

Exhibition Highlights

FOOD: Bigger than the Plate

Gallery 39 and North Court

18 May – 20 October 2019

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V&A Mushroom Farm, 2019



The museum is building a mushroom farm onsite with the help of GroCycle, an innovative social enterprise based in Devon who have grown mushrooms since 2009 using sustainable and low-tech methods. Showcasing the idea of a circular economy, the V&A will grow oyster mushrooms in the gallery from used coffee grounds – including grounds from the V&A Benugo café – with the mushrooms then harvested and

taken back into the café to be served in selected dishes. The installation will be cultivated and farmed during the exhibition run, and challenges the notion of ‘waste’ materials, with the coffee grounds being recycled and reused.

Daily Dump, 2006 – present



Daily Dump is a pioneering home composting system in Bangalore, India, which encourages individuals to treat food waste at source to create cleaner and more sustainable cities. Locally produced terracotta composting pots produce fertiliser from food scraps that can be used in gardening or sold back to Daily Dump. Their attractive, handcrafted form invites people to appreciate the organic beauty of the composting process and to incorporate it into daily life.

In an Indian context where many of the poorest in the city are involved in informal refuse collection, Daily Dump confronts the stigma of handling waste and questions whose responsibility it is to take care of it.

Koen Vanmechelen, *Planetary Community Chicken (PCC)*, 2016 – present



Belgian conceptual artist Koen Vanmechelen has been crossbreeding chickens from different countries since 1999 through his *Cosmopolitan Chicken Project (CCP)*, creating a collection of chickens that are more resilient, live longer, and are less prone to disease than their industrial counterparts. *Planetary Community Chicken* continues this work, bringing new, healthier chickens to the world's communities by pairing CCP roosters with local commercial hens globally. The aim is to produce birds that are more productive for local people, improving nutrition and biodiversity.

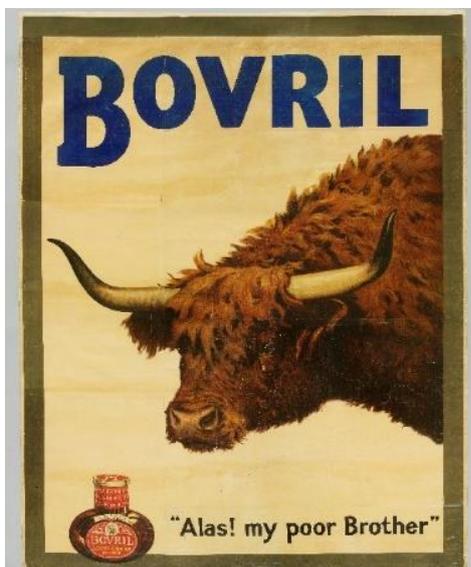
Company Drinks, 2014 – present



Company Drinks is a community enterprise in east London that brings people together to pick, process and produce drinks. Founded by Kathrin Böhm of Myvillages in 2014, it started by inviting residents of Barking and Dagenham to 'go picking' in Kent – recalling the history of east Londoners going hop picking. More than 36,000 people across generations and cultures have since engaged with the enterprise,

which aims to use local heritage, skills and resources to establish a local economy. *FOOD* will feature a short film about the picking process, and a Company Drinks bar in the gallery will serve drinks samples to exhibition visitors.

"Alas! My poor Brother", poster by W.H. Caffyn advertising Bovril, 1905



The 'Trading' section will include an early marketing campaign poster for Bovril beef extract, measuring almost 3-metres high. Bovril was successfully established as a household name in the late 1800s by advertising agent S.H. Benson, and in 1923 this iconic image won second prize in a Bovril competition for the most popular poster. An example of the beginning of branding, its inclusion in *FOOD* shines a light on trading history, showing how brands have changed the way we understand food through the visual stories they tell.

Uli Westphal, *Supernatural*, 2019



A new commission by German artist Uli Westphal will explore the way nature and agriculture are portrayed on UK supermarket packaging. As part of his ongoing series *Supernatural*, Westphal is creating a triptych of landscapes for *FOOD*, collaged from imagery found on packaging in three different UK supermarkets. The strange and oversaturated scenes that result highlight how packaging generates idealised and often fictional ideas about how our food is produced.

Fallen Fruit, *Endless Orchard*, 2019



Contemporary artist collective Fallen Fruit are creating a new commission for the V&A in the form of a 12-metre squared wallpaper. Drawing on the V&A's collections, and the pre-museum history of the site (which was once an important nursery for fruit trees), it will explore the past and contemporary role of fruit in creating shared culture. The commission is an extension of Fallen Fruit's public art project *Endless Orchard*, that encourages planting fruit trees and foraging in public space as a way for people to engage with their local landscapes and communities.

Skipping Rocks Lab, *Ooho!* edible water bottle, 2013



Ooho! is a sustainable, edible packaging for liquids made from seaweed-extract, and is a 100% natural alternative to plastic bottles, cups and sachets. Designed for consuming on-the-go, the capsules can either be 'eaten' or left to degrade naturally in around 6 weeks. Their most iconic product is an edible water bottle – which will be on display in *FOOD* and available to buy from the V&A Benugo café – but the packaging can also hold other liquids like energy drinks, juice, sauces and condiments.

Michael Zee, *SymmetryBreakfast*, 2013 – present



Since 2013, Michael Zee has shared images of the breakfasts he makes for himself and his partner Mark on his hugely popular Instagram account @SymmetryBreakfast, incorporating world cuisines, contemporary design and a story of love over breakfast. Mark's hectic job meant breakfast became a sacred meal early in the couple's relationship as a way to spend time together. Michael wakes up early each morning to make breakfast for Mark, creating beautiful dishes inspired by breakfast cultures all over the world. In *FOOD*, an animation of Michael's SymmetryBreakfast

Instagram will underline how the power of deliciousness can connect people.

Carolien Niebling, *The Sausage of the Future*, 2014-17



Sausages were one of the first designed food items, offering a solution for making a limited supply of meat go further. Designer Carolien Niebling has teamed up with butcher Herman ter Weele and molecular chef Gabriel Serero to develop a range of creative new sausage designs that explore how we might put historic ingenuity to good use today in finding delicious but sustainable approaches to consuming protein. Models of Carolien's sausage designs – including the 'Fruit Salami' and 'Insect Pâté' – will be on display in the exhibition, and one of her recipes will appear in the exhibition publication.

New commission by Honey & Bunny, 2019



Honey and Bunny – an interdisciplinary design atelier founded by Sonja Stummerer and Martin Hablesreiter – use playful performances that disrupt the familiar rituals of the table in order to question eating behaviours that we take for granted. For *FOOD*, they are creating a series of site-specific films that will see them experiment with eating in unexpected locations around the museum.

Photography Credits

1. Urban Mushroom Farm © GroCycle
2. Daily Dump Compost at Home - India
3. Mechelse Maatiaiskana – 22nd generation Cosmopolitan Chicken Project © Koen Vanmechelen
4. Hop-picking trip 2018. Courtesy Company Drinks, photo Nick Matthews
5. “Alas! My poor Brother”, poster advertising Bovril, 1905 © Henry Caffyn/Image courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London
6. *Supernatural Albertsons* © Uli Westphal 2014
7. Fallen Fruit, David Allen Burns and Austin Young, “Theater of the Sun”, 2018, wallpaper pattern, variable dimensions. Created for the art installation, *Theater of the Sun* for Manifesta 12. Courtesy of the artists
8. *Ooho!* - Skipping Rocks Lab
9. © Michael Zee, SymmetryBreakfast
10. Carolien Niebling, *The Sausage of the Future*. Clockwise, from top left: Carrot, apricot and coconut dried sausage; Berry, date and almond dried sausage; Insect salami; Berry and liver sausage; Apple blood sausage; Potato and pea fresh sausage; Vegetable mortadella. Photo: Noortje Knulst
11. © honey & bunny (Sonja Stummerer & Martin Hablesreiter) / Daisuke Akita

For further PRESS information about *FOOD* please contact Sophie Steel on s.steel@vam.ac.uk / +44 (0)20 7942 2279, or vam@purplepr.com (not for publication). A selection of press images is available to download free of charge from pressimages.vam.ac.uk