming pot called a couscoussiére to prepare but almost all the couscous sold in the US is the instant variety and can be made in a regular pot.

- 1 # couscous
- 1 cardamom pod
- 3 cups water
- 2 t salt
- 2 T olive oil

Bring water, salt, oil, and cardamom pod to a boil. Whisk in couscous. Cut off the heat and cover the pot. Let sit five minutes. Fluff really well with a fork, before serving.

### GROUND CHERRY CLAFOUTI

- 4 T butter, plus more to grease a 10 inch baking dish
- 2 T honey
- 1/4 vanilla bean, scraped
- 1/4 t ground cinnamon
- 1/2 # ground cherries
- 6 large eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 vanilla bean, scraped
- 1 cup milk
- 2/3 cup flour
- pinch of salt

Preheat oven to 400. Warm honey, vanilla bean, and cinnamon in a small saucepan. Melt butter in a small saucepan and set aside. Grease the

pan with butter and sprinkle a small handful of flour over it to cover, tapping out excess. Toss the ground cherries in the honey mixture, then arrange in the baking dish. Combine eggs, sugar, and vanilla in a bowl and beat with an electric mixer until frothy. Slowly add in the milk, flour, salt, and melted butter and mix until fully incorporated. Pour the batter over the ground cherries and bake until golden brown and firm to the touch, about 30 minutes.

## MENU FOR HARLEY SPILLER

### TEA EGG WITH SHRIMP

- 1 dozen eggs
- 6 bags lapsang souchong black tea
- 1 star anise
- 30 small shrimp, peeled
- 2 T butter
- 1 T soy sauce
- 1 package tiny dried shrimp
- 1 bunch cilantro

First make the eggs. Bring a medium pot to a boil. Put eggs in a bowl, then use the bowl to slide the eggs into the boiling water. Bring the water back to a boil and cook eggs for 7 1/2 minutes. Remove eggs from the boiling water and submerge in an ice bath. Let sit in the ice bath for 5 minutes. While eggs are cooling, heat six cups of water for tea. Let boil, then steep lapsang souchong, or any other strong smoky black tea, and the star anise, in the water. Let cool. Remove the eggs from the ice bath. Tap the eggs on all sides against a hard surface to crack, but do not peel. Submerge the eggs in the tea and let refrigerate, overnight. When you peel the eggs, they should be beautifully dyed along the crack-lines, from the tea.

When you are ready to make the dish, first cook the shrimp. In a saute pan, heat butter over medium-high heat. Toss in the shrimp, stirring and shaking pan to coat shrimp with the butter. Add in soy sauce and season with more

salt. Cook shrimp for just one minute, then remove from the heat. To prepare the plate, cut one egg in half, then top each half with a warm shrimp and a little dribble of its sauce. Sprinkle the dried shrimp on top of each egg, for added salt and crunch. Then drape sprigs of cilantro over the eggs.

### CRAB CUSTARD

- 3 cups water
- 1/4 cup porcini mushrooms
- 1 5-inch piece dried kombu
- 6 eggs
- 1/4 cup cream
- 2 t soy sauce
- 2 t sherry
- 1 t salt
- pinch of sugar
- 1/2 # lump crab meat, picked through
- 8 little ramekins

First make the stock. Bring the water to a simmer with the porcini and kombu. If you have cooked and cleaned the crabs yourself, add the crab carapaces to the stock as well. Let simmer for 5 minutes, then turn heat off and let ingredients steep for 10-15 minutes. Strain liquid through a fine-mesh strainer lined with cheesecloth. Set aside to cool.

Preheat oven to 350. Then make the custard. Whisk the eggs together with 1 1/2 cups of cooled, reserved stock. Whisk in all other ingredients and fold in the crab meat. Divide the custard between 8 ramekins, making sure to distribute the hunks of crab evenly. Place ramekins in a large pan, lined with a kitchen towel, so the cups do not slip around. Carefully pour hot water into the pan so it comes 1/2 of the way up the side of the ramekins. Cover the whole pan tightly with aluminum foil. Bake custards until just barely set. The center will still wobble slightly, about 20 minutes. Remove the pan from the oven, remove the aluminum foil, and the ramekins from the water. Serve immediately.

## ROAST DUCK WITH HONEY, TANGERINE, AND STAR ANISE

- 1/2 cup honey
- 4 tangerines, juiced
- 3 star anise
- 2 ducks

Combine honey, tangerine juice, and star anise in a small sauce pot. Bring to a boil, then simmer over medium-heat, until mixture is reduced to a thin glaze, about ten minutes. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. To prepare the ducks, prick skin all over ducks with a fork. Slash and score ducks with a sharp knife, being careful not to cut into the flesh underneath the fat layer. Place ducks in a clean sink and bring a tea-kettle of water to a boil. Pour boiling water over both sides of the ducks. This will noticeably tighten the duck skin and help release some of the fat, when roasting. Dry the ducks, inside and out with a kitchen towel, then season liberally with salt and pepper. Truss the legs together with kitchen twine, then place breast-side-up on a perforated roasting pan. Roast ducks in the oven for 1 hour. Twice during this time, remove the ducks from the oven and prick skin all over to help release rendering fat. After the hour, remove ducks and flip breast-side down, then continue to roast for 1/2 an hour more, pricking the skin occasionally. After the 1/2 hour, remove ducks and flip again, so the breast-side is up. Roast for 15 more minutes, pricking skin occasionally. After the 15 minutes, remove ducks from the oven and brush on the reserved glaze. Return ducks to the oven to roast for 10 more minutes, watching carefully so the glaze doesn't get too brown or burn. Brush on one more layer of glaze. Then let duck rest, outside of the oven, for 10 minutes before carving.

## CABBAGE WITH CHILE

- 1 head Savoy cabbage,  
thinly sliced
- 2 T vegetable oil

- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 dried red chiles  
thinly sliced
- 1 small knob ginger,  
thinly sliced
- 2 t salt
- 2 t soy sauce

Heat a large sauté pan, or wok, if you have one, over medium-high heat. Add the oil to the pan and swirl it around to coat. When the oil is almost smoking, add in the garlic and let cook for just a couple of seconds. When it begins turn golden, add the ginger to the pan, and the dried chiles, crushing them with your fingers, tossing to coat in the hot oil. Over high heat, add the cabbage, tossing and stirring aggressively, to cook. Add the salt and continue to cook for just a couple of minutes. Add in the soy sauce, toss one more time to coat, and serve. The cabbage should be hot and wilted with just a bit of crunch.

## WARM CHESTNUTS, ORANGES

Serve a platter of warm chestnuts, scored with a heavy knife then roasted for 30-45 minutes in a 350 degree oven, for guests to peel themselves. Add oranges, cut from the rind and sliced. Dates would be nice, too.

## MENU FOR DENNIS SPINA

### TOMATOES IN ARMAGNAC

- 2 # ripe tomatoes  
Armagnac  
good olive oil  
sea salt  
pepper

Slice tomatoes into wedges and slices and fan out on a plate. Drizzle Armagnac over tomatoes, then olive oil. Season well with sea salt and black pepper. Serve.

## FIG AND WALNUT TOAST

- 7 anchovy fillets, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cup walnuts, toasted
- 1 t lemon zest  
the juice of one lemon
- 1 1/2 cup dried figs, chopped
- 1 t sage, minced
- 1 t rosemary, minced

Pulse all ingredients to a paste in a food processor. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and black pepper. Spread on warm toast.

## AIOLI WITH LEEKS, CARROTS, AND ONIONS

### For aioli:

- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 T salt
- 2 T lemon juice
- 5 egg yolks
- 1 T dijon mustard
- 4 cups mild olive oil

### For pickled leeks:

- 4 leeks  
water
- 2 1/2 cups white distilled vinegar  
sugar  
salt

### For roasted carrots:

- 20 smallish carrots, trimmed  
olive oil  
salt  
pinch of sugar
- 2 t ground cumin

### For frizzled onions:

- 4 smallish white onions
- 2 cups flour
- 2 cups beer  
salt and pepper  
oil for frying

First make the aioli. In a mortar and pestle, smash garlic cloves with salt to a paste. Smash in the egg yolks. Add lemon juice and mustard, stirring well to combine. Slowly drip in the olive oil, 1 tablespoon at a time, stirring aggressively. Once the aioli starts to come together, you can drizzle in the oil more quickly.

Then pickle the leeks. Carefully trim the root end of the leeks, cutting away any long roots but leaving the base intact. Trim the green tops from the leek. Cut leek vertically in half and then each half into three pieces. You should have six intact batons, approximately five inches each in length. Bring 4 cups of water, and 2 1/2 cup white distilled vinegar, a handful of sugar, and a handful of salt to a boil. Submerge leeks in pickling liquid and simmer for 3 minutes. Remove leeks from the pickling liquid and set aside.

Then roast carrots: Toss carrots with olive oil, salt, pepper, cumin, and a pinch of sugar. Roast on a sheet tray in a hot oven until just soft and starting to caramelize. Remove and set aside.

Then fry the onions: Cut onions into half horizontally, leaving root end intact. Then cut each half into six wedges, cutting through the root end so the wedges remain intact. Soak onion wedges in ice water for 30 minutes. Remove from the water and let dry. Get oil heating up to fry. Whisk together flour with beer and season well with salt and pepper. Dip onion pieces in the batter, letting excess fall away, then slip into the hot oil. Fry in batches until the onions are dark golden on both sides. Remove from oil, drain, and toss in a bowl, sprinkling lightly with salt.

When all components are ready, place a large dollop of aioli on the plate and pile up the pickled leeks, frizzled onions, and roasted carrots in a loose pile, to dip. Drizzle the whole plate with good olive oil, sprinkle with lemon and sea salt.

## GARBURE

Garbure is a stew of cabbage and pork so thick it can be eaten with a fork. A French peasant dish, that is enlivened with a shot of red wine, poured into the remaining soup, at the end of the meal.

- 1/4 # bacon, cut into lardons
- 4 confit duck legs
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 leeks, sliced and cleaned
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 large potatoes, peeled  
and diced
- 1 large turnip, diced
- 2 cups dried broad beans,  
soaked in water overnight
- 1 small head cabbage,  
sliced thinly
- 1/2 cup chestnuts,  
cooked and peeled
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1 bunch thyme
- 2 sprigs sage
- 2 sprigs rosemary  
red wine

In a large pot over medium heat, cook the bacon lardons until golden and crispy. Add the duck legs, melting off any fat, and warming legs. Remove legs and pull the meat from the bones. Set meat aside. Add onion, leeks, carrot, celery, garlic, and bouquet of herbs to the pot and sweat in oil, until translucent, about 10 minutes. Season with salt. Add potatoes, turnip, cabbage, and beans to the pot, and the stock. Bring soup to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Simmer soup until beans are tender, about an hour. Add the pulled duck meat and chestnuts to the pot, cook until warmed through. Taste and adjust seasoning, if needed.

Serve the soup. When diners have just a cup or so of their soup left in their bowls, instruct them to pour in 1/2 a glass their of red wine to the bowl, and sip the "chabrot" from the bowl.

## WALNUT PEAR CAKE

- 8 oz butter, divided
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 t salt
- 5 medium Bosc pears,  
ripe but slightly firm
- 1 cup AP flour
- 1/2 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 5 oz walnuts, toasted and  
finely ground to a coarse flour
- 1 1/2 t baking powder
- 1/2 t baking soda
- 1 t cinnamon
- 2 eggs
- 1 t vanilla

Preheat oven to 350 degrees, grease, dust lightly with flour and line the bottom of a 9" spring-form pan with parchment paper. Peel, half and core pears.

Melt half the butter with the brown sugar and salt in a medium saute pan. Add the pears in single layer to the pan. Cook, turning occasionally, over medium heat until pears are caramelized and tender, about 15 minutes. Meanwhile make the cake batter. Whisk together the flours and walnuts with baking powder, baking soda and cinnamon. Beat the butter together with the sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, then the vanilla. Slowly beat in the dry ingredients until just combined, scraping down the sides of the bowl.

Remove pears from sauté pan and arrange cut sides down in the spring form pan. Pour any caramel left in pan over top of the pears. Drop batter over pears and spread to an even layer. Place on middle rack in oven and bake until tester in center comes out clean, about an hour. Cool 1 hour before removing spring form ring and inverting onto a serving plate.





ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXANDRA CITRIN

## *Eulogy for Joe Dressner*

It's true that I can't remember the first time I met Joe. We live with this narrative idea about life, that it begins and that it ends. But this thread doesn't do justice to the way we know people, the way we respect and appreciate, the way we live with each other. My friendship with Joe Dressner feels, in that way, timeless. I remember seven years ago he came to Diner for lunch with a salesman. They ate at the bar and I tasted wine with them. They were not super interested in selling, which I felt was a relief, equally for them as for me. We talked a bit about Mondovino, a movie that had recently come out. An interview with another importer had been filmed inside the Diner. Joe told me all the growers he worked with liked the movie. That first visit was full of quick banter. Later, in France, he introduced me as the star of Mondovino.

The first time I accompanied Joe to France it felt, rather oddly, as though I'd come home. Perhaps it was jetlag or half-drunkenness, but I felt secure in his presence. He immediately felt like family to me. Joe was speaking French, but he was doing it with a cadence that was specific to him. As an English speaker I could almost understand everything he said just by his gestures. His character, his language, his spirit seemed boundless, tremendous.

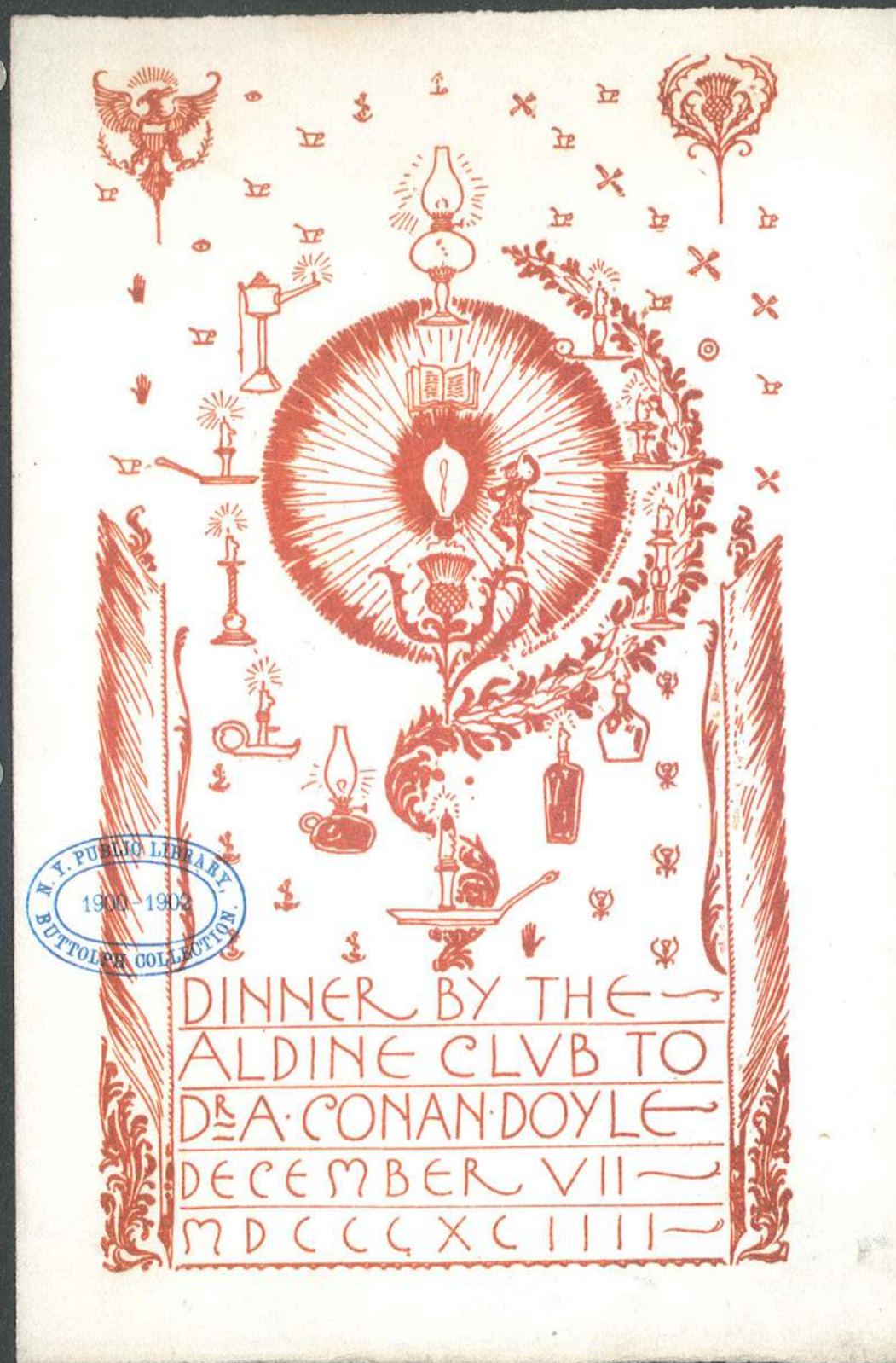
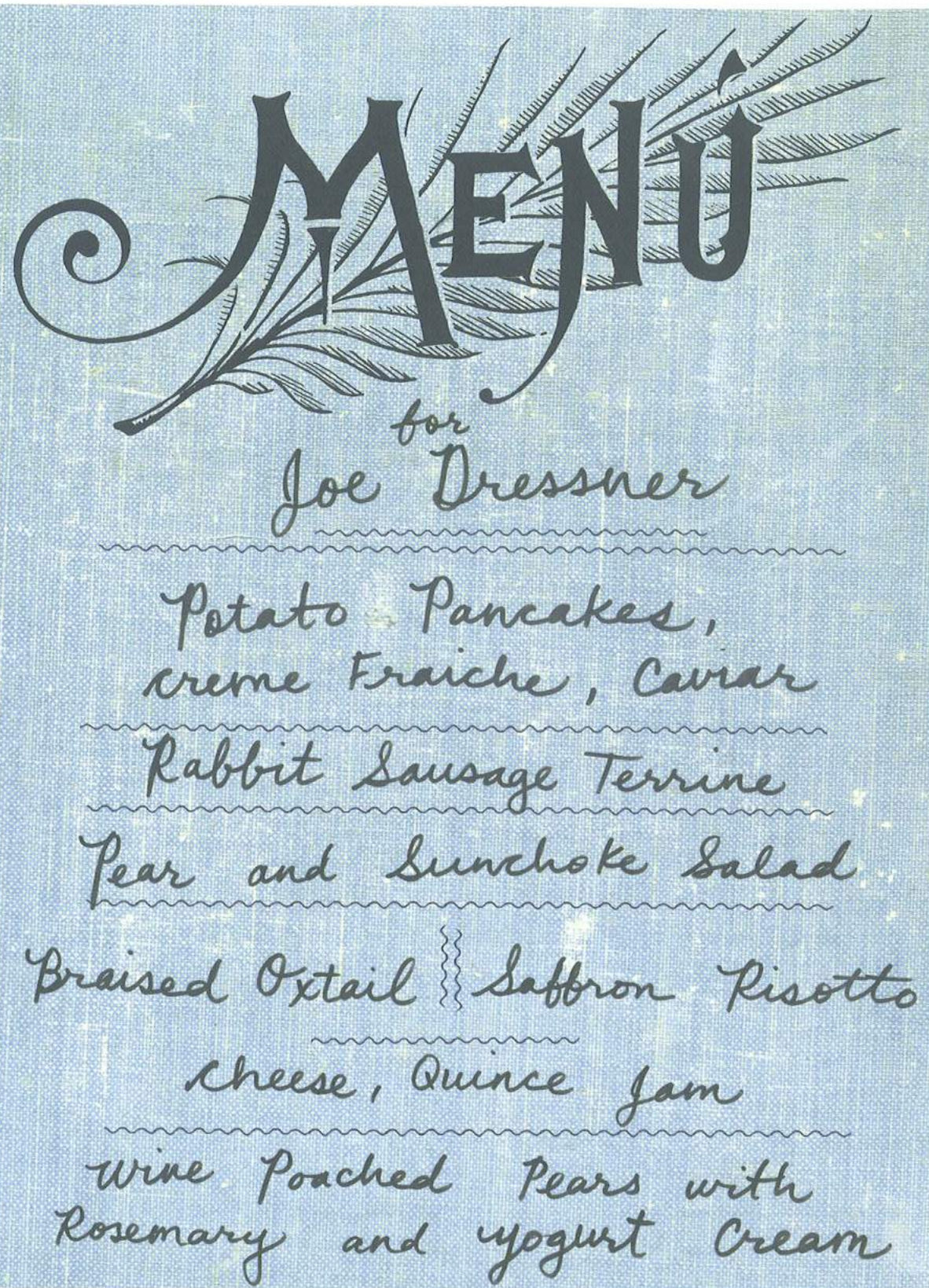
Joe surrounded himself with the most original, charming and mischievous characters to ever grace a vineyard row. They are farmers who work the fields and are committed to leaving the land and the planet in equal, if not better, condition than they found it. These vigneron counted on him to represent them, sell their wine and pay them for the bottles. Joe became the natural if somewhat reluctant leader of this community. He was able to bring people together, vigneron and otherwise, all more or less like minded, to try do something ethical, something authentic. Wine just happened to be the vehicle for these values.

I have never known anyone who passed away that has lingered in my thoughts the way he has. I spend many of my interactions with people wondering how Joe would do it, or what Joe would say. The odd thing is he mostly never did things the conventional way. Brash and super opinionated, generally pretty right, intensely funny and biting, super sharp and fast. The intensity he took to the world sometimes made me feel like I was talking to someone who was smarter than the rest of us... He was a radical communist in college. For the people, with the people, but maybe smarter than people. Movement, not a movement.

It's been a couple of months since Joe died now and I can't stop thinking about him. I asked my wife and she talked about how perhaps our minds cannot truly comprehend the notion of death, that our minds struggle to understand the loss of another human being. I feel lucky to have spent time with Joe. To sit at a table with him, and share in his jokes, to be on the inside of his jokes. To spend some time inside the life Joe created.

I want to say, Joe, goodbye and thank you for bringing this community together, for caring so much and holding on to your ideals, and not being quiet or polite about it, for trying to make something better and totally being a personality about it. Such important lessons.

-Andrew Tarlow



Menus, as documents, condense information and impart immediacy. The word menu derives from the Latin minutus, literally "made smaller." A menu distills the meal and the experience, their essence communicated in the choice of materials, words, and design. Historical menus make a time and place tangible, unfolding from a seemingly simple and almost disposable document. Some have a distinct sense of humor. Others are barely legible and imply a particular relationship between the restaurant and its patrons. Many feel like grocery lists, blunt and non-descript, while some have dense and extensive text.

The New York Public Library menu archive feels labyrinthine and curiously personal, even in digital form. Some menus bear hand-written annotations, stains and tears. The bulk of them have been stamped, by hand, with a blue Buttolph Collection stamp. The collection began in the early 20th century when librarian Miss Frank E. Buttolph collaborated with the library to expand her own collection of menus. During her twenty-five odd years of collecting and archiving, Miss Buttolph amounted close to 25,000 menus. The collection continues to expand and its current curator, Rebecca Federman, intends to focus on New York-specific menus moving forward.

We looked through thousands of menus from the New York Public Library Menu Collection and were inspired by their historical and visual details while designing this issue of Diner Journal. We would like to thank Rebecca Federman for her assistance and her willingness to share her knowledge and to express our appreciation for the archive as a rich and growing resource. -FF

