



OSP

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Semiotics of the kitchen radio

Open Source Publishing

Semiotics of the kitchen radio

Annotated playlist for a live radio show, broadcast from the FoAM Open Kitchen, Saturday November 15 2008

*Inspired by Martha Rosler's performative alphabet **Semiotics of the Kitchen**, the Brussels design collective OSP experimented with the displacement of multi-sensory experiences in a live radio show broadcast in two parts. With the help of invited guests, selected readings and an eclectic playlist, **Semiotics of the kitchen radio** was an afternoon of thinking out loud about the preparation and distribution of food as metaphor, structure, vocabulary and rhythm.*

Scenario: *OSP (Open Source Publishing)*

Tracks: *Harrisson, Christophe Piette*

Presentation: *Harrisson, Ludivine Loiseau*

Readings: *Rachelle Sassi*

Sound: *Wendy van Wynsberghe*

Streaming server: *Denis Devos*

Guests: *Christophe Piette (musician, gardener, cook and member of Pickels et frères), Nicolas Malevé (software artist, data activist and member of Constant), Kate Rich (artist, trader)*

Stream archived at: <http://ospublish.constantvzw.org/documents/sound/kitchen>

Semiotics of the Kitchen Radio Part I

00:00

Chanson paté

Track: *L'air du paté*. Chimay, Hainault. From: G Roullier, à Biarent, *Mélodie populaire Wallone et Flamande* – 1924

01:16.6

Welcome I

03:55.0

L'enigme des sandwiches

Reading: *Les Sandwiches*. Georges Perec, *Jeux interessants*, Ed. Zulma, 1980-1982

05:57.0

Semiotics of the kitchen

Excerpt from an interview with Martha Rosler by Iwona Blazwick (*Art Monthly*), 2007

Semiotics of the kitchen (1975) is a seminal feminist video, featuring artist Martha Rosler as a cooking show host. A static camera registers her performing an array of kitchen hand utensils in alphabetical order and after identifying each of them, demonstrating ritual and sometimes violent uses for each. Shot in grainy black and white, you are not sure whether to laugh or cry when Rosler lashes the air as she forms the last letters of the alphabet with a fork and a knife.

IB: Could we run Semiotics of the Kitchen please?

Apron

Bowl

Chopper (metal falling, chopping)

Dish (metal falling on wood)

Egg beater (rattling)

Fork

Grater (grating)

Hamburger press (wood clicking)

Icepick (thumping)

Juicer (rasping)

Knife

Ladle

Measuring implements (jingling)

Nutcracker (clicking)

Opener

Pan (thump)

Quork bottle (shaking)

Rolling pin (wood rattling)

Spoon

Tenderizer (banging)

U

V

W

X

Y

Z

(applause)

IB: In fact we staged this work, in London, two years ago... no, three years ago. How did you feel about that?

MR: Well, you invited me to redo it in performance and I said it was never meant to be live performance but that I'd be happy to do it as an audition (laughter). Ehm ... and we put out a call for a number of young women ... we got twenty-six young women who saw the tape, we rehearsed a bit and I told them what I would like them to do, which was to be expressive, as one might be with kitchen implements, without harming themselves or others (laughter)

16:49.3

Bestelling nummer 424 is klaar aan de beenhouwerij, la commande numéro 424 est prêt à la boucherie

Excerpt from a conversation between Pierre Huyghebaert and Ivan Monroy Lopez

IML: What sounds are we listening to?

PH: This sound was recorded this morning in Colruyt, one of the four in Brussels. Colruyt is a chain of supermarkets that has begun thirty years ago in Halle, and is now developing in the Netherlands and France I think. Preparing this radio show, you asked me questions about Colruyt and I started to think about it ... I had never thought constructively about Colruyt before but it has always fascinated me.

IML: They have a special system at the cash register too?

PH: The cashier actually stands up, is not sitting behind a conveyor belt. He or she picks up every thing you buy, scans it, and puts it in to another cart. So it is completely efficient and you can discuss

with the person and you pay afterwards in a second stage, in an open space. Well... Not completely open, because they also have their own rack system, everything in Colruyt is built with their own proprietary rack system. They must have developed it themselves because I have never seen this system anywhere else.

27:52.4

Promo de Bruno

Track: Promo. Bruno Coeurvert, 1999

29:32.7

Menu

Reading: *L'Art Culinaire Français, Menu du Cafe Voisin. Flammarion, 1950*

30:40.9

Feral Trade

Excerpt from a conversation with Kate Rich, an Australian-born artist and trader.

*As part of **Open Sauces**, Kate Rich presented her project **Feral trade** ('trading goods along social networks') in FoAM.*

KR: Feral is a term used for an animal that is wild but not in a romantic way like a wolf. It is wild in a deliberate way like a pigeon or an escaped pet. So, it is an idea that trade is not romantic or folkloric but much more an urbanly integrated, hybrid model.

FS: This relates to your idea of social network? Or trading through

friends? Because it could still have that romantic connotation of grannies preparing cakes and everything staying within the familiar environment of home and ... the kitchen?

KR: Or even the romantic notion that Facebook could give you ... that your friends are always your friends. The whole point for me is that social networks are necessarily difficult, troublesome, obstacle filled, so my trade runs along networks that incorporate delay, obstruction.

FS: Looking at your documentation of the trading process ... you show in minute detail how products are transported, who pays for them etcetera.

KR: The reason for the information is that it is something that I find shamefully missing from contemporary products. Sometimes you get a picture of the producer or someone that is the photo-model of the producer but there is no information of how it got there ... Made in China but where in China and how did it get here... nothing about the broader ecology of supply.

46:53.0

The Cooks in Trinidad

Track: *The Cooks in Trinidad*. Wilmot Houdini, 1931

50:02.1

Manifeste de cuisine futuriste

Reading: Jules Maincave. *Premier manifeste de cuisine futuriste*, 1914 à 1918

51:28.7

Man pages and Manuals

Excerpt from a text written and read by Ivan Monroy Lopez, 2008

In the GNU coding standards, the terms documentation and manual practically mean the same thing. Specifically, a manual is a texinfo file, and documentation includes manuals and other things like NEWS files and change logs. In practice, the latter term practically takes the place of the former.

The people of GNU distinguish between the way in which a program was built, and the way in which it's used. They warn about modeling the documentation after the software.

The GNU coding standards advise authors to approach users pedagogically, thinking about "the concepts and questions that a user will have in mind when reading it." What's more, the manuals that they write should admit two types of reading: tutorial and reference. It's interesting to note that by tutorial they mean something that a user may want to read straight through.

59:36.9

The vert et thé noir

Dégustation: *Biscuits à la poudre de thé vert et œufs marinés au thé du tigre*

Preparation and recipe: Yi Liang

1:02:27.0

Réponse de l'énigme

Reading: *Les Sandwiches*. Georges Perec, *Jeux intéressants*, Ed. Zulma, 1980-1982

1:04:41.4

Foley Folie I

Kitchen utensil performance by Christophe Piette (R.O.T)

Semiotics of the Kitchen Radio Part II

00:00

Chanson paté

Track: *L'air du paté*. Chimay, Hainault. From: G Roullier, à Biarent, *Mélodie populaire Wallone et Flamande* – 1924

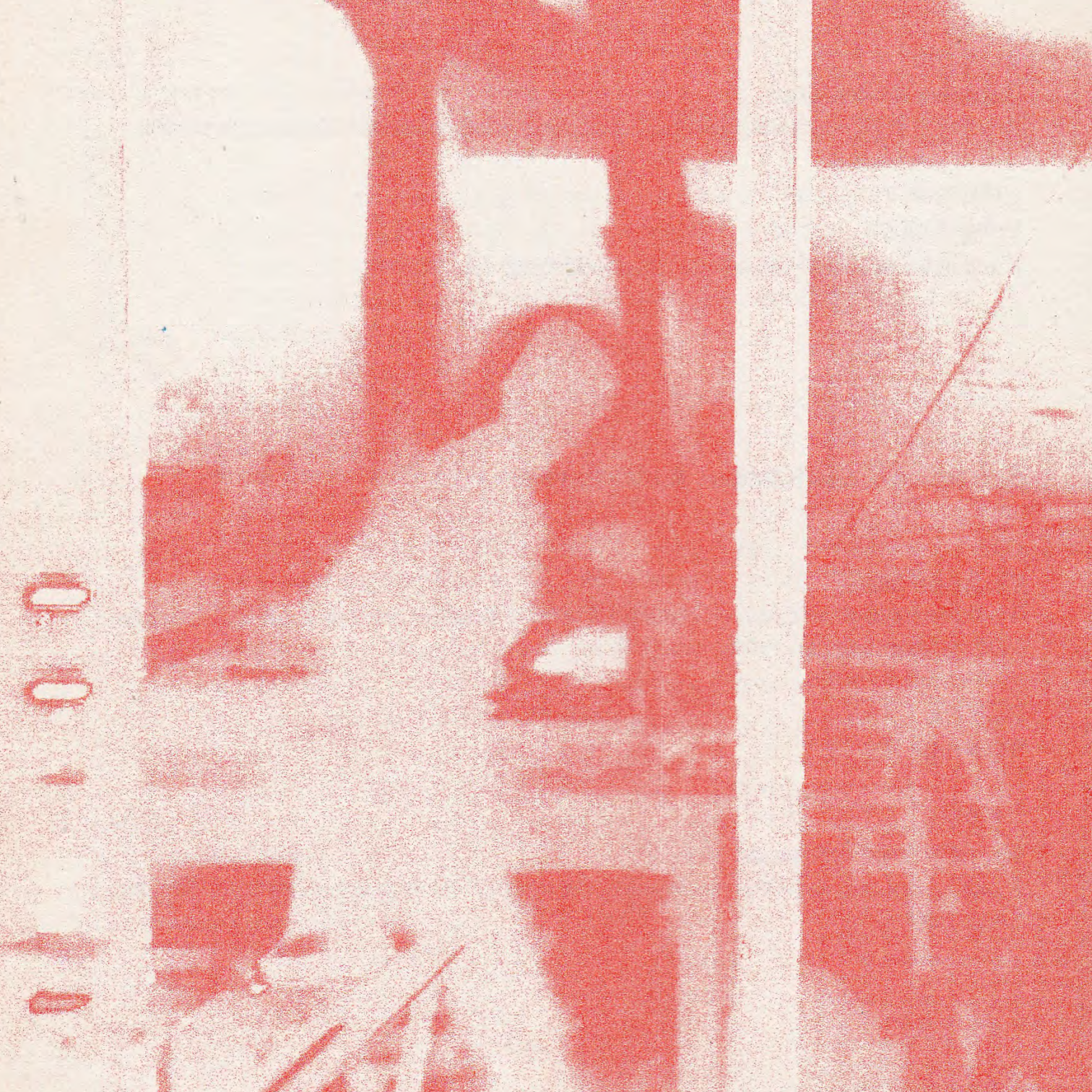
01:39.7

Welcome II

04:38.9

Un délicat problème de pesée

Reading: *Un délicat problème de pesée*. Georges Perec, *Jeux intéressants*, Ed. Zulma, 1980-1982





05:05.6

Chevaliers de la purée

Track: *Les Chevaliers de la Purée*. Paul Peri, 1930?

07:17:3

I think the ideas behind it are beautiful in my mind

Excerpt from an interview with George Williams. Recorded by OSP at the Libre Graphics Meeting in Montreal, 2007

George Williams is the main developer of the Free Software font editor FontForge, a powerful typographic tool which allows the manipulation of letter forms and other glyphs. Just before the dot.com bubble burst, Williams managed to sell off his company and now has time to do what he wants: marathon running, bread baking, pottery making and software developing.

GW: I like to make things. I like to make things that — in some strange definition are beautiful. I'm not sure how that applies to making bread, but my pots — I think I make beautiful pots. And I really like the glazing I put onto them.

It's harder to say that a font editor is beautiful. But I think the ideas behind it are beautiful in my mind — and in some sense I find the user interface beautiful. I'm not sure that anyone else in the world does, because it's what I want, but I think it's beautiful.

And there's a satisfaction in making something — in making something that's beautiful.

And there's a satisfaction too (as far as the bread goes) in making something I need. I eat my own bread — that's all the bread I eat

(except for those few days when I get lazy and don't get to make bread that day and have to put it off until the next day and have to eat something that day — but that doesn't happen very often).

So it's just — I like making beautiful things.

OSP: OK, thank you.

GW: Mm-hmm.

OSP: That was very nice, thank you very much.

GW: Thank you. I have pictures of my pots if you'd like to see them?

OSP: Yes, we would very much like to see them.

GW: Good!

09:37.3

La Crêpe

Reading: Achille Ozanne in Auguste Hélie: *La crepe, Traite general de la cuisine maigre*. Paris, 1890

12:40.0

Pickels

Recording of a performance (2008) by Pickels et frères in which they prepare pickels, a classic recipe from Anderlecht, Brussels.

16:13.0

The edible metaphor

Excerpt from a lecture by filmmaker Peter Kubelka on materiality, cooking and film. Berlin Biennial, 2006

24:46.4

As with the commander of an army

Excerpt from a reading by command of Isabelle Beeton *The book of Household management* (1870)

Script: Femke Snelting

*As with the commander of an army uses a simple language pattern to find imperative verbs in all 1177 pages of the 19th century **Book of Household Management**. Results are fed into a synthetic speech programme which renders them audible. **The Book of Household Management** combines instructions for how to run a household as efficiently as an army devison, with recipes for the necessarily repetitive work involved in the making and keeping of a comfortable home.*

4368 | CHAPTER I.

4370 |

4371 | THE MISTRESS.

4376 |

4382 |

4383 |

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4410 |

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4451 |

DESCRIBE

REMEMBER

SUCCEED

LIKE

ADD

REMAIN

INVITE

CALL

FOLLOW

BELONG

POINT

ENTER

MANAGE

4461					SMILE
4462	APPROVE				
4462				POSSESS	
4465			IMAGINE		
4466		LOOK			
4468				POSSESS	
4470			TRUST		
4473					PREFER
4481				CARE	
4489	FOUND				
4491		PART			
4497			REFLECT		
4503					PASS
4507		LIKE			
4512					CARRY
4514		PLEASE			
4514					STORE
4517					PLACE
4522	RAISE				
4524					ENTERTAIN
4525	IMPROVE				
4528			TURN		
4532			FAIL		

33:27.9

Carol's cake

Track: *Carol's Cake*. Volapuk, Pneu, 2005

Excerpt from a poisonous take on *Cake d'Amour* prepared by Catherine Deneuve in *Peau d'Ane*

24:46.4

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MANAGE

Choisissez quatre œufs frais, qu'ils soient du matin frais
Car à plus de vingt jours, un poussin sort toujours. Funny!
Un bol entier de lait, bien crémeux s'il vous plait. Please!
De sucre parsemez, et vous amalgamez. Easy!

Un souhait d'amour s'impose, que la pâte repose.
Methanol... Ciguë... Glue... Glue... Methanol... Mort aux rats...
Dauphinelle... Cyanide... Digitale... PCP! Angel of Death... Arsenic...
Chlorate... Souffle...
Arsenic. Dans le cake!

Une main de beurre fin, un souffle de levain. Aha!
Une larme de miel, et un soupçon de sel. Pas plus!
Il est temps à présent, tandis que vous brassez. Le cake. A l'arsenic.
De glisser un présent, pour votre fiancé. Your lover!

Un souhait d'amour s'impose, que la pâte repose. But not too long!

Lissez le plat de beurre. Et laissez cuire une heure. One hour!
Il est temps à présent, tandis que vous brassez. Le cake.
De glisser un présent, pour votre fiancé.

Belladonna. Ciguë... Le cake empoisoné.

37:08.5

La Vie matérielle

Reading: *La Vie matérielle*. Marguerite Duras, 1987

40:20.5

Some forms of repetition are not redundant

Excerpt from an interview with Nicolas Malevé

CakePHP (a popular software framework for developing and maintaining web applications) is yet another example of how cooking is used as a metaphor in coding. Nicolas explained one of its basic principles: 'convention, not configuration'. Like in cooking, coding starts from a set of basic assumptions, formulas after which experiment becomes possible. But how much do conventions drive the experiment?

NM: The GPL license is written in ... 1983, something like that? For me, this thinking is bound to a certain context of computing, where computing is related to mainframes and a certain stage of a productivist model which is based on repetition. When you see 1984, the advertisement by Apple, it is all against Big Brother, people being liberated from their chains ... it is clearly the end of the Fordist model, where repetition is bound to industry, like in Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, this model of non-freedom. I guess now, when we do Free Software, when we see how many people do and redo the same software in parallel, we may have the feeling that repetition must have another meaning as well because they do that

for their pleasure, or at least from enthusiasm and I think this form of repetition is more related to crafts. (...)

NM: But why do they have to tell us again and again that repetition and redundancy are bad? It is incredibly beautiful to see that repetition and redundancy never stop. It is probably the most beautiful hypocrisy of computer science, because programming produces plenty of spaghetti coding in every direction, that is clear. Probably it is also another selling argument for why software is efficient, but we know that is a lie. A learning process means redundancy, communication means redundancy. (...) What is interesting, is to see where you put repetition. Maybe it is more about where to strategically use repetition, than to try to avoid it.

57:54.9

Réponse de l'énigme

Reading: *Un délicat problème de pesée, Jeux intéressants*, Ed. Zulma, 1980-1982

1:01:40.2

J'aime l'ognon

Track: *J'aime l'ognon (Le mari qui n'a que les os à manger)*. Haversin, Namur

1:04:10.0

La Merdre

Reading: Alfred Jarry. . 1896

1:05:11.3

Foley Folie II

Kitchen performance by Christophe Piette (R.O.T) and Rachelle Sassi

Texts used: Rabelais. *Le Quart Livre. Chapitre XLI: Comment Pantagruel rompit les andouilles aux genoux.* 1548-1552; Roger Pol Droit. *Manger une substance sans nom, 101 experiences de philosophie quotidienne;* Odile Jacob, 2001; Curnonsky. *Cuisine et vins de France.* Larousse, 1953

OSP (Open Source Publishing) is Harrisson, Pierre Huyghebaert, Femke Snelting, Nicolas Maleve, Yi Liang, Ludivine Loiseau and Ivan Monroy Lopez. OSP is an experimental graphic design bureau aiming to test the possibilities and realities of doing graphic design using Free Software tools.

<http://ospublish.constantvzw.org>

Although the “guild for Reality integrators and generators” may have been active for centuries, since November 2006 six cultural organisations have begun to open the doors of the guild. The current gRig members share a mutual purpose; to mix separate realities, as well as bring whole new realities into existence. They are committed to research and create situations in hybrid (or mixed) reality, where digital media and physical materials, objects and spaces are increasingly intertwined. It is on these fuzzy edges that experimental technology and contemporary culture amplify each other’s potentials. We have found these edges to be the most fertile ground for innovative social and cultural advances, in which the Guild for Reality Integrators and Generators can be best called into service.

gRig sites 2006-2009

FoAM (Belgium) is a transdisciplinary laboratory committed openness, resilience and a holistic approach to life. FoAM seeks out and connects people in the interstitial spaces between professional and cultural boundaries, encouraging them to mix realities of art and science, digital and physical, nature and technology, adopting the motto - “grow your own worlds”. <http://fo.am.be>

nadine (Belgium) is an arts laboratory aimed at developing research focusing on transdisciplinary experiments in the fields of new media and live arts. *nadine* is a flexible and evolving project that doesn’t shy away from questioning itself to be able to stay on top of the constantly changing needs of artists.

<http://www.nadine.be>

Time’s Up (Austria) is a research institute using experimental situations as a means of investigating the behavior of the public individual in everyday and nearly everyday situations. <http://www.timesup.org>

Performing Pictures (Sweden) works in the area of moving images and new technologies for media delivery as part of the Interactive Institute – a Swedish experimental IT-research institute that combines expertise in art, design and information technology. In their artistic practice Performing Pictures explore and develop responsive film art. <http://performingpictures.se>

KIBLA (Slovenia), a multimedia artcentre, is focused on the new (contemporary) educational, cultural and artistic praxis, connecting education and research, culture and technology, arts and sciences, emancipating and demystifying media as a creative tool in education and new forms of art. <http://kibla.si>

InterMedia (Norway) investigates the intersections between design, communication and learning in digital environments. Their approach is multidisciplinary and involves critical research, development and experiments. <http://intermedia.uio.no>



Education and Culture

Culture 2000

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