

Exlibris

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A Creative Collective

This project presented two significant challenges: 1) the creation of some form of 'cookbook', given this was the central 'selling-point' of our Professional Development Scheme (PDS) offering; and 2) that this would be a student-led project. Upon meeting our students on the first day of our pro-gramme, we realised that many were simply looking for a way to learn more about cooking. While the practical dimension of cooking wasn't one that we had originally envisioned, we quickly worked to incorporate this into our scheme - no easy task given the realities of Covid and social distancing.

Having never run a project like the one we had proposed, we decided to maintain a flexible evolution-ary approach to our programme, reassessing each week to see 'which way the winds were blowing'. Allowing ourselves the freedom to adjust to the needs and impulses of the day set forth a process of intuitive discovery; as such, it is not a stretch to define ourselves as a 'process-based collective'.

One major focal point in our programme was a meeting of the members of the Cookbook Collective for an afternoon of cooking and photography at the school. We did our best to prepare a menu plan and some division of labour, however, beyond these basic arrangements very little was scripted. Draw-ing upon the inspiration of Allan Kaprow's Happenings, we decided to focus upon the experience, ra-ther than the task, collecting as much documentation as was possible. It is safe to say that the outcome exceeded our expectations and, in the midst of social isolation, created a social enclave where we could 'fill our cups' before returning once again to our computer monitors.

The theme of this project was to explore the nature of how food connects; connects us to each other, connects us to nature, connects us to the past, to the future, to emotions and to our own bodies in the present. This publication is a record of the process that we shared together.



1

5 ingredients max / Less than 30 minutes

Many new painters either want to paint with every colour in the palette, or are afraid to venture into the rainbow. As each member of our collective has come to us with different experiences, values and expectations, we thought it best to limit the possibilities for our first challenge.

With five ingredients, a good chef can prepare a spectacular dish. Flavours and fragrances are immensely complex; a perfectly balanced chemistry of chaos within themselves. Each ingredient should have a specific role to play within a recipe.

Any good chef will also tell you that 'timing is everything'. Learning to gain some control over the amount of time one spends on a dish is an essential skill. This challenge asked our collective to explore the possibilities of a few ingredients, and to do so in a short amount of time.



2

Food Connects Us

The central theme of our project came to be an exploration of the ways in which food connects us. In times of Covid, we now find ourselves distanced from our friends, our families and our communities; the issue of connectivity is one that effects all of us.

One of the amazing characteristics of food is its ability to connect. We wanted to explore the many ways in which this connectivity was possible, even in the midst of social isolation. While our future challenges continues to explore this idea in varying capacities, this challenge was the starting place down our road of discovery.





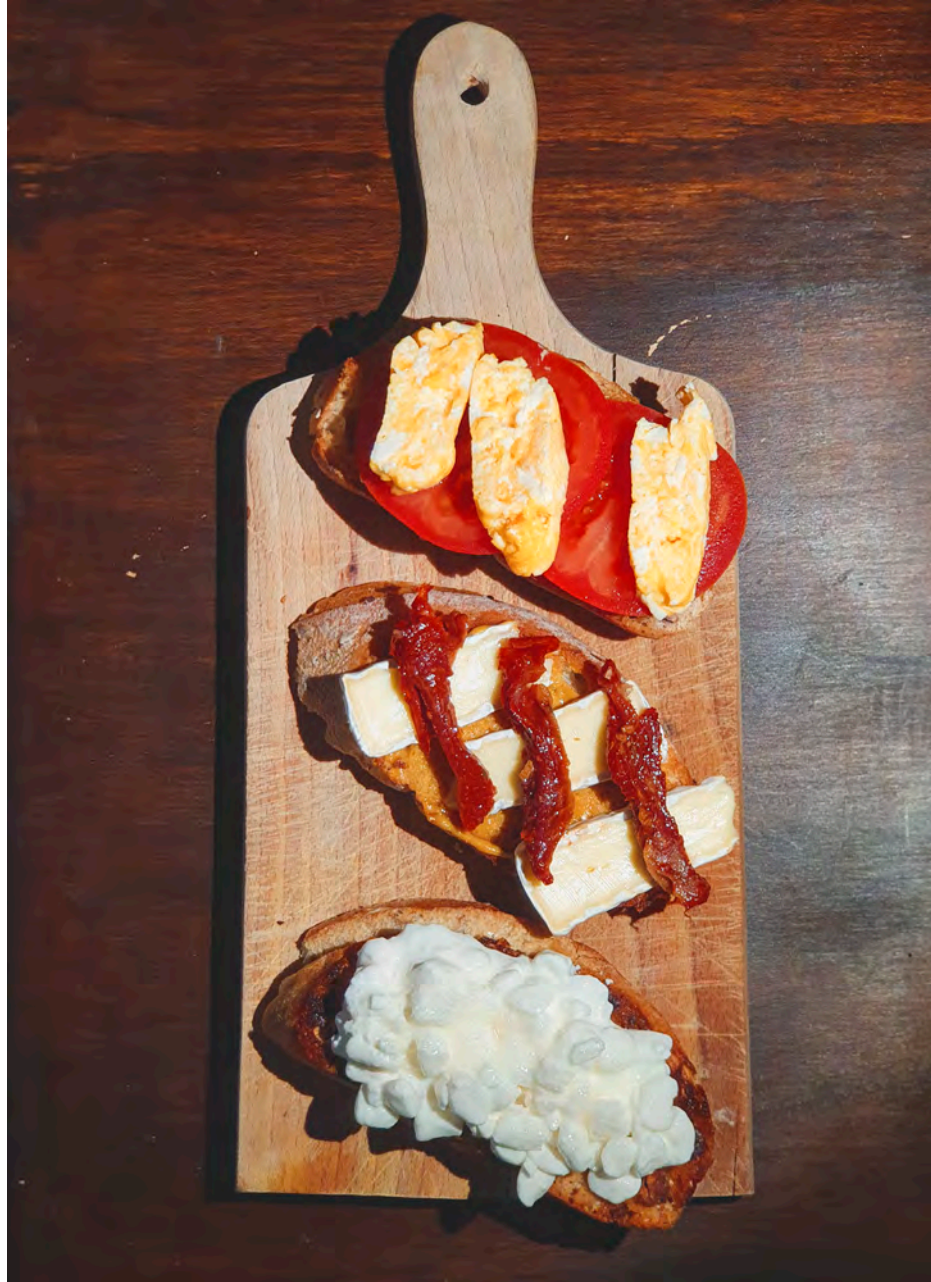


3

Smørrebrød

One of the easiest starting places for learning how to cook is the creation of a sandwich. A sandwich lays down a piece of bread as a *tabula rasa*, a canvas of possibilities. While the origins of the sandwich have been claimed by many nations, the Scandinavian *Smørrebrød* is an example of an elevated approach to making a snack. An open-faced, magic carpet of flavours that levitates the dish to new heights. In this challenge, the limits of our imaginations was our only constraint.







4

Sweet Winter Solstice

Over the winter break, with time on our hands and a bustling kitchen as families prepared for festivities, we asked the members of our collective to prepare a sweet recipe and to ask our friends and family to tell us a story about food from their lives. While the stories fell by the wayside amidst the bliss of idleness, we did manage to collect a handful of sweet recipes (and a few, not so sweet).







5 Słoiki

Here is my take on how food becomes sort of a connection between people. In the Polish language we have a nickname for students who leave home and move to another city: “sloik”, which means “jar”. This is because they tend to bring back homemade food in jars after weekends with their family. The last time I was at home I received some jars and other gifts from my mom. When I’m in Warsaw everytime I open one of them or eat an oat cookie that my mom made for me, it reminds me of home; this is not only in the act of opening a jar, but in the taste of homemade food that no person other than my mom can make. The food becomes a link between me and my home, which is far away, but always waiting for me.

- Julia Kądziela



Pumpkin

Yayoi Kusama (2010)

The 20/21 academic session saw a new Japanese twist introduced to the A Level History of Art curriculum, with Y13 students studying the work of contemporary Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama for the first time. Famous for her pumpkin sculptures, which can be seen in numerous formats great and small around the world, it was delightful to see our Collective's Sixth Form collaborator, Julia Kądziela, take inspiration for her sloik from this artist's work (see left). Her jar of cake-y goodness had all the autumnal notes that go with sweet pumpkin: nutmeg, cinnamon, and cloves. Other students' recipes also featured pumpkin: Anders's pumpkin soup, which was re-imagined by Yakira.

“The pumpkin is to Yayoi Kusama what the Campbell's Soup can is to Warhol: an everyday comestible elevated to the status of fine art.”



Kusama with PUMPKIN, 2010 / Courtesy Ota Fine Arts, David Zwirner, and Victoria Miro

© YAYOI KUSAMA



PDS
Cookbook Collective
GROUP

THIS
cookie
brightens
YOUR DAY

Gluten free Chocolate Meringue Cookies

160g egg white (without a trace of yolk)
225g icing sugar, sifted
200g dark chocolate
60g crushed cornflakes

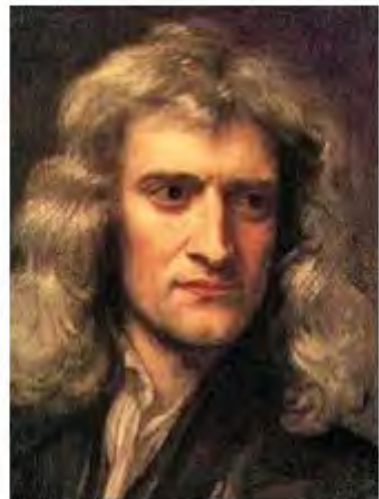
Pre-heat your oven to 120 °C but remove two of the trays in your oven before doing so. Place some baking paper on each of these.

First, grate all your chocolate on a fine, sharp toothed grater like a microplane. The grated mass will be voluminous, so try to grate it into a large bowl. Warning: this step takes a long time - only proceed with the rest if you have the patience to do this part first!

Having grated all the chocolate (and do not be tempted to use cocoa... it ruins the consistency) beat the egg whites using an electric whisk on a high speed until the 'soft peak' stage - when the eggs turn into a semi-solid white mass that can hold its shape. At this point begin to add the sifted icing sugar to the egg mass, tablespoon by tablespoon, whisking non-stop. At the end you will have a silken meringue with a stiff consistency: when you pull the mass up using one of the paddles of your whisk, it should easily hold its shape.

Gently fold in the grated chocolate, followed by the crushed cornflakes. DO NOT OVERMIX. The consistency will liquify somewhat, but you do not want it to be totally runny - it still needs to hold its shape.

Dollop/pour onto your baking sheets, making sure to leave 5cm between each. Bake at 120 °C for 90 minutes and then turn the oven off. Remove after a further 90 minutes. Enjoy; preserve any leftovers in jars.



6

Poem on a Plate

Cooking is very often a way of expressing affection for another. In this case, we asked each member of the collective to select one personality for whom they were to prepare a dish. The dish should be in some way an inspired by that personality, and symbolism was most encouraged.

The range of personalities that our collective selected was as varied as the members of our group; ranging from Rosa Parks to Margaret Thatcher, Shakespear to Picasso, with other exceptional personalities raising their appetites for our attention from times long since past.





“Vertumnus” (1591) by Giuseppe Arcimboldo. Credit: Skokloster Castle, Skokloster, Sweden



Food in Dutch Still Life
(1930)



Pieter Claesz. *Still Life with Oysters* (1642)



Dinner Party
Judy Chicago (1979)







Unswept Floor mosaic, 2nd century, Vatican Museum, Rome - copy by Heraclitus (2nd Century AD), after Sosos of Pergamos (2nd C BC)
Hellenistic Period – notable for the Greek masterpieces of sculpture.



7

Connect/Reconnect

SHORT WRITE UP ON CONCEPT AND LESSON

Presentation: abstraction & concepts through the material of food

Connecting to the past, or to aspirations for the future?

[show individual photos (perhaps taken from the Happening live images) layered with historical images from timeline posts. Then place these in juxtaposition to the meals prepared by students.]

The Happening & Haikus

(...and menu planning and shopping)

No-one likes to stay stuck behind a screen, and with this in mind we decided to take our Cookbook Collective out of Teams to work as a team, in reality, in the Akademeia kitchen. What follows are some poetic reflections on our 'happening' together - our coming together around food to blend ideas, expression and cuisine, all with the intention of cooking up some joy. Enjoy...

Smells fill the kitchen -
An explosion of flavours,
Eyes hungry for more.

- Olivia Kupczyński



The gathering of the souls,
Beautiful art compositions,
Faces filled with smiles

- Laura Bochenek

Saturday cooking.
Many flavours on the plates.
Everyone communicates.

- Adam Przybył

Meeting once again,
Together on Saturday,
smiles all around.

- Yakira Wray







Quinoa Salad

For the salad:

- 150g uncooked quinoa
- 225g fresh cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 large cucumber, diced
- 1 small red onion, finely chopped
- 150g fresh spinach, roughly chopped
- 2 large ripe avocados, stones removed and chopped into chunks
- 1/4 of 1 bunch fresh coriander, optional and to taste
- 50g Feta Cheese, optional and to taste

For the dressing:

- 4 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 120ml olive oil
- 1 lemon (2-3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice)
- Salt and pepper

Cook the quinoa according to package directions (this will involve boiling it for around 15 minutes, and draining off the water). Fluff with a fork and set aside to cool.

Meanwhile, prepare the dressing. Whisk together the red wine vinegar, Dijon mustard, oregano, garlic, and a pinch each of salt and pepper (to taste) in a small bowl. Slowly add the olive oil into the vinegar mixture, whisking briskly all the time. Last of all, whisk in the lemon juice (without any pips). Pour into a jar and store in the fridge while prepping the vegetables.

Halve the cherry tomatoes, chop the cucumber (peel if desired, but then the skin never killed anyone) and place into a large bowl. To this, add a finely chopped small red onion, the roughly chopped fresh spinach, and the avocados, cut into bite-sized chunks. Finely chop the coriander if desired, and sprinkle on top. Lastly, add the quinoa into the same large bowl with all the vegetables and lightly toss together. Remove the dressing from the fridge, shake it well and then pour over the salad. Toss the salad further and then top with crumbled feta cheese, if desired. Enjoy immediately!















Potatoes Dauphinoise

a.k.a. Scalloped Potatoes

5 largish floury potatoes
1 onion
30g butter
1 garlic clove, (optional)
400ml 36% cream
300ml milk
A pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
A pinch of salt
Freshly ground black pepper
200g grated cheddar

Heat the oven to 170°C.

Wash and peel the potatoes, then slice thinly, using a mandolin slicer if you have one.

Halve, peel and thinly slice the onion. Melt the butter in a large saucepan, add the onion, cover and sweat until soft. Peel and crush the garlic, if using, then add it to the onion and cook for a further minute.

Add both creams, the milk and the nutmeg to the onion, and bring to a simmer, whisking gently (if the cream is thick, whisk intensively with the milk in a separate bowl first). Add the potatoes with some salt and pepper and simmer for 10–15 minutes until the potatoes begin to soften, release their starch and the cream begins to thicken.

Transfer to a lightly buttered ovenproof dish, spreading the potatoes into an even layer. Scatter the grated cheese on top. Bake in the oven for 1–1½ hours, or until tender and golden brown on top. The slower the cooking the better.



Vegan Banana Bread

a.k.a. Bunker Cake

250g cake flour (type 400/450). For the gluten free version use 125g cornflour + 125g rice flour.

75g caster sugar

2 tsp baking powder

1/2 tsp baking soda

1 tsp cinnamon

A pinch of salt

75ml melted and cooled coconut oil/vegan butter/apple sauce

1 tsp vanilla extract

3 large overripe bananas, i.e. ones that are at least slightly speckled and going brown. The total weight of the peeled bananas should be around 400g.

60ml almond milk, or other vegan milk (almond is preferable).

100g chopped nuts of your choice (optional)

100g dark chocolate chips/pieces of chopped dark chocolate (definitely not optional!)

Preheat your oven to 150 °C. Grease an 800g loaf pan, and line with baking paper.

In a large bowl, sift together the flour(s), sugar, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. Add the chocolate chips and nuts, if using, and gently mix into the remaining dry ingredients. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, mash the bananas, using a potato masher. It's best to leave a few small lumps. Add the oil, vanilla and mashed bananas to the dry ingredients, mixing gently as you go. Once everything is in, mix until combined, but do not beat or you risk making your banana bread tough and chewy. If the mixture seems too thick, add the almond milk.

Pour batter into a greased loaf pan, and bake in the centre of the oven for about 50 minutes to 1 hour. Insert a toothpick into the centre of the loaf to check if it's ready: if it comes out clean it should be done. Remove from oven and let cool for 10 minutes before slicing. Absolutely fabulous warm, smeared with peanutbutter.



The Perfect Tarte Tatin (Caramelised Apple Tart)

7 medium apples with a sharp flavour (Granny Smith are best)
200g white sugar
50ml water
50g butter
225g plain flour
2 tbsp caster sugar
120g cold butter
1 medium egg, beaten

Peel, halve and core the apples, and slice into generously sized wedges. Place in the fridge. Pre-heat the oven to 180 °C.

Put the sugar into a 20cm heavy-based frying pan along with 50ml water. Leave to soak for a couple of minutes, then cook over a medium heat until golden and fudgy. Take off the heat and stir in the butter (careful - it may splutter at this point), together with a pinch of salt, until well combined. Carefully arrange the apples in the pan, straight into the caramel (watch your fingers - the caramel will be very hot!) Try to avoid any gaps being left, and put back on a low heat. Cook for 5 minutes, then take off the heat and allow to cool completely.

Make the pastry: sift the flour into a large mixing bowl and add the sugar and a pinch of salt. Grate in the butter, then rub together until it resembles coarse crumbs. Whisk the egg in a cup and add the beaten egg to the centre of the mixture. Gently mix together into a soft but not sticky dough. Shape into a disc, and then cover with clingfilm and refrigerate for at least 20 minutes before rolling out.

Roll out the pastry to 5mm thick, and to a shape slightly larger than your pan. Put the pastry on top of the apples and, pressing down gently, tuck in the edges around the fruit. Bake for about 30 minutes until the pastry is golden, then remove from the oven. Allow to cool for 5 minutes, then place a plate, slightly larger than the pan, on top and then, very carefully, using oven gloves, invert the tart on to the plate. Best served warm, with crème fraîche or vanilla ice cream.

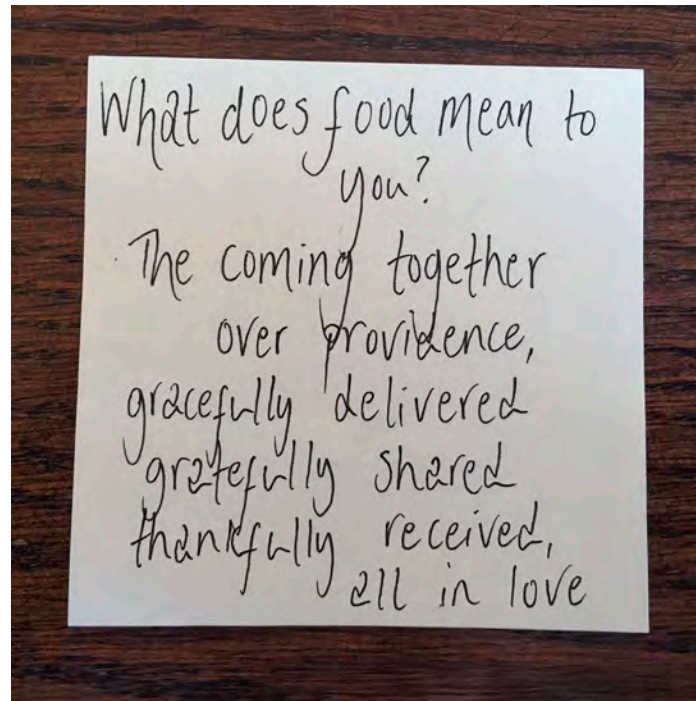


The Manifesto of Futurist Cooking
Marinetti and Luigi Colombo's
(1930)



Futurist dinner at the Tavern of the Holy Palate

What Food Means to Me

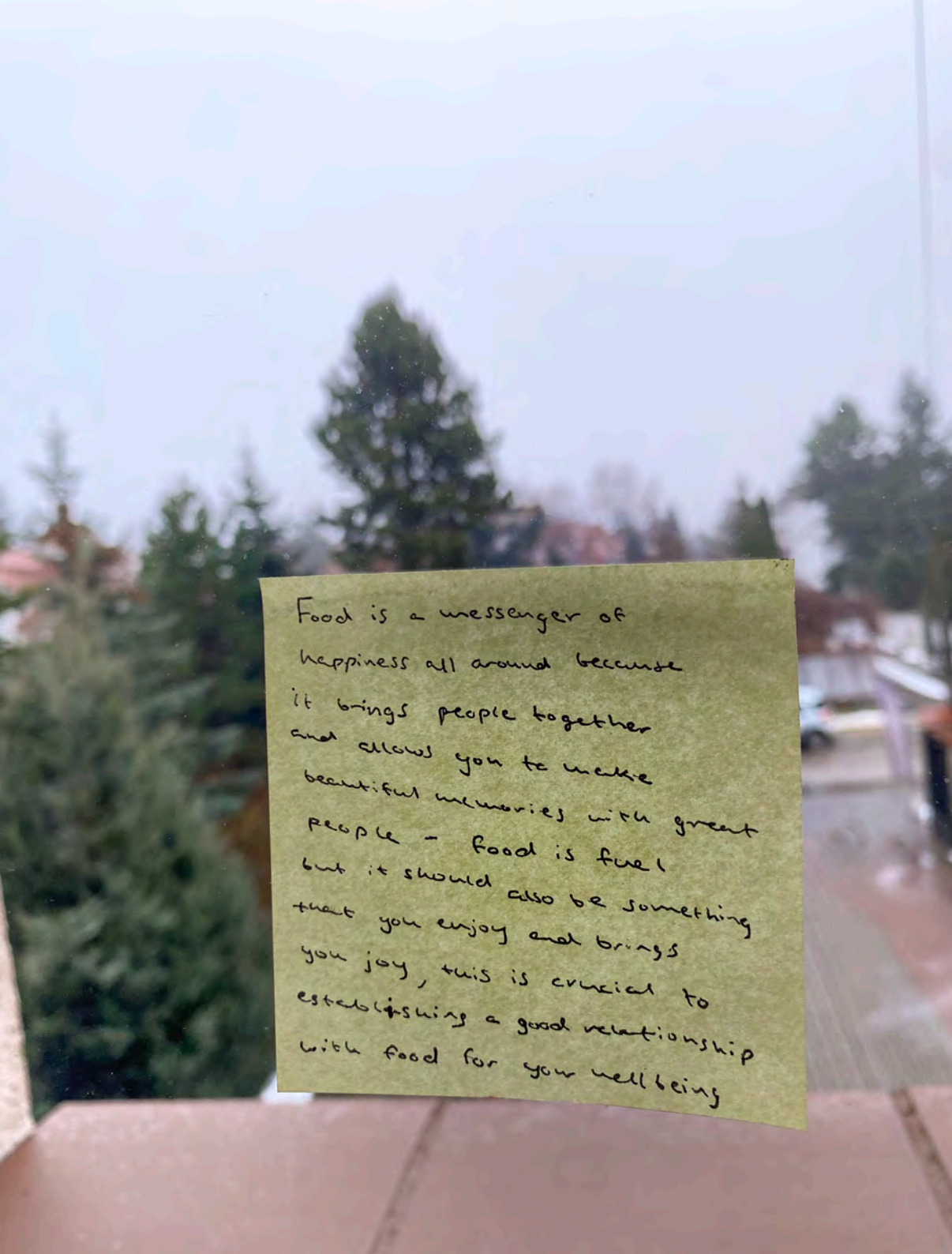


Food is a necessary and inescapable component
of life

Every day, food provides me with a challenge of inventing a dish from ingredients that I have - a creative stimulation.

Food is a passion we do
on a daily basis, we need
it as it provides energy
and tastes great too
and without it we will
die.

FOOD IS
THE LIFE FORCE
OF THE COSMOS
GIFT-WAPPED FOR
MY INDIVIDUAL
VITALITY.



Food is a messenger of
happiness all around because
it brings people together
and allows you to make
beautiful memories with great
people - food is fuel
but it should also be something
that you enjoy and brings
you joy, this is crucial to
establishing a good relationship
with food for your wellbeing

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Digital divide
Bridged by flavours and friendship
Off online, divine

- Ryan Bromley

Your laughter was a
Synaesthetic joy around
the table, a friend

- Bella Szala



AKADEMI
CANTEN

Whole Foods