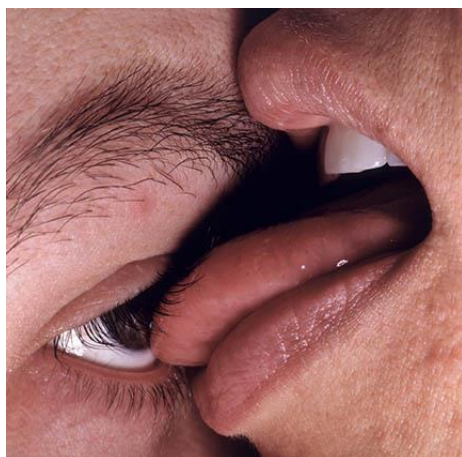


PRESS
INFO

February 2020



Press conference:

Tuesday, 18 February 2020 | 10:30 am

Opening:

Tuesday, 18 February 2020 | 6:30 pm

Press images:

tinguely.ch/en/presse-download

Amuse-bouche. The Taste of Art
19 February – 17 May 2020

Does art taste sweet, sour, bitter, salty or even umami? What role does our sense of taste play as an artistic material and in our social interactions? Museum Tinguely continues its series on the human senses in the arts that began with *Belle Haleine* (2015) and *Prière de toucher* (2016). The group exhibition «Amuse-bouche. The Taste of Art» (19 February–17 May 2020) presents artworks by some forty-five international artists from the Baroque period to the present, all of which explore our sense of taste as a dimension of aesthetic perception. Breaking with the usual museum practice of appealing primarily to the sense of sight, the show offers a range of art-historical and phenomenological encounters with our sense of taste. Several of the works can be experienced in a participatory way and even sampled as part of our special tours, workshops and performances.

About taste: from sickly sweet to the bitter end

In traditional accounts of the senses, taste is predicated on direct physical contact. We perceive the world around us in all its diversity through the physical sensation of taste in the mouth and on the tongue. The concept and itinerary of the exhibition *Amuse-bouche. The Taste of Art* focuses on those basic tastes we can perceive with our sensory apparatus: sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami – a term coined in 1908 by the Japanese chemist Kikunae Ikeda that is commonly translated into English as 'savoury'. The exhibition at Museum Tinguely poses a number of questions concerning various aspects of our gustatory experience: How do we perceive art made of edible materials and their specific nuances of taste? What happens when our mouth and tongue suddenly take centre stage in the art experience? Can artworks address the sense of taste even when the viewer has no direct physical contact with them? Can gustatory experiences be described and translated into pictures? Can flavour serve as a medium of artistic expression and creativity?

The show includes allegorical depictions of the sense of taste by Baroque masters, works by avant-garde artists of the early 20th century and exhibits from the 1960s and '70s. The main focus is on a representative selection of paintings, photographs, sculptures, video works and installations from the past thirty years, all of which address the ingestion and tasting of food in a variety of ways. In these works, the artists use foodstuffs and natural materials to lend flavours different forms. Visitors therefore get to sample the edible plants in the *Hortus Deliciarum*, an installation- and performance-based project by the Portuguese artist Marisa Benjamim, as well as the vegetal essences of *Tastescape*, a project by the Swiss artist Claudia Vogel. *Goosebump*, a monumental participatory work made of gingerbread

cookies by the Australian artist Elizabeth Willing, can also be tasted. Meanwhile, sauerkraut juice, here labelled *Brine and Punishment*, features in a large-scale installation by Slavs and Tatars, a Berlin-based artists' collective. This sharp-tasting 'power drink' provides a sensory experience that forms part of the artists' philosophical engagement with the multiple meanings and interpretations of fermentation and the process of 'going sour'. Current sociopolitical issues are also addressed in the various works that deal with the 'taste of nature' or the 'taste of foreignness'. Art works and performance concepts like *Contained Measures of a Kolanut* by Otobong Nkanga (to see on 18 February 2020) open up a world of unknown, forgotten, new or naturalized flavours, which are often intricately bound up with personal and cultural identities as well as gustatory preferences. The Berlin-based Nigerian artist Emeka Ogboh is also interested in explosive sociopolitical subjects relating to the taste of foreignness, as in the new Basel edition of his on-going project *Sufferhead Original*, in which he asks the question: 'Who's afraid of black?'

From pleasure to disgust

The works and artistic concepts shown evoke a whole spectrum of emotions from pleasure to disgust. Taste is used as a metaphor in many of German's idiomatic expressions, such as *Honig ums Maul schmieren* (lit. 'to smear honey around someone's mouth', i.e. 'to butter someone up') and *bitterer Ernst* (lit. 'bitter earnest' in the sense of 'deadly serious'). Still more layers of meaning are opened up in the course of the exhibition, as when flavours – in the broadest sense of the term – are used as a medium of artistic expression and creativity.

Some of the works in the show are nevertheless 'without taste' and liable to trick our sensory perceptions. Any one flavour can be sweet as sugar and very much to our taste or it may repulse us, prompting nausea and revulsion. In common parlance, 'taste' covers a wide range of coded meanings. There are interesting links between our sensory perception of certain nuances of taste and the linguistic metaphors that also play a role in our experience of art. In art, gustatory *stimuli* are often deployed in subversive, taboo-breaking ways to engage with the major issues of the day. In both subjective and cultural terms, tastes may evoke very different emotions, memories and associations that are also subject to change over time.

In the 'sweet' section of the exhibition, visitors encounter both subtle and radical changes in taste just as they do in real life. Since these are experienced differently from individual to individual, even works made of pure sugar can be rated as anything from 'pleasantly sweet' to unpleasantly 'bitter-sweet'. One good example of this are the minimalist pieces by the Yugoslavian conceptual artist Mladen Stilinović, who uses sugar as an artistic medium. Whereas at first, visitors experience a seductive sweetness, this actually turns out to be way off the mark. For the artist who realised these works in the early 1990s during the war in Croatia, the white monochrome symbolises emptiness, loss and pain. The 'bitter' section, by contrast, assembles exhibits that turn on the theme of disgust and the natural process of decay and decomposition, many of them through their use of perishable materials. The bitterness and toxins in this section are clearly pointers to death.

Gustatory Illusions

Touring the exhibition we also encounter 'gustatory illusions'. Our sense of taste's capacity for deception fascinated even many of the avant-garde artists of the early 20th century, among them the Italian Futurists and the Surrealists. «Amuse-bouche» therefore dedicates a whole section to Daniel Spoerri, the founder of Eat Art in the early 1960s, who engages with the tricks and deceptions of our sense of taste. Thus he deliberately tracks down the arcane, the inverted and the abnormal in order to play with our familiar view of things and cast doubt on long-held assumptions. Here, the palate is played off against the eye. His latest experiment, *Nur Geschmack anstatt Essen* (Tasting, Not Eating) is a four-course meal composed of identically coloured cubes of aspic, whose principal aim is to confuse the visitors. (Visitors can experience the menu on 27.3. | 28.3. | 25.4. | 25.4. | 26.4. | 16.5. | 17.5.2020).

Multi-sensory, action-based art since the 1960s

Many artists since the 1960s have worked with their own bodies and the possibilities of multi-sensory, gustatory, action-based art. The past three decades have seen considerable interest in crossovers and multi-media extensions of experiments with the experience of taste. Last, but not least, some of the works in the show foreground questions raised by our multi-cultural society, including the search for new diets and the great discrepancy between naturalness and artificiality, showing that in the 21st century a heightened taste-based awareness of the environment and its fragile resources is more relevant than ever.

The exhibition *Amuse-bouche. The Taste of Art* will be accompanied by a varied programme of events. As well as interactive guided tours, there will be performances, Family Sundays, talks, workshops, tastings and a 'Sausage Special' in Solitude Park with the Michelin-starred Swiss chef Stefan Wiesner.

The show features works by the artists Sonja Alhäuser, Farah Al Qasimi, Janine Antoni, Marisa Benjamim, Joseph Beuys, George Brecht, Pol Bury, Costantino Ciervo, Jan Davidsz. de Heem, Bea de Visser, Marcel Duchamp, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Urs Fischer, Fischli/Weiss, Karl Gerstner, Damien Hirst, Roelof Louw, Sarah Lucas, Opavivará!, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Cildo Meireles, Alexandra Meyer, Antonio Miralda-Dorothee Selz, Nicolas Momein, Anca Munteanu Rimnic, Otobong Nkanga, Emeka Ogbah, Dennis Oppenheim, Meret Oppenheim, Tobias Rehberger, Torbjørn Rødland, Dieter Roth, Roman Signer, Cindy Sherman, Shimabuku, Slavs and Tatars, Daniel Spoerri, Mladen Stilinović, Sam Taylor-Johnson, André Thomkins, Jorinde Voigt, Claudia Vogel, Andy Warhol, Tom Wesselmann, Elizabeth Willing, Erwin Wurm, Rémy Zaugg.

Curator of the exhibition: Annja Müller-Alsbach

Publication

As a tie-in with the exhibition, Hatje Cantz is publishing a book on the interdisciplinary symposium *Amuse-bouche* that was held at Museum Tinguely (April 2019). This book, to be published in both an English and a German edition, offers readers a fascinating insight into the many areas in which taste impacts on human experience. It contains texts by renowned international historians of art and culture, scientists and social scientists and practitioners, including Antje Baecker, Ralf Beil, Felix Bröcker, Elisabeth Bronfen, Karin Leonhard, Wolfgang Meyerhof, Jeannette Nuessli Guth, Maren Runte, Charles Spence, Paul Stoller. It also contains an interview with the Michelin-starred Swiss chef Stefan Wiesner, a conceptual piece by Daniel Spoerri entitled *Tasting, Not Eating*, a foreword by Roland Wetzels, and an introduction to the exhibition by Annja Müller-Alsbach. ISBN 978-3-7757-4639-7, price at bookstores: EUR 28.

General Information:

Title: Amuse-bouche. The Taste of Art

Address: Museum Tinguely | Paul Sacher-Anlage 1 | 4002 Basel, Switzerland

Duration: 19 February – 17 May 2020

Opening: Tuesday, 18 February 2020, 6:30 pm

Press conference: Tuesday, 18 February 2020, 10:30 am

Opening hours: Tuesday – Sunday, daily 11 am-6 pm

Websites: www.tinguely.ch

Social Media: @museumtinguely | #museumtinguely | #tinguely | #amusebouche |
thetasteofart

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Photo credits: Janine Antoni, *Mortar and Pestle*, 1999

C-print, 121,9 x 121,9 cm © Janine Antoni; Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York

Download: <http://www.tinguely.ch/en/presse/pressematerial/2020.html>

**Interactive guided tours
with taste experiences**

Wednesdays and Saturdays:

2:30 – 3:30 pm

Sundays:

11:30 am – 12:30 pm | 2:30 – 3:30 pm |

4:30 – 5:30 pm

Costs: museum admission

No registration possible,
maximum 15 persons.

**Public guided tour of the
exhibition for the visually
impaired and blind (in German)**

Saturday, 28 March 2020, 2 pm

Costs: free, no booking required.

Sour or bitter?

Melony or cucumberish?

**Sensory Tasting experience
in practice! (in German)**

Workshop with Dr. Jeannette

Nuessli Guth, Food Sensory

Scientist, ETH Zurich

Sunday, 23 February

and Sunday, 5 April 2020,

1:30 – 2:30 pm

Costs: museum admission + 8 CHF

No booking required.

Location:

Roth Bar at Museum Tinguely

Curator's Tour

Tuesday, 3 March 2020, 12:30 pm

Costs: museum admission,
no booking required.

Anca Munteanu Rimnic: Mamaliga

**Live performance with meal with
the artist**

Saturday, 7 March 2020, 12 – 1 pm

Costs: museum admission + 8 CHF

No booking required.

Marisa Benjamim:

Hortus Deliciarum

Live-Performance with the artist

Saturday, 14 March,

Sunday, 15 March,

Saturday, 28 March

and Sunday, 29 March 2020,

at 1:30 – 2:30 pm

Costs: museum admission + 8 CHF

No booking required.

Claudia Vogel: Tastescape

Live performance with the artist

Sunday, 1 March,

Sunday, 22 March,

Sunday, 12 April,

Sunday, 26 April

and Sunday, 17 May

in each case at 1:30 – 2:30 pm

Costs: museum admission

No booking required.

Meret Oppenheim – Spring Festival

A new edition of the Festival of
the Senses first performed in 1959.

The chocolatier Fabian Rimann,
the sensory specialist Patrick Zbinden and the actress
Sibylle Mumenthaler will take you on
a journey into Meret Oppenheim's
melt-in-your-mouth world of
flavours!

Saturday, 21 March 2020, 4 – 5 pm

Costs: museum admission + 8 CHF

No booking required.

Location:

Roth Bar at Museum Tinguely

Family Sunday

We make our own butter and give
it an individual taste and colour.

Sunday, 22 March 2020,

11:30 am – 5 pm

Costs: museum admission

No booking required

Family Sundays are inclusive events.

**Sausage-sorcerer- «Klamauk»
and fire**

Michelin-starred chef Stefan

Wiesner and Feuerring®:

Homage to Jean Tinguely,

performance with culinary

elements, in Solitude Park

outside Museum Tinguely.

Sunday, 19 April 2020,

11 am – 4 pm

No booking required.

Daniel Spoerri:

Just tasting, not eating

A newly developed Eat Art
experiment by Daniel Spoerri.

By consciously altering and
confusing our usual sensory
impressions while eating,
this experiment forces us to
rely solely on our sense
of taste. Experience will show
how many of these flavours
are clearly recognised.

Friday, 27 March,

Saturday, 28 March,

Saturday, 25 April,

Sunday, 26 April

Saturday, 16 May

and Sunday, 17 May 2020

12:30 – approx. 1:30 pm

Costs: museum admission + 8 CHF

No booking required.

Location:

Roth Bar at Museum Tinguely