### Essential Recipes for Serendipity

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## Introduction

The subject of this text defines a field of tension between no design and over-design that enables or triggers an emotional and creative response. Themes that are complicit to this field include incompletion, efficiency, imperfection, minimalism, reduction, structure, humour and panache. It is not an absolute notion.

Edouarde de Pomiane is my central figure whose book *Cooking in 10 Minutes* has sparked a need to define the generous and philosophical essence of his cookery writing that embraces contradictionrubs opposites against each other and creates visceral social experiences within tight constraints. He has designed his meals for a desired effect. He's not trying too hard to impress and is not ostentatious. But he is however, persuasive and performative. Pomiane makes modesty attractive with his recipes that are about focused and intimate togetherness as opposed to aloof foodyism.

Pomiane has initiated for me a comparison between hospitality associated with food and that of architectural practice. As well as highlighting the extent to which structures can be made tangible to audiences, occupants or dining guests of authorial voices within the realm of specialists' fields.

I have included on the menu professionals of various expertise, including Pomiane, Donald Woods Winnicott, Grete Schütte Lihotzky, Marie Kondo and George Perec. They have addressed a topic of their own field, interpreted it through experience and contemplation, and been compelled to relay that interpretation to an audience. I have also included accounts of my own personal experience, utilising techniques from my collection of writers.

The meal that I'm serving is sequential. It combines these characters of different disciplines to try and draw your attention towards a common but elusive flavour. Parts of the meal are not delicious, but are included for the complimentary and emphasising quality of antitheses.

There is hearty guidance from a scientist and cook, a refreshing psychoanalyst's support, lean modernists, some saccharine musical role play, oysters and chipolatas, over-the-top kitchens, intricate observers and somewhat sour self-help writers. I have put them in an order to awaken your appetite.

I haven't gone into detail about a lot of specific buildings but I have thought mainly about architectural conditions - scale, form, lights and darks. There are things that are methodical and rational and there are elements that are human and chaotic, but it is the sweet spot at which these two opposite tastes synchronise that I am interested in.

Throughout this essay I have adopted the colloquial writing and speaking style synonymous with the experts that I've brought together. That includes apostrophes in words like couldn't wouldn't won't can't daren't shan't and shouldn't. Probably to get you, the reader, on my side. I want my dissertation to be imperfect to give myself and you the chance to interpret the dishes I've assembled, leaving space to think and fulfill.



Edouarde de Pomiane's Minimal Hedonism

Edouarde de Pomiane was a French Gastroenterologist of Polish descent who became a celebrated cookery writer in the 1930s. His book of gastronomical prose Cooking in Ten Minutes .or. The Adaption to the Rhythm of our Times provides a list of his renowned admirers in the inside cover, such as Elisabeth David and Raymond Blanc describing who describes him as his hero.¹ I have received his writing as a piece of written philosophy that is not confined purely to the realm of the kitchen. In the following passages, I directly compare Pomiane's writing style to the tropes of an architectural brief. It has initiated a broader comparison between cuisine and architectural practice and the surprising relationships between the two.

"My book is meant for the student, for the midinette, for the clerk, for the artist, for lazy people, poets, men of action, dreamers and scientists, for everyone who has only an hour for lunch or dinner and yet wants half an hour of peace to watch the smoke of a cigarette whilst they sip a cup of coffee which has not even time to get cold."<sup>2</sup>

Modern life spoils so much that is pleasant. Let us see that it does not make us spoil our steak or our omelette.3

Your cooking utensils will occupy a minimum of space as the saucepans will fit one inside the other... The deep frying pan will need a good deal of space...but this is the only bulky object.<sup>4</sup>

The early short chapters of Edouarde de Pomiane's pocket sized, one hundred and one page volume set out a detailed brief. Firstly, he describes his target audience, much in the way that an architect would define the target demographic of a project.

I am an architecture student, sometimes this feels like being an artist, sometimes I want to be a lazy person, a poet and a woman of action. Architecture encapsulates dreamers and scientists and the most common feeling is enjoying what you do, but not having enough time in the day to do it. There are long days and nights in the studio plus two hours of travelling each day. In this sense I am a perfect candidate for Pomiane's book.

Pomiane sets a tone, with a style of writing that expresses his understanding for the intricacies of peoples' lives. He establishes a prose of relatability, drawing in the reader from his opening line.

Next he defines his intention. Pomiane states his aim to resolve an identified problem, in the same way that an architect would deduce a question from the simmering social landscape of a project.

Thirdly he proceeds to define the necessary important skills, essential utensils, advised kitchen organisation along with a recommended structure of menus.

These passages, along with his instruction to 'chat pleasantly' and 'do not dream, for lunchtime is nearly over'5 suggests compact, urban living and small quick moments within a city. Without explicably describing a space, one gets a sense of the close living quarters, typical of Pomiane's home city of Paris and the rushed pace of life.

Indulgent descriptions of sensuous delights sit side by side with usermanual instructions all as part of the same body of cooking methodology, such as the fact that 'a slice of brie with a curl of butter will delight you' is followed with the instruction to then 'pour two cups of boiling water on the coffee which is massed in the filter of the machine.'6

This intertwining of sensory gratification and practical technique, that arguably can be synthesised to a delightful expression of method and strikes a chord with good architectural practice. His writing is precise and methodical, evidencing his scientific background, but notably not strict. He describes exactly what one needs and when one needs it in order to create a relaxed, intimate and potentially unruly social encounter.

Meanwhile he lays a reliable ground work for warm hospitality, within

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 22

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 33

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 45

Functionalism stresses function to the point where, because a function has a specially assigned place within space, the very possibility of multifunctionality is eliminated.<sup>7</sup>

Wash your walls once a week with lukewarm soapy water. Your kitchen will thus be a spotlessly clean laboratory which you will transform, I'm sure, into an artist's studio.8

Like everyone else, I presume, I feel an attraction for zero points. It makes you want to like them too.9

Reduce your trips to the kitchen to a minimum... Have a small table within reach... Put used plates onto this table.<sup>10</sup>

'Fry some chipolata sausages. Serve them very hot with a dozen oysters on a second dish. Alternate sensations. Burn your mouth with a crackling sausage. Sooth your burns with a cool oyster. Continue until all the sausages and oysters have disappeared. White wine, of course.'11

<sup>7</sup> Jonothan Hill, *Actions of Architecture: Architects and Creative Users*, (London:Routledge, 2003) p.14

<sup>8</sup> Pomiane, p.35

<sup>9</sup> George Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, ed. John Sturrock, trans. by John Sturrock, (London:Penguin, 1997) p.150

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p.44

a tight time-frame and organised through preparation and good humour. These are leaves that architects should take from his cookery books, alongside the broader understanding that the emphasis on the practicalities and efficiency of cooking, as a route towards pleasure, are essential to architectural practice.

Efficiency in architecture is of course useful. But in history has been prioritised to a point that it becomes prescriptive. Henri Lefebvre condemns the functionalist architectural movement of the 1920s and 30s which championed functionality as paramount and a quantified understanding of space writing that:

Pomiane errs on the side of functional but rather than purely being efficient for efficiency's sake, he has a more interesting outcome in mind. Equating a 'laboratory' to an 'artist's studio', attests to a coexistence between the attention and focus given to both creativity and functionality.

Pomiane has a presumption to his turn of phrase that assumes a general understanding between human beings. This is something that I've discovered to be synonymous between some of the people I discuss in this text, in particular George Perec who draws you into his exceptionally, particular, inner world but depicts it as relatable to everyone.

Pomiane wants to streamline the process of cooking and hosting for the ultimate importance of social serendipity.

I am intrigued by Pomiane's idea that amenities can be organised in such a way to free up time and space for people to enjoy a more exuberant social life. An exhuberent tension is perhaps analogised most joyfully in his recipe for Oysters and Chipolatas. When telling a friend about this recipe with enthusiasm I was quickly made to feel quite naive. How could I have overlooked the inuendo? which is perhaps another idea of how Pomiane suggests one should spend a lunch break.

Oysters and Chipolatas, although I haven't tasted it, is the best recipe in the book and one that I feel Pomiane has had fun writing. It is both elemental and playful. Three lines long in total but with a sharp rhythmic sentence structure and focussed descriptiveness that is visceral and makes your mouth water. The passage takes you to the moment of eating and enjoyment without distraction. To receive the dish, even as words on paper, you don't have time to think further to the point that you might be unsure whether to find it desirable or repulsive. Before you know it, you've already finished the plate and polished off the wine. Pomiane delivers an unfamiliar and questionable combination of

contrasting foods in the imperative tense and with gusto. He renders them delectable.

Pomiane is a skilled scientist, chef and professional but he understands his priorities and what makes life worth living at a social and emotional level. It is because he understands his field so thoroughly that he can make the shortcuts that enables this joie de vivre.

However prescriptive Pomiane is, he is without doubt charming. In that regard he is generous with his performance and certainly does not presume authority by boring his audience into submission. The contrast between rigidity and humour has an exuberant panache.



Fig 2

D.W. Winnicott the 'Ordinary', 'Devoted' Architect

Hospitality at its best should be joyful, a performative and relaxed event held for the creation of unpredictable social and intimate experience. At its worst it can be imbued with pressure and anxiety and definitely shouldn't be. Following the theories of paediatrician and psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott; it should be 'devoted' and 'ordinary'.<sup>12</sup>

In his book 'The Child, the Family and the Outside World' which sold 50,000 copies when first printed in 1964, Winnicott coined the simple but powerful phrase a 'good enough mother'. While he was not specifically politically engaged, his context, as being part of a loosely bounded movement seeking to find an altruistic basis for political structures, has been argued by some as leading to the creation of the welfare state following the second world war. However, his position on mother baby relationships, that this chapter explores, can be viewed as a model of hospitality and empathy that I will consider through the lens of architectural thought. My comparison lies in the concept of hosting and the extent to which an architect defines the experience of a building, or how it is used.

- A baby is a person from the very start of their life. 15

- It is through the personal and close relationship with a mother who can be love, hated and relied upon – a good enough mother - that a baby can develop into a healthy, independent, adult.<sup>16</sup>

- When a mother can only depend on books or professional advice to make decisions on child rearing, "they lose touch with their own ability to act without knowing exactly what is right and wrong." <sup>17</sup>

15 Ibid

<sup>16</sup> G. Gerson, "Winnicott And The History Of Welfare State Thought In Britain", in D.W. Winnicott And Political Theory: Recentering The Subject (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), p.312

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Hill. p.14

19 Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Susan R Henderson "A Revolution in the Woman's sphere: Grete Lihotzky and the Frankfurt Kitchen." In *Architecture and Feminism*, ed. Debra Coleman (Princeton NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996) p.223

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. p.223

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p.224

I admire Winnicott's restraint and self-criticality from his position as a voice of authority in paediatrics and psychoanalysis. The statement; to be a 'good enough mother', does not aim to make a parent feel any fear of failure but is intended to set a bench mark that is already within the grasp of parents themselves.

In his BBC talks broadcasted between 1943 and 1962, Winnicott served up the fundamental elements of his theory.

In essence, Winnicott offers a discussion about the meaning of behaviours between mothers and babies, rather than administering instructions. As a woman who might have children of my own one day, and an architecture student, training in a profession that is heavily dominated professionally and educationally by men, I am drawn to Winnicott's emboldening perspective. He offers a criticism of prescriptiveness that empowers women to make their own informed decisions and there is a parallel that can be read between the role of a mother and the role of an architect through the act of creation; be it a building or a baby.

In contrast to this feeling of agency instilled by Winnicott's progressive views, an earlier example of questioning the role of women in the home and specifically with relation to food production is Grete Schütte Lihotzky's 1927 Frankfurt kitchen.

This functionalist kitchen design was based on the idea that it could be mass-produced and standardised for the city's post-war social housing program. The Frankfurt Kitchen was generated from the idea of 'scientific management of kitchen labour'. Schütte Lihotzky quantified and measured all of the actions performed in the kitchen in order to produce one that, while aiming to eradicate unnecessary labour, was born from the determinist point of view that the actions of individuals are predictable and everything has predetermined course.

Although designing for an efficient domestic realm was initiated by liberals as a positive step for women in the 1920s, the efforts to galvanise the woman's sphere in the home, as an equivalent to a male profession, 20 were naïve. It was claimed at the time – and strangely framed positively - that housework should be comparable to factory work on a production line. 21

The promise was to eliminate drudgery by professionalising household tasks.<sup>22</sup> However, where kitchens were designed at the time around the

"Erstens besteht es in Arbeit, und zweitens in Ausruhen, Gesellschaft, Genuß"<sup>26</sup>

Translates to: "Firstly, it is work, and secondly it is relaxing, company, pleasures." Grete Schütte Lihotzky

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p.223

cult ideas of rationalisation, but also against a socio-political context of "female-redomestication"<sup>23</sup> women became further pigeon-holed into their household domain. This was a step backwards caused by pressures from right-wing politics to reduce women's professional and educational advancement in Germany that had followed the first world war.

Every element of the Frankfurt kitchen was reduced to its "smallest functional component"<sup>24</sup>, thus making each bodily movement and task less serendipitous and more controlled. The Frankfurt Kitchen was a 'niche' rather than a room and the woman's sphere was prevented from encroaching into the desired tranquillity of other household territories that were to be relaxing spaces for husbands to return to from work.<sup>25</sup> Essentially women were rendered invisible, put into household quarters, equivalent to servants, and homogenised through the eyes of designers. The fact that insecurities regarding women's professionalisation outside of the home were ultimately designed into the physical body of a house is sinister and manipulative.

Schütte Lihotzky's generalised statement is manifesto-like and highlights a self-belief that she is an expert in how people should live. The functionalist attitude of a person being a machine-like user of a machine-like kitchen confirms gender role divisions, further consolidating, through stream-lined efficiency, a woman's place in the home.

I want to refer back to Pomiane at this point, as I have been seduced by his short book Cooking in 10 Minutes. Where Schütte Lihotzky refers to the kitchen as a machine, Pomiane describes it as a laboratory, although both are metaphors of an organised system, a laboratory is still spatial and as stated from the point of view of a creative scientist, a creative space. However, a machine suggests an object with no social associations involved whatsoever. Moreover, none of the meals in his book rely on a categorised 'housewife'. He is writing from his own, male, perspective. He can deftly whip up his own omelette, deal with his own dishes and is talking to young professionals, students and generally all round busy people without referring to any particular gender. He takes the appealing elements of a rationalised work space as a vessel in which to create pleasure as opposed to greasing the wheels and shutting the door on the out of-sight-out-of-mind woman as domestic servant. Pomiane would be upset to think of the kitchen as a production line.

Pomiane's Cooking in Ten Minutes, it's subtitle being The Adaption to the Rhythm of Modern Life is in theory a response to the direction of thought involved in the Frankfurt Kitchen (They became popular at the same time.) While the Frankfurt Kitchen sought to categorise, Pomiane

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 234

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 236

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Gerd Kuhn, *Die "Frankfurter Küche*" p.153 <a href="http://ernst-may-gesellschaft.de/fileadmin/Redakteure/downloads/sonstige\_pdf/kuhnfrankfurterkueche.pdf">http://ernst-may-gesellschaft.de/fileadmin/Redakteure/downloads/sonstige\_pdf/kuhnfrankfurterkueche.pdf</a>> [accessed on June 18 2018]

I want to encourage you to keep and defend your specialist knowledge. It cannot be taught.  $^{\rm 30}$ 

<sup>27</sup> G. Gerson, p. 312.

maintains an open mind in regard to people, particularly through his genderless writing. Where Schütte Lihotzky's idea of modern life is epitomised by machines and technology, Pomiane's idea of modernity breaks traditional gender roles writing about cooking and hospitality in the home, a traditionally female perspective.

It is not that Schütte Lihotzky is wrong for making a precise and methodical analysis and following this up with a design; this could potentially work well on a private or personal project with a particular client. It is the mass-produced nature of such tight intentions that feels unnerving and claustrophobic. The idea of removing choice and control from an un-emancipated class of women, is an upsetting notion.

Schütte Lihotzky was a pioneering woman architect and a strong outspoken voice within the industry, I can sympathise that her ability to excel within the architectural world was determined upon working within the constraints of a political redomestication of women. However, my criticism is of course from the context of today's more emancipated time, although architecture is nonetheless still a heavily male dominated profession.

However, in Winnicott's broadcasts about child-rearing, despite being mass-produced and mainstream, his intentions were very different. Rather than analysing behaviours and then prescribing a broad-stroke solution, his main aim was to share his expertise and instil confidence in women's own innate abilities. In this sense his approach to good advice strikes a tone with Pomiane's and establishes the ironic notion that men at this time would find it easier to break convention and be who they want to be, where-as women trod a narrower path, enabled to excel only within a role and direction that was understood to be appropriate to a woman's sphere.

A progressive liberal,<sup>27</sup> Winnicott's work represented the tension between individuality and regulation<sup>28</sup> and it is this intentional incompleteness that I find a generous notion to be related to the realm of design.

His likeability and aptitude for breaking down complex psychoanalytic ideas to ordinary listeners over the radio made him extremely popular. With the direct appeal of 'you',²9 Winnicott used the second person when addressing listeners, sounding both conversational and reliable. This approach personalised public broadcast into a multiplicity of one to one intimate audio encounters. There is a theatrical aspect to this abstracted kind of delivery, by speaking as if to an individual, Winnicott breaks the fourth wall and draws attention to intimacy as one of his core principles by enacting it himself.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Steven Groarke, *Managed Lives: Psychoanalysis, inner security and the social order* (Hove: Routledge, 2014) p.xi

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Karpf, p.24

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> D.W. Winnicott, Winnicott on the Child, (Cambridge, Mass: Perseus:2002), p. 23

Essentially, Winnicott regulates the role of an expert by limiting the extent of instruction or advice that he passes on. Within the sphere of child care, paediatricians and psychoanalysts are the professionals from which parents can look to for guidance. In aiming to defuse anxiety, Winnicott is an architect of relationships. Over the airwaves, through a mixture of formal and intimate language,31 he makes visible the structural elements of the relationships between mothers and children. In doing so he also makes visible the structures between himself and the listener. Anne Karpf describes the radio broadcasts as 'a space in which a mother is able to think about her baby and its needs.'32 With this interpretation, 'a space' is defined as generous and non-prescriptive - a very different concept to that of the Frankfurt Kitchen. Winnicott provides a space for social intimacy rather than prescribing a piece of unforgiving technology.

Winnicott implies that a parent should be able to feel independent to raise their child. His approach of being an expert that does not claim the final word, but rather offers possibilities of understanding, satisfies a relationship of trust and support and is one that is important to the architectural sphere.

Where an architect can be understood to be an expert in the built realm in which we live, an architect is not, of course, an expert in how to live. Such an expert doesn't exist. There are limits to what a professional can and should define of lay people's lives. What is critical is the articulation of ideas when the wealth of differences between the trajectories of peoples' lives will always be wonderfully unpredictable and unknown.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Karpf, p.24



An American in Paris and Ridiculous Gadgets









Fig 4

"ultrasonic" dishwasher/drier/sterilizer, an IBM electro-recipe file, with automatically activated ingredient dispenser, rising storage cabinets, a "thermopane" domed oven, a roto storage system with dry, refrigerated, and frozen sections, a loudspeaker telephone (with voice and written messaging capabilities), and a laundry machine activated when the wash load reached 8lbs.<sup>33</sup>

In the 1951 American musical film 'An American in Paris' Gene Kelly stars as Jerry Mulligan, an American painter living in Paris.

In the opening scene he choreographs the acts of getting up and making breakfast in the close quarters of a Parisian studio apartment.

- 1 He is woken by a knocking sound, turns over in bed to open his apartment door within an inch of his nose to collect a paper bag of pastries.
- 2 Stepping out of his single bed he stretches to pull on a chord storing his bed on a pulley above his head.
- 3 Folding up a leaf of the wall to become a side board with his foot he puts the pastries down and opens a cupboard to unpack a chair and table.
- 4 Next, he takes a jug of milk and a bowl of fruit from the balcony behind him but before he adds it to his spread, is distracted by his unfinished portrait on an easel beside him and children shouting from the street below.
- As he sits in the window we see a line of paint brush pots teetering on the edge of the rooftop apartment window ledge.

The delivery of the scene is a sugary parody of a Parisian artist's life pitched for the amusement of an American audience. It feeds off the fascination with the bohemian poverty of the young artist and the city of Paris as an ideal place for self-realisation and the launching of a successful career. The set of the opening sequence captures an extremely economical use of space. A single room apartment serves as all of bedroom, kitchen and workspace with each element of the room doubling or tripling it's use between being a wall, a piece of furniture a roof or entirely storage. The romanticism of the scene makes theatre of an essence of what Edouarde de Pomiane writes about in Cooking in 10 Minutes and illustrates a bohemian ideal, that richness and hedonism can be found in a materially minimal lifestyle.

The fact that this is pitched as an entertaining notion for an American audience of the 1950s - makes sense as a counterpoint to the highly desirable and engineered kitchens of the same time in the USA. In particular Frigidaire's 1956 "Kitchen of the Future" shown in the General Motors film *Design for Dreaming*. When considering that the historical

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Adrian O'Connor, Kitchens of the Future, Moma Website, Inside/Out, 2010, <a href="https://www.moma.org/explore/inside\_out/2010/09/22/kitchens-of-the-future/">https://www.moma.org/explore/inside\_out/2010/09/22/kitchens-of-the-future/</a> [accessed on 30 March 2018]

Electronically controlled cabinets slid down to easy reach with the wave of the hand, and cabinet doors pop open by light pressure on the front panel. A new appliance provides a choice of cold water, ice cubes, or crushed ice. For easy reading, recipes are flashed onto a screen when they are placed in a photographic viewer. The sink provides water at any temperature from a single faucet. An electronic oven rises at the press of a button, bakes potatoes in five minutes, or roasts a turkey in 45. Even the flour-sifter is motor-driven.<sup>34</sup>

34 Ibid.

record of these kitchen designs is so heavily documented through advertising (there are entire websites dedicated to mid-century kitchen advertisements)<sup>35</sup> it is possible to connect the accumulation of gadgetry, and elaborate processes to a prolifically marketed aspirational ideal. The more components the better. The more technologised the kitchen the classier.

This is explicitly represented in the RCA/Whirlpool Miracle Kitchen that toured Europe to help convince the recipients of the Marshall Plan that spending money on gadgets and equipment was a good idea, a necessary commercial push for both companies that were winding down their production of military equipment after the second world war. 36,37

The American ostentatious kitchens of the 1950s are a far-cry from Pomiane's modest kitchen cupboard contents of 1930s Paris; relying on basic needs and the ingenuity of people. A commercial insistence that people need new gadgets creates a dependence on technology and a mistrust of people's own abilities, who Winnicott, broadcasting during the fifties in the UK and encouraging mothers to trust their own skills, would arguably not have approved of.

The way in which a political, economic consumerist agenda reached into the domestic realms of ordinary people, chimes with the political motive behind the Frankfurt Kitchen. When in Germany, post-WWI, the government's 'female re-domestication' manifested itself through the machine-like kitchen designs for social housing; after the second world war in the United States, the government demonstrated its political and economic intentions through the thrust of advertising of household goods propagated by private companies. These companies had been in involved in making weapons as well as kitchens, further highlighting the intertwining of military and domestic crusades. The American household goods exhibition which was sponsored by the Marshall Plan (an American initiative to aid, Western Europe to rebuild their economies after WWII,<sup>38</sup> utilised artifacts of American consumer domesticity as propaganda against the Soviet Union.<sup>39</sup>

The economic strength and political force that extended into people's domestic lives seemed anything but transparent during the kitchen campaigns of the Marshall Plan. Structures of persuasion found in

The Editors of Click Americana, 9 mid-century kitchen remodels & floorplans (1954), <a href="https://clickamericana.com/topics/home-garden/9-mid-century-kitchen-remodels-floorplans-1954">https://clickamericana.com/topics/home-garden/9-mid-century-kitchen-remodels-floorplans-1954</a>> [accessed on 20 June 2018]
 The Editors of Funding Universe, Whirlpool Corporation History, <a href="https://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/whirlpool-corporation-history/">https://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/whirlpool-corporation-history/</a>> [accessed on 20 June 2018]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> L.J. Davis, *Did RCA have to be Sold?*, (The New York Times online archives, 1987), <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/1987/09/20/magazine/did-rca-have-to-be-sold.html>[accessed 20 June 2018]">https://www.nytimes.com/1987/09/20/magazine/did-rca-have-to-be-sold.html>[accessed 20 June 2018]</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, *Marshall Plan*, (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc, 2017)

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.britannica.com/event/Marshall-Plan">https://www.britannica.com/event/Marshall-Plan</a> [accessed on 20 June 2018]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Meltem Ö Gürel, *Mid century Modernism in Turkey Architecture Across Cultures in the 1950s and 1960s*, (London:Routledge, 2016)

1) The Rotimatic Rotimaker (£830, Rotimatic.com) is a complex unit comprising reservoirs, manipulative mechanisms and hot plate. Converts flour and water into cooked south-Asian flatbreads.

- 2) Bacon Express (£49.95, cuckooland.com) is a heated trapezoid enclosed by hinged metal plates. Thin cuts of cured pork are laterally arranged and cooked on the element.
- 3) The Egg Master (£29.99, DecentGadget, Amazon) is a vertical grill encased in silicone housing. Ingredients poured into the plastic tube are heated by an embedded, wraparound element. When ready, food spontaneously rises from the device.
- 4) The KitchenCraft 5-in-1 avocado tool (£8.99, amazon.co.uk) is a double-ended multi-tool comprising a cutaway scoop, a serrated blade and a clamping iaw. Used to access and prepare avocado flesh.

glossy advertising campaigns can arguably be seen to be responsible for imbued anxiety in hospitality, considering feelings of inadequacy when not having the newest blender or 'thermo-pane domed oven'. These anxious feelings infringe on hospitality and the state of social ease in which preparing and sharing a meal are best enjoyed.

On the opposite page is a list of ridiculous gadgets on sale today collected and unforgivingly reviewed by Rhik Samadder. 40 I imagine that they only serve to create more complication and angst around food preparation as they have the same, or more, specificity of function that was behind the functionalist design of the Frankfurt Kitchen and the over-the-top kitchens of the Marshall Plan. All of Samadder's collection present expensive, over-engineered, niche solutions for food preparation that are already possible using more standard household utensils - saucepans, frying pans, spoons - in actual fact, the same utensils you will find in Pomiane's cupboard.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Rhik Samadder, Kitchen Gadgets Reviewed, The Guardian Online, <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/series/inspect-a-gadget">https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/series/inspect-a-gadget</a> [accessed on 16 March 2018]



A Dinner Table as a Stage in Low Light

I was brought up to have the basic understanding that meal times were social encounters and this understanding has solidified to the extent that I take it for granted. As a child, evening meals were always at the table, held mainly by my mother who simultaneously cooked, served and held conversation with our family. The food and the conversation were not really separable, but together the social emphasis and the fact that everyone sat down together did make it an event.

Dinner time happened in an open plan living, kitchen and dining room, a regular scene amongst a compilation of walls and rooms that evolved over time within the concrete shell of a converted 1930s Woolworths building. It was a conventional social norm in an unconventional setting in which my parents made practical and domestic architectural interventions. The most fundamental intervention tackled the problem of light ingress and lack of outside-space in the deep-plan commercial building. By paving a 4m x 4m square of the first floor with concrete slabs, lining this square with crittal-windowed walls and cutting a 4m x 4m square from the roof above it. This became our garden, filled with potted plants and paddling pools. Other fixes and adaptations used reclaimed industrial materials to fit the needs of a home for a growing family; as well as a functioning workspace and studio. The space had an unfinished quality with spaghetti like cables of incomplete electrics coming out of the walls.

Building, eating, cooking, working, learning, playing and sleeping rubbed against one another in a shared space with both agility and friction, however, an evening meal was consistently the crux of togetherness. Set against a crude, stripped back setting, the dinner table as a social event was abstracted from a traditional domestic setting.

I compare this experience and feeling - from perhaps exaggerated memories - to the concept of black box theatre. A theatrical movement beginning in the 1960s and appropriating abandoned commercial spaces, 41,42 black box theatre reduces the stage set to black curtains, or painted black walls, ceilings and floors, with the intention to abstract and allow for explicit concentration on a performance. My childhood home wasn't painted black, but the roughness and industrial nature of the building sat apart from its domestic use and around the stage of the dinner table, that setting fell away.

This memory is likely also connected to the actual darkness in that house. There was never any overhead lighting but floor based lamps that meant at night it was actually dimly lit. Dim lights that reflected off of the glazed walled courtyard, made by my parents, created ambiguous spatial limits. Less light meaning that I saw more and thought more.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Dominic Lutyens, *A brave new world for theatre design*, (BBC Website, 2018), http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20180122-how-theatre-design-has-become-flamboyant-and-flexible [accessed 18 June 2018]
 <sup>42</sup> William Missouri Downs, Lou Anne Wright and Erik Ramsey, *The Art of Theatre: A Concise Introduction*, (Boston: Wadsworth, 2007) p.199



Fig.6

When considering the importance of darkness, I also think about being in Berlin and the settings that offered just the right level of neural input. Term used in this context by Daniel Rupp. Living there for two years, I found the city was best enjoyed al-fresco. Despite all of the filmic bars and their delicious beers, sitting on a stoop or a left-over construction site or the bank of a canal was paramount (albeit with said delicious beers from a Späti). The spaces had just enough definition, something to hold on to, furniture and structure, but never four walls or a roof. They were architectural conditions. My enjoyment of them emerged and was obvious when my tolerances to thermal comfort became higher. Just enough 'neural input' lead to better conversations, spurred from observations and imaginations in the darkness. This trumped warmth. I would cycle home after a long evening in March; very cold, but very happy. Darkness both stretching and concentrating my thoughts and my thoughts in turn sharply in focus but big.

Berlin has a good-kind of gloominess and un-manicured nature that I felt very at home in. It also has a rich music and dance culture entrenched in that. It was there that I saw the Michael Clark company's contemporary dance performance of: 'To a simple rock and roll...song', where against unelaborated stage sets created with gradients of light, danced a mixture of minimalism, self-control, relentless rebelliousness and humour. These combined qualities exemplify the sweet spot that I am trying to get across in this text.

The soundtrack including music by Erik Satie, Patti Smith and David Bowie, included combinations of solo and group performances. But it was a red gradient set design against which a solo woman danced to Alladin Sane by Bowie that felt like I was experiencing it from the inside of my closed eyes. The grey to black gradient satin leotards by Stevie Stewart reflected the red stage lighting by Charles Atlas. They used the surrounding light to transform. It got directly under my skin and it felt close and extremely vivid.

I want to emphasise from this notion of the right level of darkness being 'just enough', the idea that a viewer, inhabitant or reader can have a more personal, essential and bodily experience when allowed to fill in the gaps of what is not immediately visible, with their own imagination and interpretation. The combination of both seeing less but seeing more is a key flavour of the menu.



Fig.7

Home Organisation *or* Organising the World

There is something very satisfying about bringing mass processes to domestic tasks in terms of efficiency. Despite the arguments I have made towards a more frivolous and intuitive interaction with our environment as evidenced by Pomiane, there is increasingly a societal sense that we should approach domestic tasks with keen respect to efficiency, á la Schütte Lihotzky.



Fig.8

43 Marie Kondo, The Life Changing Magic of Tidving, trans, Cathy Hirano (London: Vermilion, 2014) p.11

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A recent and looser example introduced in my shared household includes collecting all black socks from clean laundry in one communal basin to reduce the monotonous task of pairing them and differentiating between minor differences in brand. \*System put in motion by Clare Cameron. The ideal of having two socks with identically ribbed cuffs is traded off against painstaking rummaging in a dimly lit room to find a sock's elusive twin. The similar pleasure of broad-stroke organisation includes kitchens with large surfaces of all one hardwearing material that can take large amounts of mess and can then be easily washed (abattoir style.) In essence, these examples are a compromise, giving up a bit of perfection for something that is easier, so you can spend the time-saved doing more interesting things.

Marie Kondo, however, has a passion for tidying. A professional declutterer and best-selling writer of The Life Changing Magic of Tidying, she expresses that there has never been a comprehensive education in tidying<sup>43</sup> and as she has been engrossed in self-study, starting with household magazines at the age of five,44 she has the expertise to tell all 6 million readers, 45 how to organise their lives. Kondo rebukes the assumption that 'tidying doesn't need to be taught<sup>46</sup> and writes to an audience who are failing in their good intentions to keep their homes in order, letting them repeatedly slip back into a state of chaos. The repeating mantra throughout her books is to remove anything from your life that doesn't 'spark joy'.47

The popular success of *The Life Changing Magic of Tidying* is a reaction to the rampant materialism of today's highly consumerist society, historically instilled by the 1950's advertising for household goods and governmental support of global companies. Prolific consumerism along with increasingly overpopulated cities has created a challenging negation between an excess of ridiculous gadgets and smaller and smaller living spaces.

The popularity of Kondo's book shows a mass psychological phenomenon that to one extent is an evidently welcome response to mass anxiety about mess, but can arguably be understood as a mass fetishisation of neatness. Where a fetish can be described as the worshipping of an inanimate object for its supposed magical powers, 48 one can easily draw similarities between that definition and Kondo's book. She communicates that magic is to be found in an ordered home as she says 'hello' to her house, 49 thanks her shoes for their service50 and allows her socks to 'rest' in the drawer.51

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., inside cover.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Zoe Williams, Did Marie Kondo's Spark Bring me Joy, The Guardian Website, 2017, <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/jan/02/did-">https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/jan/02/did-</a> marie-kondos-spark-bring-me-jov->[accessed 20 June 2018]

<sup>46</sup> Kondo, p.11

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 209

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup>The Editors of Oxford Dictionaries, Fetish < https://en.oxforddictionaries. com/definition/fetish> [accessed on 20 June 2018]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Kondo, p.220

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 151

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Ibid., p.95

There is an anti-social and sour tone to her writing as she lists 'bedding for the guest that never comes' as an important set of items to purge from your life. This chapter title rings with resentment towards the guests that never came. It seems cold to seal the fate that having extra bedding for the purpose of being hospitable to guests is a burden not worth the space on your shelf. Joy for an empty cupboard trumps any "joy sparked" by people. This approach is validated in one of the final chapters of the book where she muses about how the material things in her house taught her to appreciate unconditional love, not her parents or her friends, 3 and that in high school she began treating her possessions as if they were alive. 4

Kondo encourages techniques of home organisation (a term I've stolen from a department in IKEA) that are arguably fetishised and obsessional, but on the other hand are evidently hugely popular. I can't deny their therapeutic appeal. However, my attraction to the ruthless purging of stuff for a clutter-free life is laced with sadness as if a sacrilege to an upbringing infused with ideas of 'creative chaos' amongst piles of books, collections of inspiring objects and having sleepovers with friends. A number of Kondo's followers have said that her merciless approach to tidying prompted them to get rid of so many things that it generated equivalent amounts of new emotional baggage.<sup>55</sup>

The bitter taste of Kondo's instructions doesn't come from the fact that she personally finds joy in ordering her home but rather the degree to which she has written a manifesto marketed to the masses that has stemmed from her self-professed insecurity of being "poor at developing bonds with people", "feeling uncomfortable exposing weakness to others" and having a complex desire to be noticed by her parents. The book and her practice reveals itself at this point to be a therapeutic process for herself but also to have a nervous narrator with a frightening homepage mission statement to 'organise the world'. This tastes of the Frankfurt Kitchen – metallic with a hint of bleach.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> Ibid., p.208

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Ibid., p.194

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Alice Hines, When Marie Kondo's Decluttering Manifesto Doesn't 'Spark Joy', The Village Voice, 2017,

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.villagevoice.com/2017/01/11/when-marie-kondos-decluttering-manifesto-doesnt-spark-joy/">https://www.villagevoice.com/2017/01/11/when-marie-kondos-decluttering-manifesto-doesnt-spark-joy/</a> [accessed on 20 June 2018] 

6 Kondo, p. 208

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Marie Kondo, p. 207

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Marie Kondo, Website Homepage <a href="http://konmari.com/">http://konmari.com/</a> [accessed on 16 March 2018]



Fig.9

Georges Perec's Ordered Knick Knacks

Georges Perec was a French novelist, filmmaker, documentarist, and essayist. Born in 1936 and publishing work from the 1960s up until his death in 1982. He wrote with amusing lightness<sup>59</sup> and literary agility. His book Species of Spaces intricately records observations of the spatial realm. He utilises prose, lists, literary academic devices such as footnotes and detailed categorisation of immeasurable and unruly matter. He enforces constraints on his own writing that reveal a surreal tone from the juxtaposition of subject and approach. He works between rigidity and playfulness while revealing the structure of his work flow in the writing itself.

"The bed is one of the rare places where we adopt roughly speaking a horizontal posture." 62

Everything that I couldn't do without was to be found assembled there [his bed] in the areas of the both necessary and the pointless...A bottle of mineral water, a glass, a pair of nail scissors (chipped unfortunately), a collection of crosswords by Robert Scipion... a few dozen books some that I had intended to read and some that I had intended not to read.<sup>63</sup>

Perec gives exercises to the reader in Species of Spaces. They form constraints in which a reader can decide to follow, the instructions of his exercises don't tell you how to interpret what you see but he does get you to look again, breaking down the task of looking further and emphasising the important step of abstraction of applying a system to looking. The purpose of applying a systematic approach seems to me to be democratic. Everything that is seen is given the same amount of attention and thus value, it is at that point, once everything has been processed thorugh the act of looking that you are able to evaluate and subjective understandings emerge. His methodical and consrained and systematic approach to writing was supported by the fact that he worked as an archivist for money.<sup>60</sup>

Although 50 years his junior, Perec, like Pomiane, was the child of working class polish Jews who had emigrated to France. When the second world war broke out, his father was sent to fight as a Polish citizen and was killed, Perec was evacuated to a small village in an unoccupied zone and his mother was left behind in an occupied Paris. Terribly after Perec's departure she was sent to Auschwitz by the Nazis and not seen again.<sup>61</sup>

Describing the space of his bed, Perec takes a place that through human narrative can be imbued with dreams, fantasies and emotion, and discusses the measurable attributes of that place creating a field of tension between the quantifiable and the immeasurable. I particularly like the passage that defines the accumulated objects and detritus that he collects and values there.

His collection of objects is relatable. Some useless, some anonymous, some beautiful, ugly and annoying but all impossible to throw away.

In the kitchen of my parents' house (not the house that I grew up in) there is a glass cake-stand that sits on the kitchen counter. At this point I want to describe the counter upon which it sits, it is important to define the immediate context.

The counter is about 60cm x 2m in plan and taller than most kitchen surfaces at about 1.1m high. A black rubber bumper edge surrounds the perimeter of its top and bottom surfaces. It is made of stainless steel and sits on rubberised metal wheels. It has doors on one of its long sides with metal fastenings. The doors have labels reading 'Compartment 1', 'Compartment 2' and 'Compartment 3'. It has a coiled white rubberised electrical cable that comes out of one end and plugs back into a socket on the same surface that it came out of. Between the outlet and the plug socket are three red light indicators with labels relating to the compartment doors.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> Ibid. 19

<sup>63</sup> lbid. p.18



62

Fig.10

The counter came from a prison. The cupboards inside would have been electrically heated to keep food warm as it was wheeled from room to room. It's funny having something so large in the room with such a particular story and setting behind it but that no one actually know what that story is. It's there to be filled in by whoever asks or wishes to interpret.

#### Back to the cake stand.

I can assume that it was inherited from my great aunt Suzanne. All of the furniture in this house that looks more old-fashioned came from her. My parents would not have bought a cake stand or the mahogany dining table that sits across from the kitchen. (Maybe this is obvious when considering the kitchen island reclaimed from a prison) but I assume they enjoy the cross-over of styles. Raw and utilitarian with refined and domestic.

The cake stand sits at the corner of the counter top and has accumulated a 'small fortune' of objet trouvé. They are things that nobody will take responsibility for. Things that are incomplete. Things that are anonymous, things that don't have another home. Things that no one wants to throw away and that no one really understands but can perhaps imagine a use for.

With the page as the space within which they sit.

From top to bottom.

#### **Upper Tier**

- a white shoelace
- a metal mesh basket (use unknown)
- a blue plastic clothes peg clipped to a wooden clothes peg in turn clipped to the wire frame of the cake stand.
- a crocodile hair clip (no one in my family has worn a crocodile hair clip since 1998)
- a lime green ribbon (left over from a birthday present)
- a transparent plastic box with a razor blade inside
- a matchbox with a dead insect inside (cricket or grasshopper) (I closed the box quickly after that discovery)
- a worn out nail file
- a spare set of keys for the garage
- a box of hay-fever tablets (one tablet left)
- a red ribbon
- a white plastic lid (use unknown)

<sup>65</sup> lbid, p. 44 63



Fig.11

- an unused black dog poo bag
- a small tin of aloe vera Vaseline
- a black fabric adjustable strap (use unknown)
- a box of micro-porous surgical tape
- a cross headed screw driver heads
- a elastic bands (assorted sizes)
- a black elastic hairband
- a beige elastic hairband
- 3 screws
- a readers digest association prize coin (this made me laugh, I can't imagine who in our family would have entered a readers digest prize draw)
- a blue plastic stick on gem
- a brown glazed pottery cutout shape with a cotton thread threaded through a hole to make it into a necklace (likely made when my sister and I were at primary school)

#### Middle Tier

- a roll of compostable bags for the food waste kitchen bin
- a roll of Scotch™ tape
- a roll of parcel tape
- a builders wide leaded red pencil
- a key on a green plastic key ring (use unknown)
- a lid for a valve (use unknown)
- a white plastic lid for super glue or ointment (specific use unknown)
- a pair of ear bud headphones (one ear doesn't work)
- a 50 pence piece
- a 1 pence piece
- a plastic lid from a film canister
- a small 8ml plastic package of extra virgin olive oil (this came with a supermarket bought packet of tomatoes
- small similarly sized package of rock sea salt (also came with tomatoes)
- a pair of blunt tweezers
- a screw
- a broken strip of white plastic (perhaps from a fridge door)
- a rubber seal
- a cross head drill bit
- a red colouring pencil
- a dried out black permanent marker

#### Lower Tier

- a spare set of keys (probably for a car)
- a dried bay leaf
- a spare button from a coat still in a paper labelled package
- a broken bicycle brake mechanism
- -a three iron on letter patches "M" "J" "A"

- a used, but neatly folded, piece of aluminium foil
- a push-click cupboard door mechanism
- a wire brush
- a tape measure
- an unused sticker tape for fastening the ends of bicycle handle bar tape to the handles
- a wooden handled flat headed screw driver
- 4 x allen keys
- 3 x curtain hooks
- a bulldog clip
- a coat hook
- a storm trooper lego man
- 2 x mini screwfix pencils (as found in IKEA)
- a drill bit
- a cork from a wine bottle
- an LED stick on light
- a wooden clothes peg
- a bottle of eye-drops nearly empty

I've presented the cake stand, and its contents in the space of a page in the form a column broken up by tiers. The objects are detangled and presented in an order like an ingredients list. The experience of the cake-stand and its contents is very different whether in the format of an image or as words on paper. The objective specificity that I aimed to impose as a Perecian constraint made more obvious to me the points at which objects evoked personal, unquantifiable and unfinished stories.

I greatly enjoyed making the list. A jumble of overlapping and unrecognisable strands of objects identified. Up until that point the mass of things was undecipherable, partly because of their allocated place of abandonment. I've walked past it, tried to find more space around it on the counter for plates, while not registering its details. However, each piece has its own past and future whether known or unknown, and the structure of the human tangle is made visible by the list making. The process relieved the anxiety of being ignorant of what was there. It was a step towards seeing, which in turn transformed the pile into a multiplicity of things. Perhaps this observation sounds like a contrast to the areas of human untidiness that I've praised throughout this text, but the point is about deciphering an impenetrable mass to its particulates. The hierarchy of the list is arbitrary in relation to its contents. Distinguished by the physical height of the cake-stand's tiers. The thorough mixture of knick-knacks proves that the physical tiers bear no real relation to the objects' importance.

The list does not obliterate the human traces of cross-over and imperfection, I found that the contrast between the ordering process

and its disordered things makes the flaws proud. The list certainly doesn't go as far as Ms. Kondo's ruthless tidiness. The objects can be begun to be understood, but not completely rationalised or physically categorised. In this case I found the systematic space of the page to be accepting of the imperfections of people's lives.



ig.12

Oysters and Chipolatas *or* Conclusion

There is a similarity between cuisine and architecture that I've touched on tangentially throughout this text. The distinction as cuisine rather than sustenance and architecture rather than shelter is important for my comparison to hospitality because of the element of human culture. I have discussed certain things that have been designed to be received with an intention but also remain stripped back enough to still be interpreted and filled in with imagination.



Fig.13

Food and even food writing can be enjoyed because of its viscerality. This is a quality that I understand from brutalist architecture. A rawness which has in actual fact been processed, ordered and designed to such effect that it feels elemental. The kind of architecture that has the biggest impact on me draws my attention to chosen elements of a building in the same way that Pomiane designs his meals to draw your attention to the most essential experiences. Most explicitly so with the bodily experience of eating cold oysters with hot chipolatas. It is a provocative recipe, that sits somewhere between repulsion and desire, and suggests it could be understood primarily as a conversation starter. In this sense the conversation and food interlink beautifully.

A particularly visceral architectural experience, one that oysters and chipolatas attests to, was on a field trip to the Swiss Alps. Peter Märkli and Stefan Bellwalder's 1992 Museo La Congiunta, was purpose built to show the bronze sculptures of Swiss artist Hans Josephsohn. It is an essay in contrasts, with unlikely but complimentary relationships of rough and smooth, hot and cold, specific and arbitrary. Much like Pomiane's stimulating recipe, the architectural response to artwork creates an experience that extends beyond its immediate purpose - be that a meal or a building. It is elemental, and reduced to the fundamentals of architecture: space and proportion, surface and light. These qualities are expressed through the gallery's context, placed at the end of a small village path in the grand setting of the Swiss mountains.

La Congiunta is a menu of experience and interaction carefully curated through an architectural choice of aperitif, amuse bouche, place setting, wine region, course timing, palate cleansers, centre-pieces, desserts and specifically common to both, an espresso to finish. The architecture encompasses the village cafe, from which you must request the key, then there is a procession along the high street, Swiss houses along a country lane surrounded by soaring mountains, a crossing of a mountain stream, entering the field, unlocking the door, climbing the singular slab step, entering the space, the rough cast concrete interior experience illuminated by purely natural top light. The time frame at which the sculptures are illuminated is narrow because of the contextual valley condition. The thresholds are stripped back, holes cast into the wall with no interior doors. This is then all repeated in reverse, returning the key to the café and buying a coffee, in part for the finish, but also as an unspoken tip for the modest service while you sign the questbook.

What makes the experience such stimulating hospitality is the same as I've discussed of Pomiane's style of writing. It is the moment by moment experience that you don't realise you've been tricked until you've left and been struck by the artful sum of all of the menu's parts. It is theatre.



Fig.14

The concrete of Märkli and Bellwalder's gallery could, from a distant and un-experiential glance, look like a bunker, or a cow shed. When viewed through the lens of technology as value, the rough, broken concrete walls with visible protruding re-inforcement bar breaking through the surface and staining the walls, be understood to have been built in the cheapest means possible. There is no heating, no electrical light, no staff, no registration desk, no toilets - none of the extra parts that we have become used to, that surround the experience of art in museums. The interaction between the architecture and the sculptures is concentrated, basic and powerful.

Arno Brandlehuber's Antivilla is not a place that I have actually visited, but one in which I have a recurring and relentless urge to inhabit. Again, I equate it to the slightly uncomfortable but appetising combination of Oysters and Chipolatas.

A hard shell with cracks and scars accumulated through a life of being bashed around by its choppy environment. The interior is slippery and pure - soft on the inside with coolth and warmth, strength and fragility in the same mouthful. The Antivilla is a conversion project of an old concrete lingerie factory of the GDR in Potsdam Germany. With a curtain surrounding its concrete core, heated with an open fire, a warm heart is established, with cooler zones lying outside of the transparent PVC fabric. This system utilises age old ways of seasonal living while maintaining a flexible interior. Antivilla's sledgehammered window openings are a bold symbol of anarchy, resolutely taking what is wanted (views and daylight), whilst advocating that the building itself is a force to be reckoned with.

A slippage between an experience taking control of your senses while just enough of the structures, in which it came to be, are accessible and clear, epitomises my specific point that is hard to pin down. It requires a willingness to suspend disbelief but also requires space, darkness, and ambiguity to form a concentration. This field of tension, for cuisine, theatre, architecture and hospitality, sits between sharp curated choices and a hearty welcome of the unpredictable.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> The Editors of Arch Daily, Antivilla / Brandlhuber+ Emde, Schneider, ArchDaily, 2017.

<sup>&</sup>lt;a href="https://www.archdaily.com/627801/antivilla-brandlhuber-emde-schneider">https://www.archdaily.com/627801/antivilla-brandlhuber-emde-schneider</a> [accessed on 20 June 2018]

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

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