

# MIRALDA MADE IN USA





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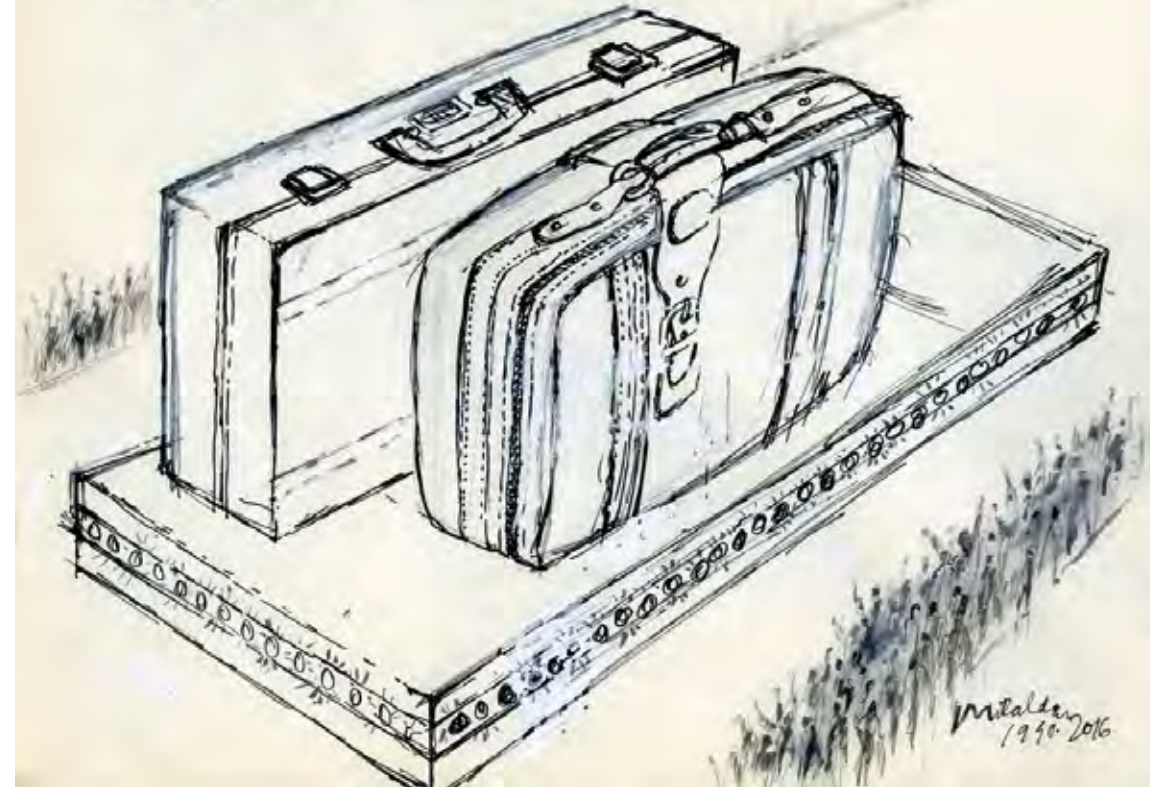
# MIRALDA MADEINUSA

**MAC  
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MUSEU  
D'ART CONTEMPORANI  
DE BARCELONA



to Benet Rossell & Jaume Xifra





# THE AMERICAN MAKING OF MIRALDA, THE PARTICIPATORY ARTIST

Josep M. Martí Font

“The experiment of working in a team is like a game. You give and you take. Sometimes it ends in drama, but that isn’t bad. There’s nothing wrong with drama.”

Miralda

Miralda arrives in the United States for the first time in 1971. He’s thirty years old. He exhibits in the Richard Gray gallery in Chicago. He’s built a career in the Paris of the *nouveaux réalistes* and is one of the “Paris Catalans” (together with Jaume Xifra, Dorothee Selz, Benet Rossell and Joan Rabascall) who are adored by such powerful critics as Pierre Restany. He travels round the country and in 1972 he ends up in New York, where he runs into another Catalan, Antoni Muntadas, with whom he shares a loft at 228 West Broadway in south Manhattan. It’s a big bright space accessed directly from the freight elevator. There are large desks and permanently switched on TVs showing distorted images that are impossible to identify as the channels are deliberately not tuned in correctly and the color, a technology at that time still in its infancy, bled its way into greens and oranges. There is something psychedelic about it. Nowadays everyone knows what a loft is and that the ones in that area, between SoHo and Tribeca, cost enormous sums of money. Then, they were simple warehouses taken over by artists. Miralda finds it through an advertisement on the noticeboard at Pearl Paint, the indispensable art-supply store on Canal Street. On the floor above lived Meredith Monk, artist, musician, and composer, who played all the keys, from performance to free jazz and who could be heard rehearsing at the most unexpected times.

The United States at that time is a country in upheaval, still engulfed in the Vietnam War, where all kinds of movements and political, social, and cultural rebellion defy the system. New York is a cauldron of ideas, a social laboratory where the last part of the twentieth century is cooked. The city bubbles with initiatives, breathes freedom, and lives with the sensation that anything is possible and that there are no red lines that cannot be crossed. It is a collective sensation. At midnight on Saturday nights,

long lines form outside The Elgin Theater, on 19<sup>th</sup> Street in the Chelsea neighborhood, to see the iconoclastic *El Topo*, by the Chilean Alejandro Jodorowsky, later replaced by David Lynch’s masterpiece *Eraserhead*. A young Bob Wilson stages the monumental opera *The Life and Times of Joseph Stalin*, which runs for more than twelve hours, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music; an oneiric experience for the audience, signaling the scenographic path for future decades. It is one of those times where everything seems to need to be done and the circumstances are right for it to happen. Washington is in the hands of Richard Nixon, a crooked president who will see himself forced to resign from office because of the Watergate scandal, overwhelmed by his own lies and pressurized by an emboldened society that openly challenges the traditional establishment. The pictures of Nixon boarding the helicopter and leaving the White House are one of those moments that taste of glory, when we believe that the world is ours. In Europe, the aftershocks of May 1968 are experienced and intellectual demobilization wreaks havoc. In Spain, General Franco continues in power.

Miralda and Muntadas, or Muntadas and Miralda, form a strange and somewhat symbiotic pair. One is color, the other monochrome. One is the sociologist’s apprentice, with the conceptualist sobriety of the video art pioneers; the other is the anthropologist’s apprentice, the baroque artist diving into popular culture. There is a very powerful exchange between the two of them. The space they share defines them. There, they cook 250 kilos of rice and color it in such a way that a taste corresponds to each part of the spectrum; from pink to blue and green going by way of yellow and the most garish red. The action is called *Sangría 228 West B Way*, in honor of two large receptacles full of sangría. The following morning they attack the street, occupying the asphalt on which they spread out the remains of the banquet in such a way that the colors and texture continually change as the traffic passes over. The piece also follows its path through the stomachs and digestive tracts of the artists and participants in a glorious scatological race, so that the final deposits also reflect the metamorphosis of color.

Many people go to the West Broadway studio that day. The practice of “open studios” is habitual; the majority of the members of the artistic community open the doors to their places of work, which are also their homes, to share and present their work. Daily life in a loft, in a space without any walls or divisions, is a stimulating experience. One meeting place is the Canal Street Post Office, where the line is shared with the neighborhood artists, people such as the father of video art, Nam June Paik, Willoughby Sharp – founder and editor of *Avalanche* magazine – and other members of the Fluxus group like Geoffrey Hendricks and the cellist and artist Charlotte Moorman, founder of, and the driving force behind, the Annual New York Avant Garde Festival.



Paco de Lucía and Peter Downsbrough tasting the rice at Sangría 228 West B Way, 1972.



Toilet at 228 West Broadway, 1972.



The festival, a key event on the New York scene, was born to present pieces of experimental music and happenings by the Fluxus movement and went on to open up to all practices, from electronic music, dance, and performance to video art. During its existence from 1963 to 1980 it was held in places such as Central Park, Shea Stadium, and the World Trade Center, and in others as improbable as the Staten Island ferry and a train traveling from Buffalo to Grand Central Station. Moorman had the ability to involve people in her projects and get them to give of their best. She handed out vitamin tablets to keep her assistants awake, Miralda recalls. Everything was organized from her studio with the help of friends lost in a mass of papers and dossiers which reminded Miralda of Joan Brossa's Barcelona studio. He himself collaborated in the organization of the 1973 edition that took place in Penn Station and in which 282 artists took part, using the platforms and a train's coaches. Miralda's piece was called *Hot & Cold* and consisted of two big tables with rice salads and colored breads, one illuminated by infrared light and the other, the cold one, with normal light.

In the first few years of the seventies, Miralda comes and goes between Europe and America, between Paris and New York, two hubs of culture that are evolving in different directions. The American poison, however, is taking effect. After producing *Edible Landscape*, an installation where 200 guests eat a Christmas country scene at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York, the event that will change the course of the Miraldian packet boat arrives. In early 1974 he receives an unexpected commission. Paul Smith, director of the museum, puts him in contact with the storekeepers' association of Ninth Avenue in Manhattan, a working-class West Side neighborhood known as Hell's Kitchen, with a mix of Italians, Greeks, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Chinese... the epitome of a melting pot. They aim to stop a large-scale real estate operation which would wipe out the essence of the place if it were to take place and because of this they want to organize the First International Ninth Avenue Festival and get the city's attention. They propose that Miralda, who doesn't even know Ninth Avenue exists, work in the streets, with regular people, totally away from art circles.

He accepts. He goes around the area and talks to the residents, the storekeepers, and discovers a place imbued with fusion: the Virgen de la Regla, the Meat Market, Manganaro's restaurant – whose origins date back to 1893 – the old New York communities that keep their identity and urban legends. He also discovers that the space is free and available to anyone who wants to occupy it. The first meeting takes place in a modest backroom. They tell him they are thinking of setting up stalls on the street with each store's products. Instead of having them immobile on the sidewalk,



The Hilton Hotel allowed the use of their kitchens in collaboration in the *Movable Feast* project, 1974.

Miralda suggests it might be better to set them on a platform so it's clear that everyone is joining in. And then, once they're on a platform, all you have to do is add wheels and take it all up and down the avenue. The idea is accepted and then the negotiation begins. The artist will have to accept that some things will not be possible and others will have to be brought in; that he will have to set up a team, get the residents and storekeepers on board, manage his desires and ability to fulfill...

*Movable Feast*, as it was baptized, was basically a great horse-drawn three-tier carriage full of food, wrapped up in a parade. Everyone joins in. His great ally is Louis Manganaro, heir to the inventive dynasty of the famous hero sandwich, a true New York classic. The Hilton Hotel lets him use their kitchens to make the colored bread. It is the first time he has ever been in a big hotel's kitchen and he will not forget it. The local Boy Scout association offer to hand out the colored bread slices during the parade.

It is a founding moment for Miralda's activity in public space. Everything he will go on to do is already present on Ninth Avenue. The production of the event becomes the learning that will mark his way of working. He is on the street, without the



Boy Scouts waiting for the gloves to hand out the slices of colored bread to the crowd during the parade at *Movable Feast*, 1974.

conceptual safety nets the art world provides, and with no references to help deal with all the different practical problems that occur during the process. He has to find out how North American society works at people level. He runs up against the unyielding rigidity of the public authorities. The city assign to him three municipal employees, but no one warns them they are working with an artist. They see his wishes as whims, stick strictly to the rulebook, and cause confrontation and conflict. The budget is gradually cut or not stretched enough. Miralda, however, despite his still incipient mastery of English, gets round the difficulties with the help of the people who believe in his project. Everything seems to develop in a constant dice with catastrophe, but in the end the aim is achieved: the mayor of New York, Abraham Beame, comes to the parade and the city turns its eyes to Ninth Avenue.

The carriage and its escorts are now marching down the avenue and the Boy Scouts are handing out the slices of colored bread to the crowd. Suddenly everything comes to a halt: an official orders them to stop because health regulations do not allow food to be touched with bare hands. Desolation spreads. Everyone goes silent. The kids stare at the ground disconsolately. Miralda immediately gets hold of dozens



of pairs of colored gloves from a neighborhood haberdashery store and the parade recommences. The Boy Scouts, including their veteran leader, start handing out the colored bread again.

The negotiation with the people in the neighborhood, with the storekeepers, shows him the way; the importance of being able to fully explain the project so as to generate enthusiasm and the necessary collaboration for it to go ahead. It will be the central element in his artistic activity: the project's communication is part of its very origin. Miralda does it with both words and drawings, which will be his best argument. A set of arguments which will transport instructions, suggest ways of interpretation, transmit ideas and delight those who receive it by means of an amazing machine: the fax, a sublime device which the analogue world gave birth to before it disappeared and to which Miralda declares himself for ever in debt. The compilation of these facsimiles remains a task for the future.



Louis Manganaro with the hero sandwich, 1974.

Another essential element in Miralda's work: food, which turns a decisive corner on Ninth Avenue. In the process of putting together the carriage with the various foodstuffs, Miralda discovers the incredible range of products each culture provides. He visits La Marqueta – the market in Spanish Harlem – near El Museo del Barrio and comes across the *botánicas*, the stores around 130<sup>th</sup> Street where all kinds of religious products are to be found. They sell the herbs in the drugstore, but in the backyards are the roosters and hens required for the rituals. On this journey, he is accompanied by the French artist Arman and an unusual New York collector, Jack Kaplan, a famous Fifth Avenue fur dealer and friend of artists with whom he exchanges artworks for fur and for whom Miralda designs a store window display in exchange for a bearskin coat.

He discovers the true meaning of the North American melting pot: that the layers of different cultures create a whole with which everyone can identify, a place where – he says – “you can be more authentic than in your own country, because the city grants you space and respect, whereas in Europe I didn't know what respect for what people say and do was.” The esthete with exquisite taste who dazzles in Paris and Milan, the artist who builds affected imaginary cenotaphs or dresses the Winged Victory of Samothrace in a cloak of little plastic soldiers, the scenographer who produces fascinating rituals of color, gets dirty when he turns American. In a society that

practices the immediacy of the ephemeral and with the permanent ability to dare to try what is on offer just to see if it works – something very improbable at the time in Europe – Miralda is transformed into a creator who goes beyond artistic practice.

After Ninth Avenue, he prepares a banquet for the premiere of the film *Ladies & Gentlemen: The Rolling Stones* at the Ziegfeld Theater that was called off on public order grounds, although the colored food ends up being handed out in a Salvation Army center for the destitute. He returns to Europe and brings together his *Cénotaphes* at the Galerie Noire in Paris; he prepares a portfolio with his sketches and collages for the *Cendriers-tombeaux* and, among other things, has his first solo exhibition in Barcelona, at Galería G, on the poster for which appear for the first time the languages that years later will become an omnipresent symbol in many of his projects. In 1977 he is invited to take part in Documenta 6 in Kassel, due to take place at the beginning of the summer. He has an interview with the artistic director, Manfred Schneckenburger, and explains to him that in order to carry out his project, *Fest für Leda*, he needs to use the Versailles inspired Karlsaue gardens. In this way, he wants to integrate Documenta into Kassel's everyday life. An elaborate festive procession leaves from the shopping area in the city center and ends at the Temple on the Island of Swans at Karlsaue. “So you're a participatory artist!” Schneckenburger tells him after listening to the proposal. At the following Documenta, Rebecca Horn will also use the Karlsaue gardens.



Making the prototype swan for the set of 22 swans for the Fest für Leda procession, 1977.

Back in the United States, he jumps to Texas, the apparent antipodes to Schneckenburger's Kassel. The Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston – a fleeting *ville miracle* – is directed by James Harithas, one of the most radical characters on the art scene at the time with an intense relationship with the people in Fluxus and who has gathered round him guys like Paul Schimmel, David Ross, and Rita Gardner. Fascinated by Texan culture, the mix of the “Western” and ultramodernity, Miralda produces the *Breadline* performance, which consists of a sixty-meter-long wall of colored bread combined with the installation *Texas TV Dinner*; a reflection on popular North American culture where television is already playing a dominant role, something which is still to happen in Europe. *TV Dinner* is a complete menu served on a tray with individual compartments for each dish, heated in the oven with the single objective of





Portraits in the New York subway, c. 1984.  
Pierre Restany and Jos de Cock returning from a  
botánica in the neighborhood of Spanish Harlem.  
Dale Eldred, James Harithas and Fernando Vijaende.

being able to eat while watching television. They are a series of monitor-trays which symbolize daily habits: the screen as object.

The icing on top is the Kilgore College Rangerettes – a Texan version of Majorettes – the cheerleaders of a local football team who, dressed in denim miniskirts and cowboy attire do their routines on the night of the performance with the result that all the people present, the cream of Houston high society, launch themselves crazily at the colored bread wall and rip out crusts to throw over their heads, thus generating a real pitched battle with colored bread that spills over into the streets surrounding the museum in what ends up being known as the Night of the Food Fight.

By that time, Miralda had expanded his spectrum of works to other fields, the majority being related to rituals and foodstuffs. In 1979 he looks south and travels to the Port-au-Prince carnival in Haiti, to All Souls' Day at Lake Pátzcuaro in Mexico, to the Festival of Dates in Morocco, and the Celebration of the Full Moon in Sri Lanka. At the Bronx Zoo he produces *Thanksgiving: The Animals' Banquet* with Karin Bacon. With the assistance of twelve chefs, he offers the animals a meal as they are shown a video of humans eating the traditional Thanksgiving Day turkey.

The qualitative leap to turn into the participatory artist foreseen by Schneckeburger in Kassel takes place in Kansas City, capital of corrals, destination for great herds of livestock, a Homeric space of epic legends of the West, the mythical place where the cowboys went to spend their pay after crossing the prairies. In addition, Charlie Parker's city, the cradle of bebop, in which jazz became denser and darker. You can't find anything more American.

In November every year, Kansas City holds the American Royal, an event with all sorts of agricultural competitions with prizes for the best cattle, sheep, and pigs, and at the same time big business is done on the grain market, the Kansas City Board of Trade (KCBT). Dale Eldred, a professor at the Art Institute of Kansas City who had seen Miralda's *Breadline* in Houston, searches him out to do a presentation at his school. The KCBT and the Nelson Art Gallery get involved in the idea of Miralda organizing a very special edition of the American Royal, so special that it would take three years of work and the participation of 500 people.

Miralda arrives in Kansas City in time for the Future Farmers of America convention, where they explain to him where the corrals the livestock are taken to are, how the grain market works, and they initiate him into the traditions of livestock and

crop farming. To his surprise, the meetings with the farmers, although complicated, always have moving the project along as their main aim. "They are open to what might come and see immediately how to take advantage of things, how to make projects their own," he remembers. "*La vie d'artiste rencontre la vie de l'Amérique profonde* [The life of an artist meets the life of the heart of America]," the critic Pierre Restany said at the time.

He designs an enormous *Royal Crown* made of pig lard, out of which sprout a steer's head, a sheep's, and a pig's butt. He also uses large cows of different breeds, to be drawn by ostentatious Cadillac convertibles. The signature piece of the event is made up of a steer, a pig, and a sheep, all placed on top of each other, marked with their cuts, and made into unicorns, which undertakes a 100-kilometer journey by road from where it is put together to Kansas City. He convinces the Marching Cobras drum and percussion band to parade, carrying cut-outs in the shape of knives, forks, sickles, and steaks, farmers and citizens to wrap themselves in sheaves of wheat and join in the procession, and dresses the huge combine harvesters in scarecrows. Not content with occupying the city, he manages to get them to allow him to use the large grain-trading space at the KCBT and he covers a wall with 6,000 gold, blue, and pink loaves which

The Wheat & Steak team modeling out of lard  
the sheep's head at the heart of the *Royal Crown*,  
Kansas City, 1981.



act as a projection screen. On the traders' desks, he places the ingredients for *Gold Taste*: blue bread and gold leaves. *Wheat & Steak*, as the Kansas City work came to be known, is a tour de force. It means a very long gestation period and is extremely complex, as it brings together a very wide range of elements of a whole city, involves major economic sectors, and is staged simultaneously in different public spaces. Miralda emerges from this experience in the heart of America, in the essence of the Midwest, with the capability to embark on any project, however impossible or amazing it might seem.

At the start of the eighties, the United States has left behind the turmoil of the Vietnam War and the depression which followed it, and even the exotic peanut-growing president Jimmy Carter. The country is led by a Hollywood actor, the conservative Ronald Reagan, who incarnates the wild optimism of the neoliberal project and especially the chance of getting rich. The world of culture and the arts becomes frivolous in line with these Hollywood parameters. The 228 West Broadway loft neighborhood is now known as Tribeca, and the SoHo boundary is now Canal Street. Miralda meets and



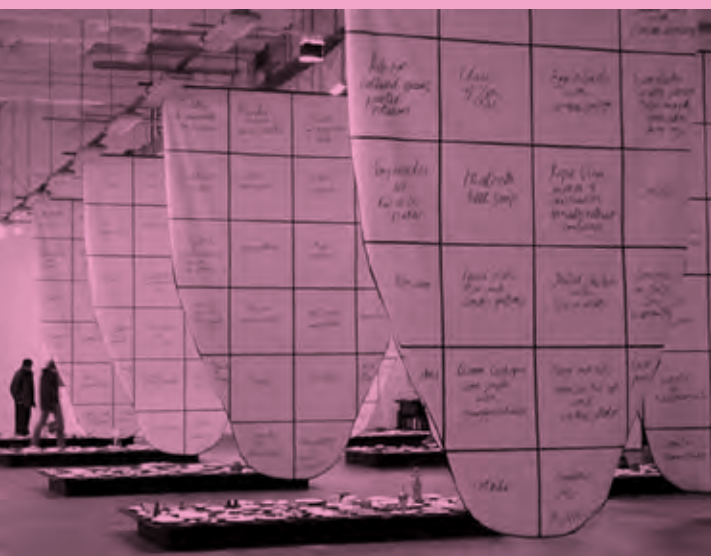


Article published in the New York Post (February 17, 1986) about the Face to Face dinner at *El Internacional* on the night of Valentine's Day.

collaborates for the first time with Montse Guillén, cook and artist, at the New World Festival of the Arts in Miami, where he presents the edible sculptures *Mermaid Table*. Out of his collaboration with Guillén, who was then running a famous restaurant in Barcelona, the idea of setting one up in New York emerged, something very different to anything previously known.

A twist of fate leads them to the discovery of premises right opposite the 228 West Broadway loft: a sign saying “For Rent” is hanging at the door to the old Teddy’s, an Italian restaurant with a long history and a great many legends, such as one that Edgar Allan Poe used to live on the site. In the twenties it was a popular restaurant serving German food and in 1945 passed into the hands of Sal Cucinotta who turned it into a luxurious and iconic Italian restaurant where film stars and all kinds of famous people, as well as important Mafia figures, came to eat. Miralda and Guillén go to see old Cucinotta and find that his bathroom is entirely covered in photographs from the fifties and that the premises’ old decoration and furniture, even the candelabras, are almost completely intact. It is as if it had been waiting for them. In the space of three months, and with a relatively modest budget, recycling everything they found there, they open *El Internacional*. They keep the façade, where it’s possible to still make out the old name, but on the roof terrace they place a life-size replica of the Statue of Liberty’s crown.

On the culinary side, *El Internacional* was the first restaurant to present tapas in the United States. As for the esthetics, it was the quintessence of Miralda’s world. Socially, it was where all the lines in mid-eighties Manhattan crossed. The succession of actions and events was non-stop. Just one example: on Valentine’s Day he brought



Sabores y Lengüas: Buenos Aires. Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, 2007.



Miralda finalizing details before the opening of the Bigfish Mayaimi restaurant, 1996.

together 53 pairs of identical twins with dishes that looked identical but had different flavors. The whole Who’s Who of New York was there: from Andy Warhol to Sara Montiel; from Jean-Michel Basquiat to Pina Bausch and Robert de Niro; David Lynch to Frank Zappa by way of David Byrne, Michael Douglas, Grace Jones, Diane Keaton, and Keith Haring, as well as such illustrious and unlikely visitors such as Umberto Eco and John F. Kennedy Jr. The restaurant is only to last two years, but the image of the Statue of Liberty’s crown on the roof of *El Internacional* is now a New York icon and appears in the credits of NBC’s *Saturday Night Live* show.

They give it up in 1986. Miralda the American participatory artist has reached mastery and he prepares for his most ambitious work: marrying the Statue of Liberty to Barcelona’s Christopher Columbus monument; this is the *Honeymoon Project* in which the American Miralda embraces the European Miralda to reflect on discovery and disagreement. It is true, as it must be, that the gods have to plot together to make it into a reality. Two decisive political elements come together: Pasqual Maragall is mayor of Barcelona and Ed Koch that of New York. Both are interested. *Honeymoon Project* is not a classic single project with a start and an end but an open process that develops on its own and goes where it is wanted and where the winds blow it, only with the expiration date of the *annus mirabilis* of 1992. It combines settings and cities and involves totally disparate actors. In the making of the trousseau and the couple’s presents, each has its own dynamic. It is a world in itself. It is like an infection; there is something organic about it.

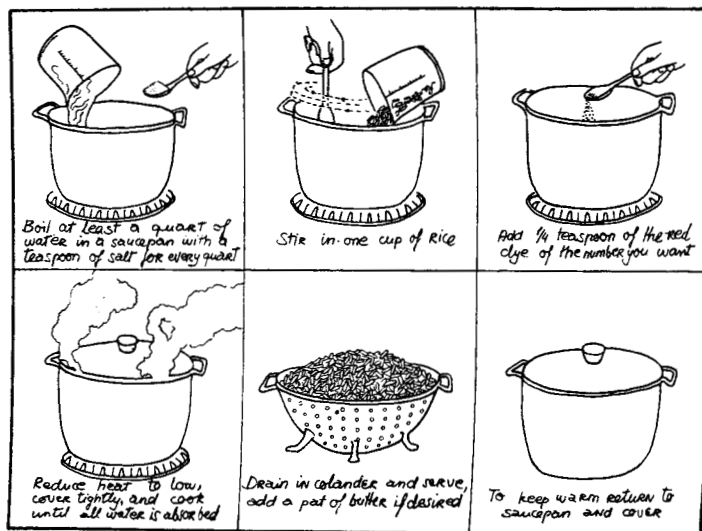
This story ends in 1992. It is incomplete as it misses out dozens of Miralda’s actions. It is restricted to the “American” ones. I have deliberately used the terms “American” and “America” to refer to the United States, as people there do, taking a part as the whole. But it is precisely through this “Americanization” that Miralda, the participatory artist, will become truly American when he transfers his center of operations to Miami and embarks on projects, such as *Tastes & Tongues*, throughout the continent. But that’s another story.





### SANGRÍA 228 WEST B'WAY, New York, October 27-28, 1972

Muntadas and Miralda conceived a participatory action in the loft they shared in Tribeca, which was attended by more than 100 guests. The artists offered a tasting of aromatic colored rice and two enormous bowls of sangria. At the same time, films, transparencies, and sensorial experiments by Muntadas, and transparencies of Miralda's celebrations, were projected onto a screen. The following day, they spread the remainder of the rice out on the street so that the colors and textures were gradually transformed by the traffic passing over until they disappeared.





## Notes on 228 West B'Way

Muntadas

228 West Broadway, as well as being an address and a loft in Tribeca, was an art/life laboratory where “activities,” taking shape between production and experimentation, were continually developed and influenced. The shared private day-to-day was prepared to be made public.

*Sangría 228 West B'Way* (1972) was one of these activities and, in a way, the result of a situation and a context.

The situation was living together, sharing a space, a place of work which was also a home.

The context was early seventies' New York, where production was tied to place and the studio still had a certain amount of meaning. The concept of “post-studio” would better define, at least for me, the use of spaces tied to a way of working on the move. The studio was a place of work and at that time many similar spaces coexisted, where things were being “cooked,” where this desire to share was present. These activities didn't used to leave the private domain, but little by little the “open studio” idea steadily grew and spaces – which were defined as alternative spaces – began to emerge, where a limited number of the public, with an interest and in many cases friends, were both author and audience, or vice-versa, at the same time.

Museums and commercial galleries remained far from interested in these initiatives and a tendency was already making itself felt in the environment towards the “do-it-yourself,” which initiated offerings in the form of actions, performances, concerts, and installations which generally coexisted among themselves and were open to participation.

This would be the origin of spaces such as Franklin Furnace, Artists Space, Printed Matter, 112 Greene Street, Clocktower, and 3 Mercer Street... All scenes of experimental practice and risk-taking.

The *Sangría* project, at 228 West Broadway, was a shared experience of work and search in sensory territory, accessible to a limited public.

On Miralda's part, in the shape of ritual celebration and the visual arrangement of foodstuffs, in which color was an important part. Miralda managed to personify and integrate color in his everyday life, in his objects and compositions as well as the clothes he wore, thus creating a character (not in a literary or theatrical sense; totally existential).

As for me, I made my subsensorial projects accessible through large-format projections.

We decided to share the work: Miralda's colored meals and my subsensorial experiences, through spatial arrangements and the projection of documents that provoked reflection on these new actions and tried to make them visible. Vertical space (that of projection) and horizontal space (that of the floor) complemented two different practices that “asked for,” or “proposed” participation, a word that seemed key to us and which on a few occasions became paradoxical.

The result of the offering was represented with an inherent generosity and the rare skill of *amélioration* – to use Pierre Restany's term – which manifested itself in everyday and public life.

What was originally going to be a one-day action continued unexpectedly the following day, on going out onto the street at 228 West Broadway. The project's activation in public space shifted interest to use of the street, and the encounter with an unknown public... Passers-by, intentions, let's see what happens, provocation...

The colored rice offered a chromatic scale which gradually made its way into the asphalt as the traffic passed over, slowly and over time disappearing. A series of sensorial interventions, which belonged in the private sphere, were developing at the same time. Tactility brought into urban space and materials as integration into the landscape.

The project was a hybrid of practices and forms of indefinable presentation. The coexistence of exhibition space and everyday living space was obvious, as there was no differentiation.

Friends and acquaintances came along, as well as an extensive stream of people through word of mouth. We were expecting 50 and twice as many came throughout the day.

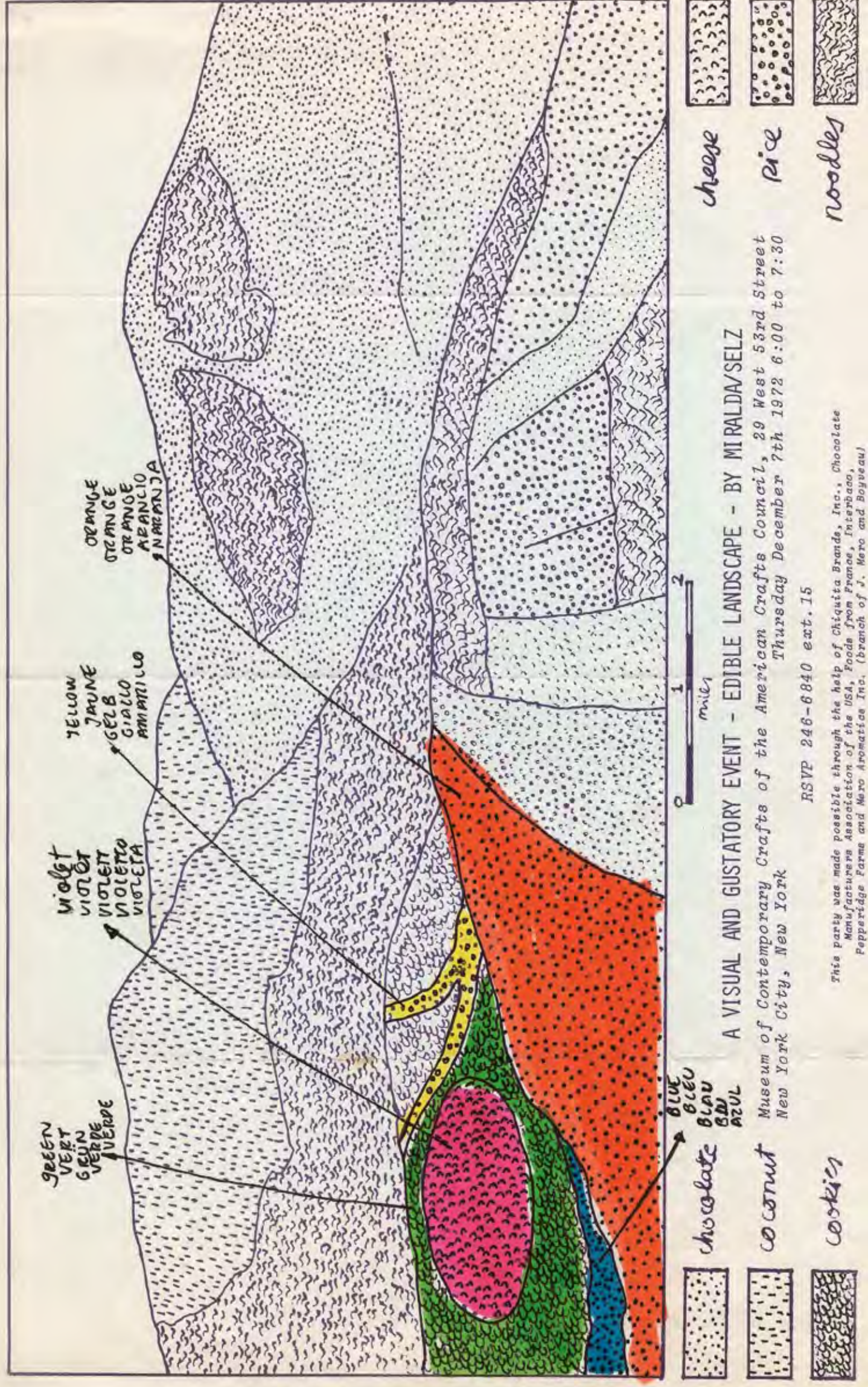
Under these premises, you can see how Miralda and I decided to open up the space in which we lived and worked, and extended these personal projects into the public arena. These early actions would later bring about more defined projects such as *Celebration of the Senses*, which was presented in another context and situation in various points of the network of alternative spaces and cultural centers at universities in the United States.











**EDIBLE LANDSCAPE, Museum of Contemporary Crafts, New York, December 7, 1972**

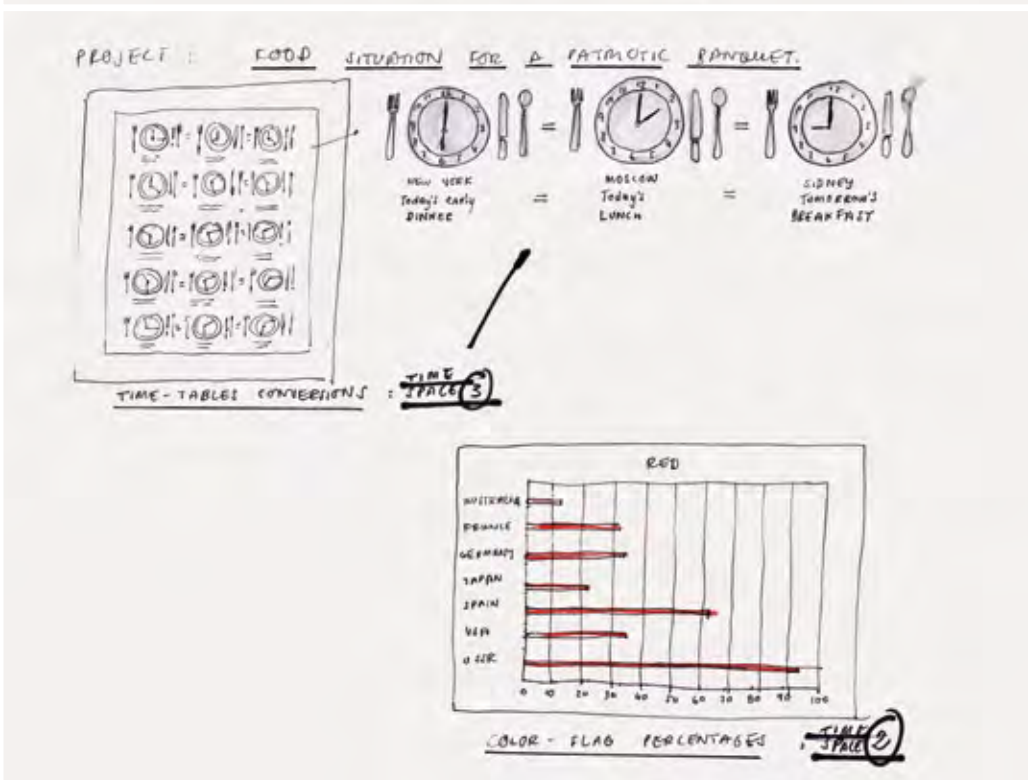
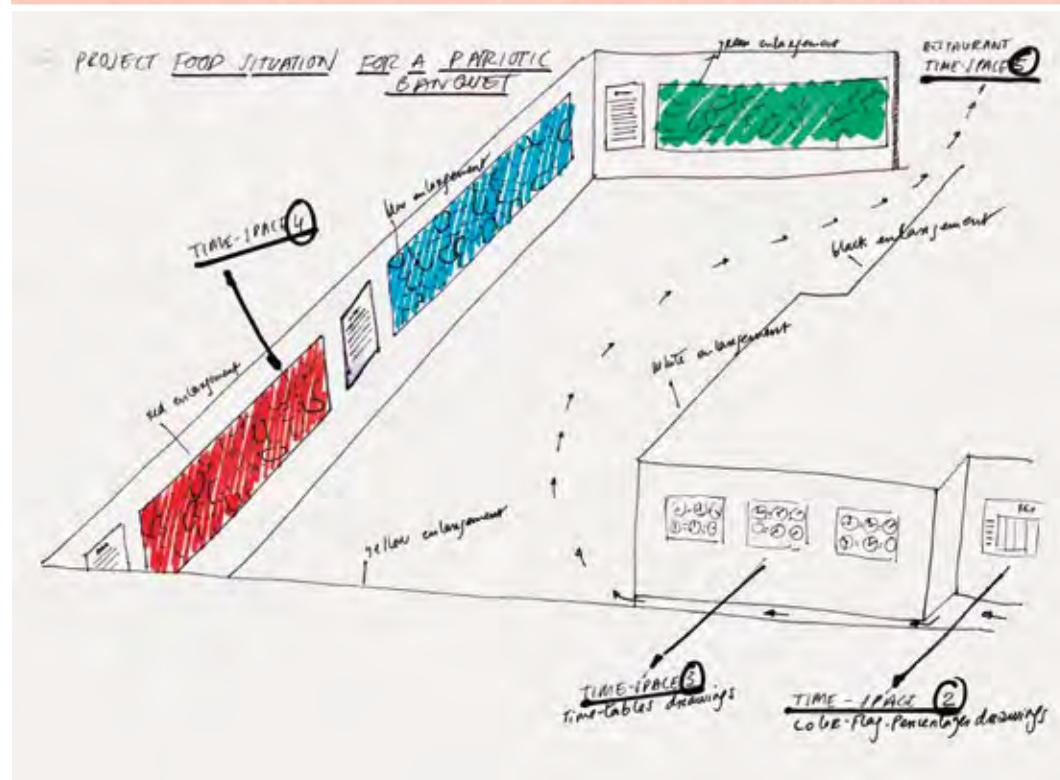
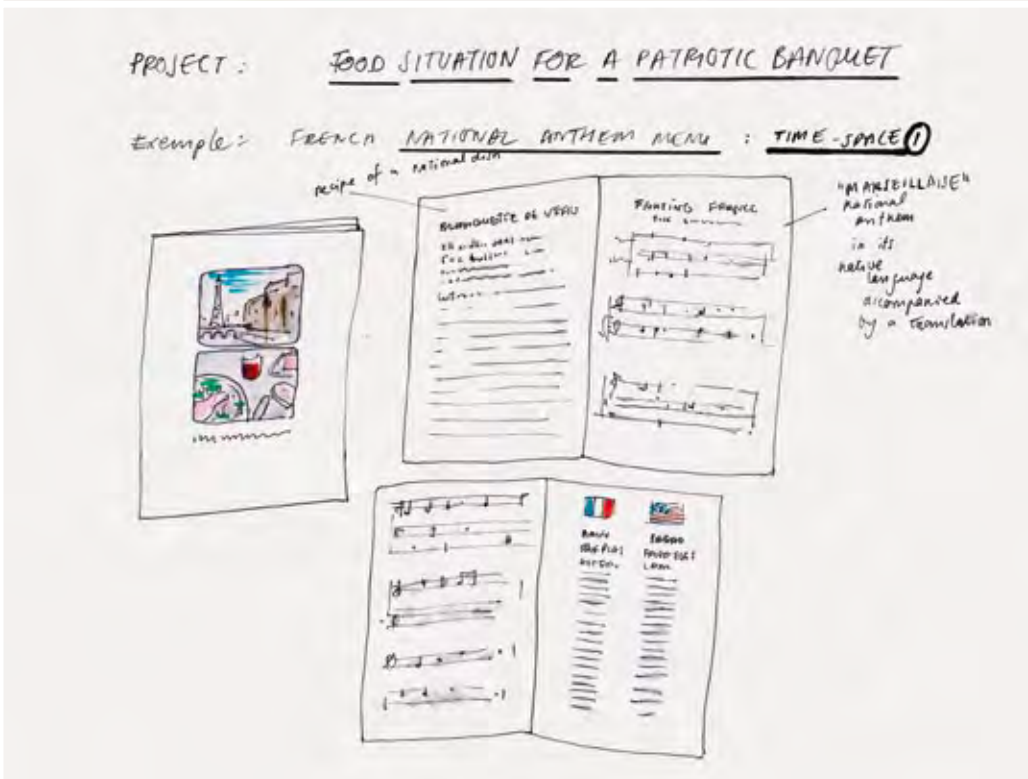
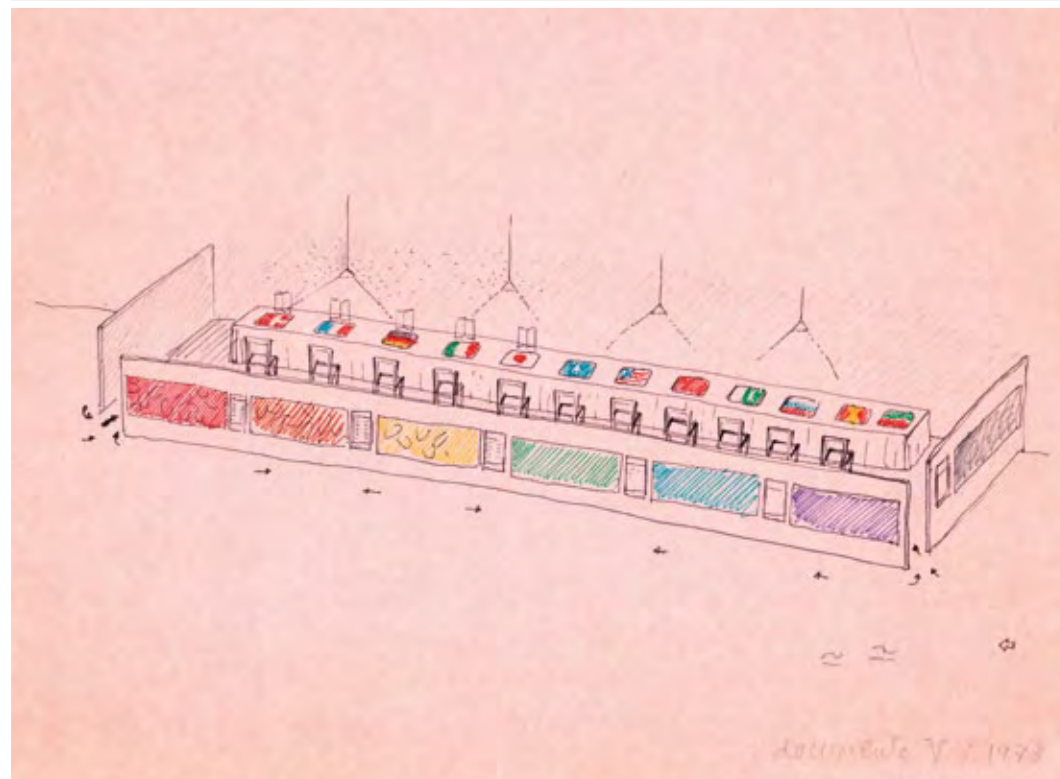
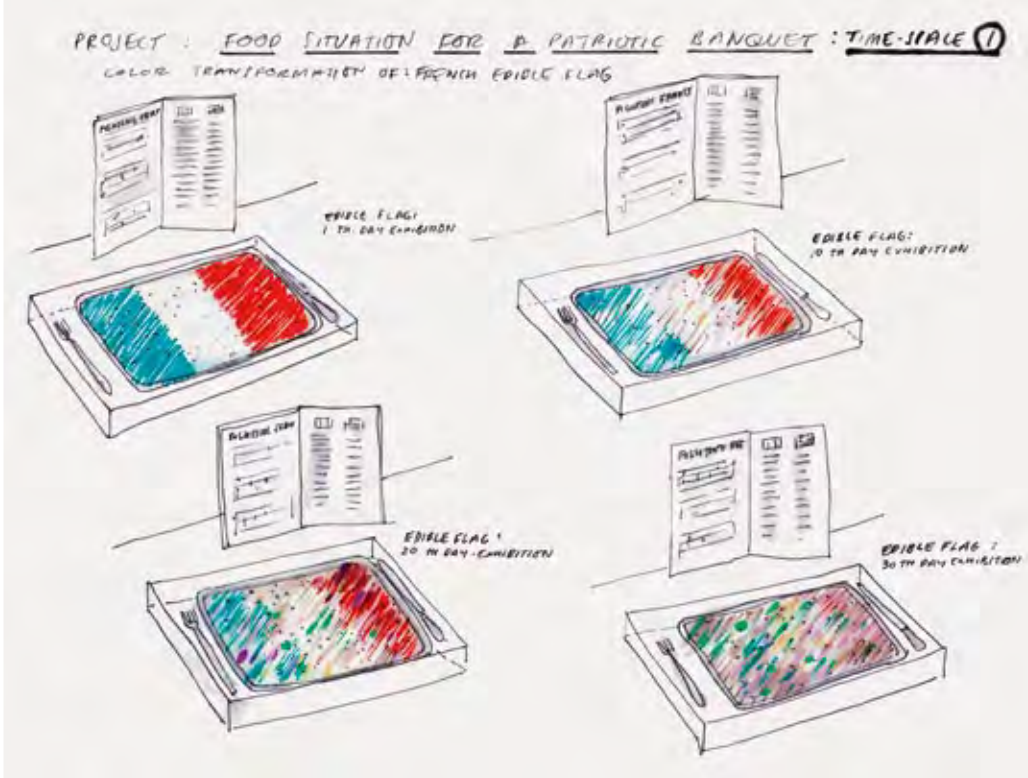
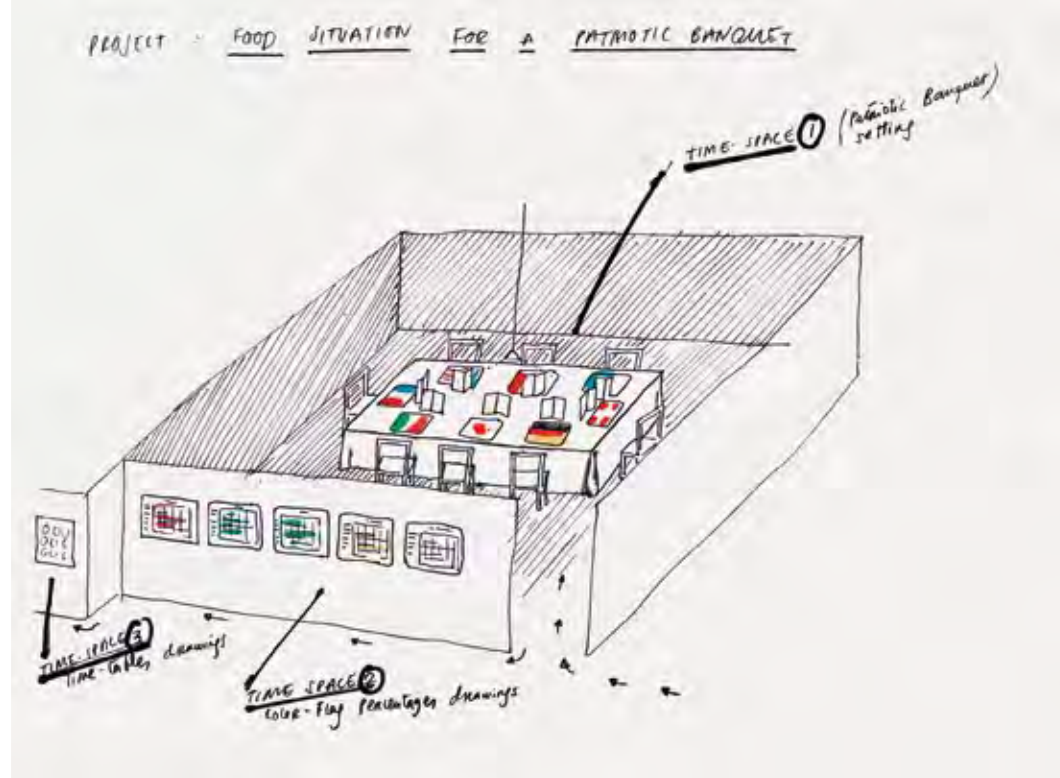
Miralda had the idea for this event during the design exhibition Objects for Preparing Food at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York. The action consisted of the presentation and tasting of an edible landscape/Nativity scene.





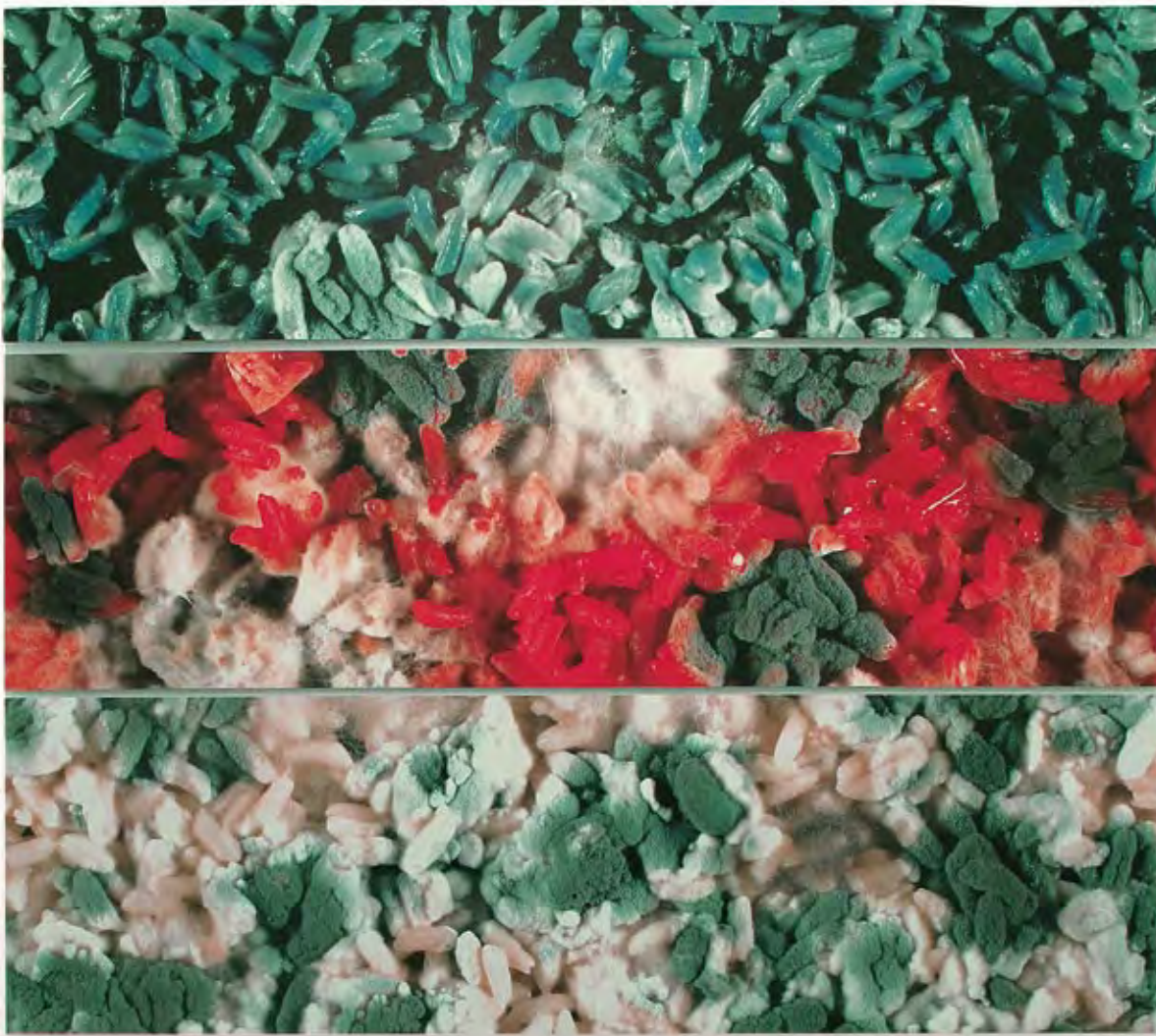
**FOOD SITUATION FOR A PATRIOTIC BANQUET**, New York, 1972-73 (unrealized project) / MNCARS, Madrid, 2010

Miralda proposed this work at Kassel's Documenta 5 in 1972, and the following year at MoMA in New York, but it never came to fruition. At last, in 2010, it was presented at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid. The installation consisted of a huge table laid with eight trays of rice cooked with natural colorants that reproduced the flags of various countries, accompanied by their respective national anthems in the form of a menu. The rice slowly decomposed during the period the exhibition is open.



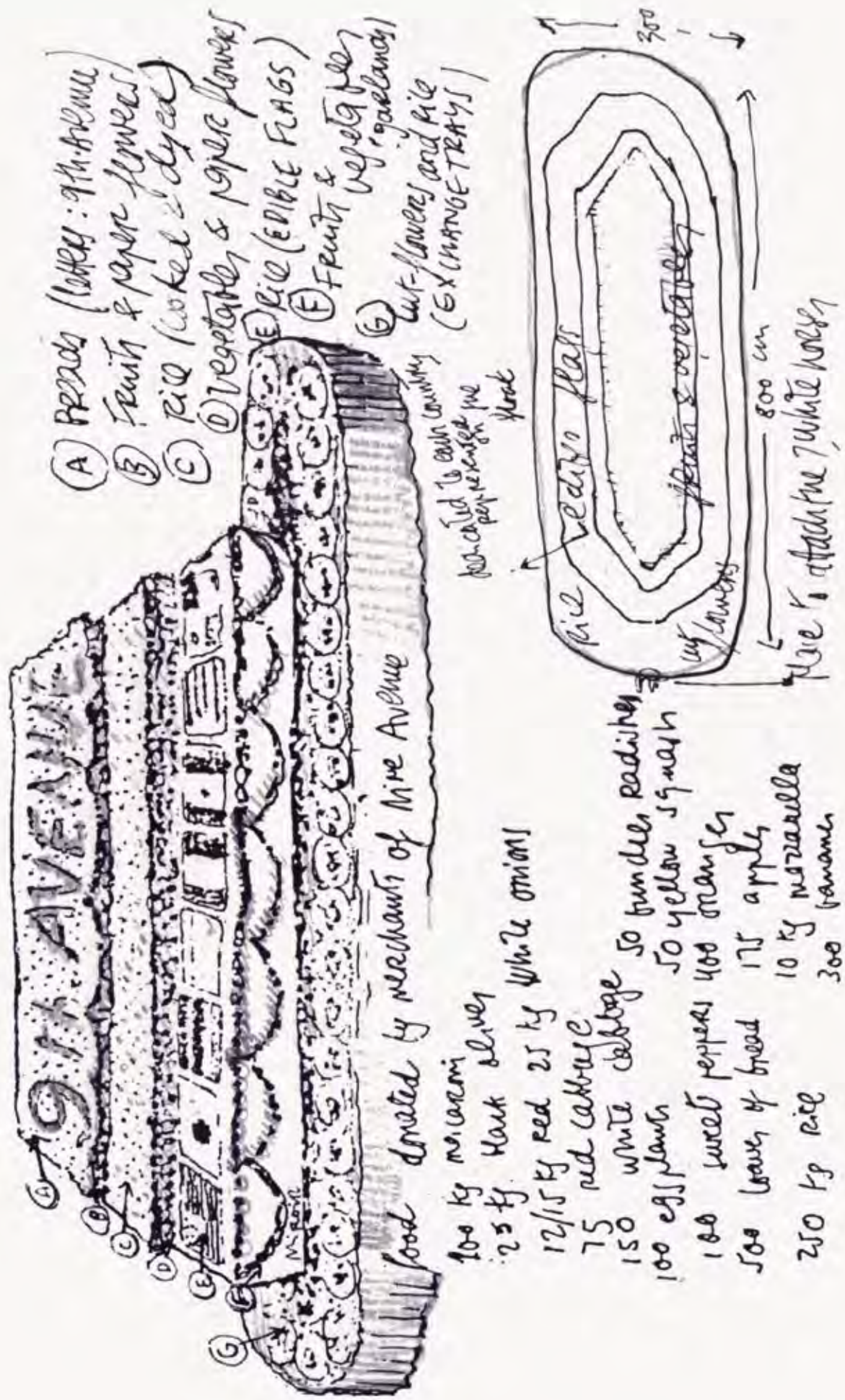
Preparatory drawings for the original proposals for MoMA, 1973.





Food Situation for a Patriotic Banquet installation at the De gustibus non disputandum exhibition, MNCARS, Madrid, 2010, and at Arts & Food, La Triennale di Milano, 2015.





### MOVABLE FEAST, Ninth Avenue International Festival, New York, May 12, 1974

With *Movable Feast*, Miralda took part in New York's first Ninth Avenue International Festival, organized by residents of the neighborhood in the face of the threat of a reurbanization project. The neighborhood storekeepers financed the creation of a three-level float that Miralda had conceived for the parade; it was made up of colored foods and decorated with paper flowers, garlands of fruit and vegetables, and panels of rice representing the various nationalities of the area's residents.





During the parade, neighborhood's schoolchildren and storekeepers exchanged fruit, bread, and dishes; the mayor of New York, Abraham Beame, attended the parade. The local Boy Scout association took part, handing out slices of colored bread.



# MEDECINE

## Major Health Group Victory As FDA Bans Red Dye 2

Lors de la même séance, l'Académie de médecine a décidé sur proposition du professeur Gounelle de Pontanel de demander aux pouvoirs publics d'annuler l'autorisation pour l'emploi de neuf colorants utilisés dans diverses industries alimentaires.

Ce sont le noir 79-84 (E152), la terre d'ombre brûlée (E181), la chrysoïne F. (E130), l'orange GGM (E111), l'orseille et orceïne (E121), le ponceau 6R (E126), l'écarlate GN (E125), le jaune solide AB (E105) et le bleu indanthreners (E130).

La commission n'a pas jugé nécessaire de demander l'interdiction de l'amarante, qui vient de faire l'objet d'une mesure d'interdit aux Etats-Unis après avoir été retirée du marché en Union soviétique. Elle rejoint en cela le comité scientifique de l'alimentation de la Communauté européenne, qui a jugé récemment que les expériences qui ont motivé la décision d'interdiction prise aux Etats-Unis « n'étaient pas suffisamment démonstratives pour modifier ses recommandations du 27 juin 1975 qui classaient l'amarante dans les matières colorantes pour lesquelles il a été possible d'établir une dose journalière temporaire, celle-ci étant fixée de 0 à 0,75 milligramme par kilo de poids corporel ».

A major victory was scored by Public Citizen's Health Research Group in January when the Food and Drug Administration banned Red Food Dye No. 2 as hazardous. The group has also petitioned FDA to impose stricter controls on three other dangerous substances: estrogens, cough medicines containing chloroform, and polyvinyl chloride food packaging materials.

### Dye May Cause Cancer

FDA removed Red Dye No. 2 from the so-called "provisional list" of approved food colors on January 19 because of evidence that it may cause cancer. This action bans the dye until manufacturers present scientific proof of its safety. Red Dye

No. 2 is used in soft drinks, breakfast cereals, dog food, drugs and cosmetics—an estimated \$10 billion worth of food products alone.

During the last four years, the Health Research Group has repeatedly petitioned FDA to ban this dye. Safety questions first arose over 20 years ago, and have been accelerating in recent years, beginning with two Russian studies which linked the dye with cancer and adverse effects on reproduction.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, numerous tests were conducted by government, industry, and independent scientists, producing evidence linking Red Dye No. 2 with cancer, fetal death, birth defects, and reproductive damage. Still FDA felt the damage had not been adequately demonstrated, questioning the scientific validity of some of the tests.

The "scientific" objections, however, ignored the legal question of FDA's authority to allow the substance to remain on the market. A 1960 law required all new dyes to be approved by FDA as "suitable and safe" before being marketed. Dyes on the market prior to the law received a "provisional listing" with a 2½-year grace period for proving them safe. Since 1963, when Red Dye No. 2's grace period expired, FDA has extended the chemical's provisional listing 14 times—with no evidence of industry effort to prove the dye's safety.

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Issue One, 1976.

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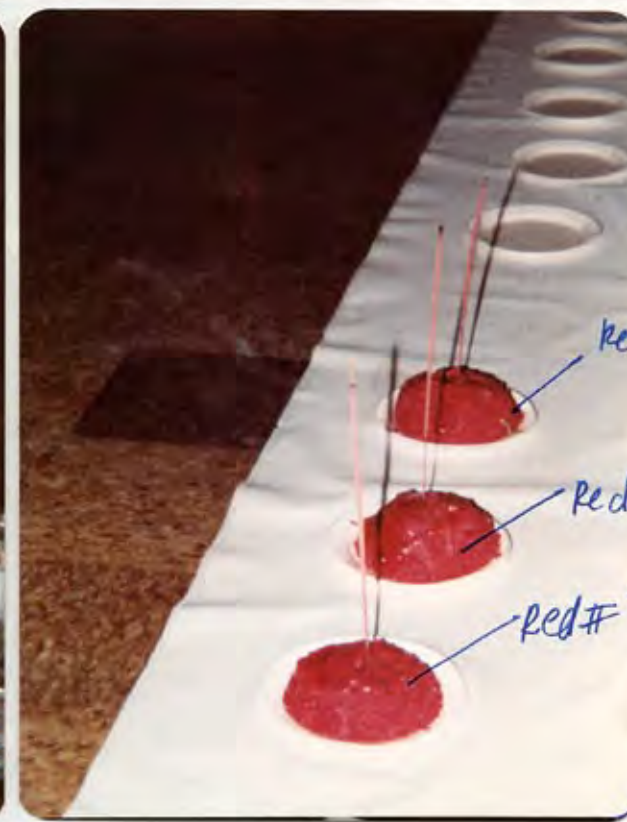
On April 27, 1976, a commission of L'ACADEMIE DE MEDECINE decided upon petition by Professor Gounelle de Pontanel to ban the use of nine dyes used in the food industries. Those dyes are NOIR 79-84 (E152), TERRE D'OMBRE BRULEE (E181), JAUNE SOLIDE AB (E105), CHRYSOINE F. (E130), ORANGE GGM (E111), PONCEAU 6R (E126) or RED DYE NO. 4, ORSEILLE and ORCEINE (E121), ECARLATE GN (E125), BLEU INDANTHRENEERS (E130).

However, the commission does not consider it necessary to ban AMARANTE or RED DYE NO. 2 which was taken off the market in the Soviet Union and afterward banned in the United States.

The commission joined the European Food Scientific Committee in this decision not to ban RED DYE NO. 2. The European Food Scientific Committee recently judged, that the experiments which motivated the decision to ban RED DYE NO. 2 in the U.S. were not sufficiently evident to modify the June 27, 1975 recommendation of the European Food Scientific Committee.

This recommendation classified RED DYE NO. 2 in the category of colorants for which it has been possible to establish a temporary daily dose of from zero to 0.75 milligrams per kilo of body weight.

**FINE  
ARTS  
BLDG**  
105 HUDSON  
N.Y.C. 10013  
925-3430



RED DIE #2

A celebration commemorating the prohibition of the use of synthetic dyes for the coloring of food: Red Dye #2, #3 & #4. Of these three dyes Red #2 was banned in the United States and the Soviet Union but not in European countries. Red #4 was banned in the European community but not in the United States or the Soviet Union. Clippings from newspapers and journals concerning the status of the dyes were made available for the perusal and information of any participants who desired them.

The sequence of events proceeded as follows:

- Preparation/Demonstration
- Displaying/Offering
- Selection/Tasting

Space: One large room. At the middle, lying on the ground, a white table-cloth. On the other side of the entrance, a white table with three stoves.

Duration: 3 hours

Participants: Approximately 50

Three chefs numbered 2, 3 & 4 simultaneously cooked the same rice salad using a different, designated food coloring: Red #2, #3 and #4.

One by one, the prepared dishes were exhibited on the table cloth with an incense stick on the top of each dish and the corresponding numeral of red dye type displayed.

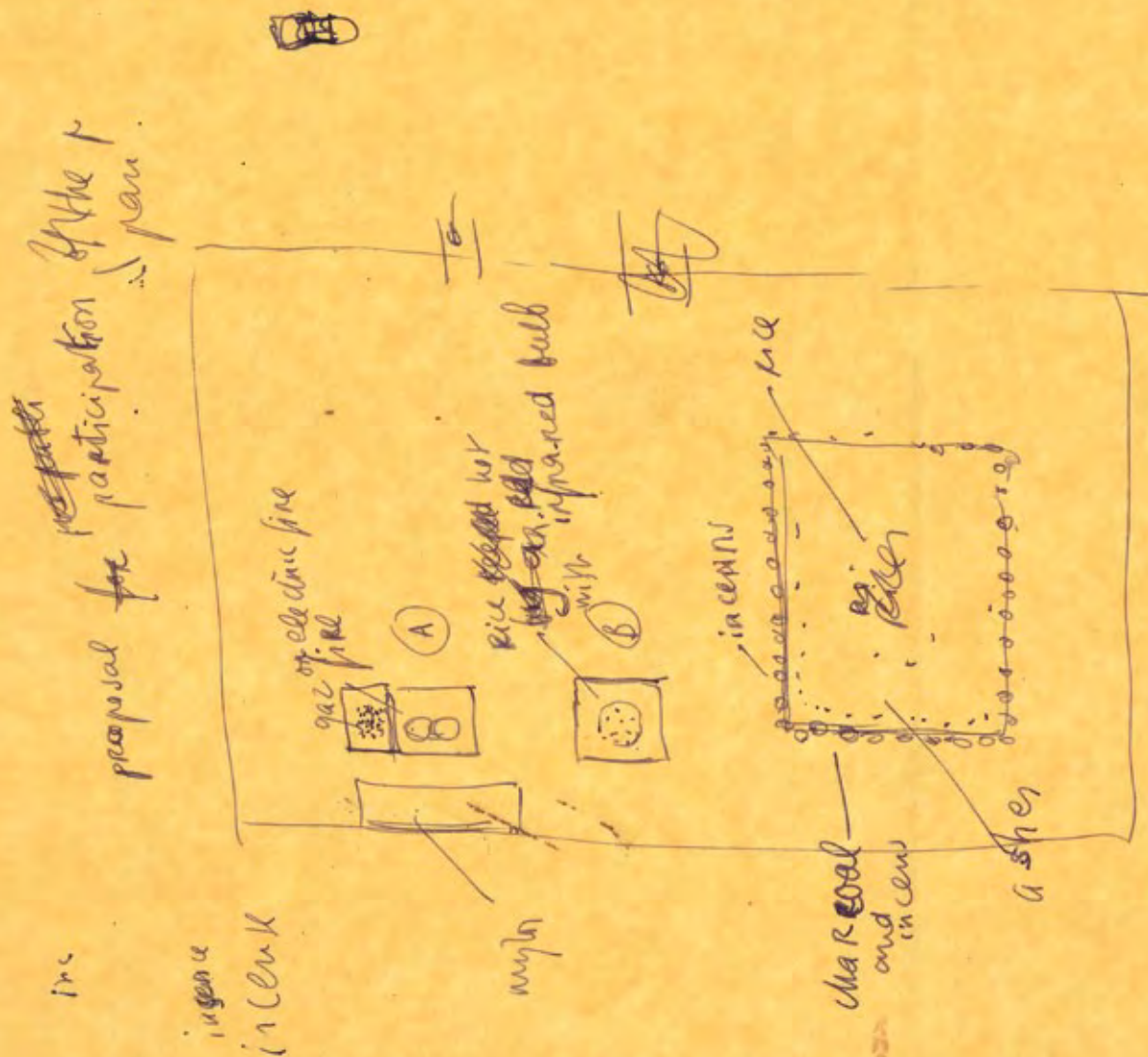
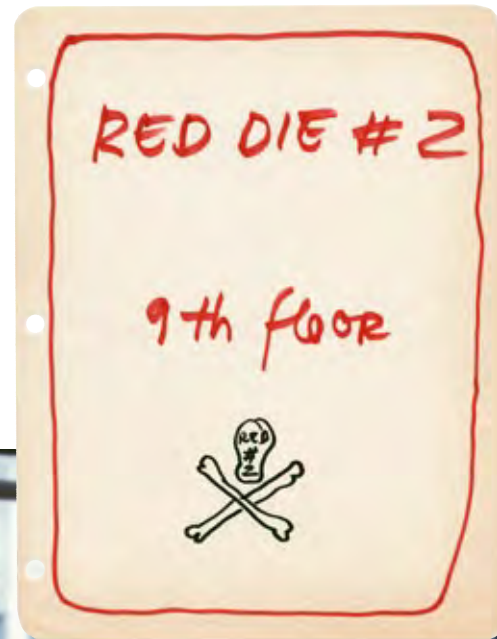
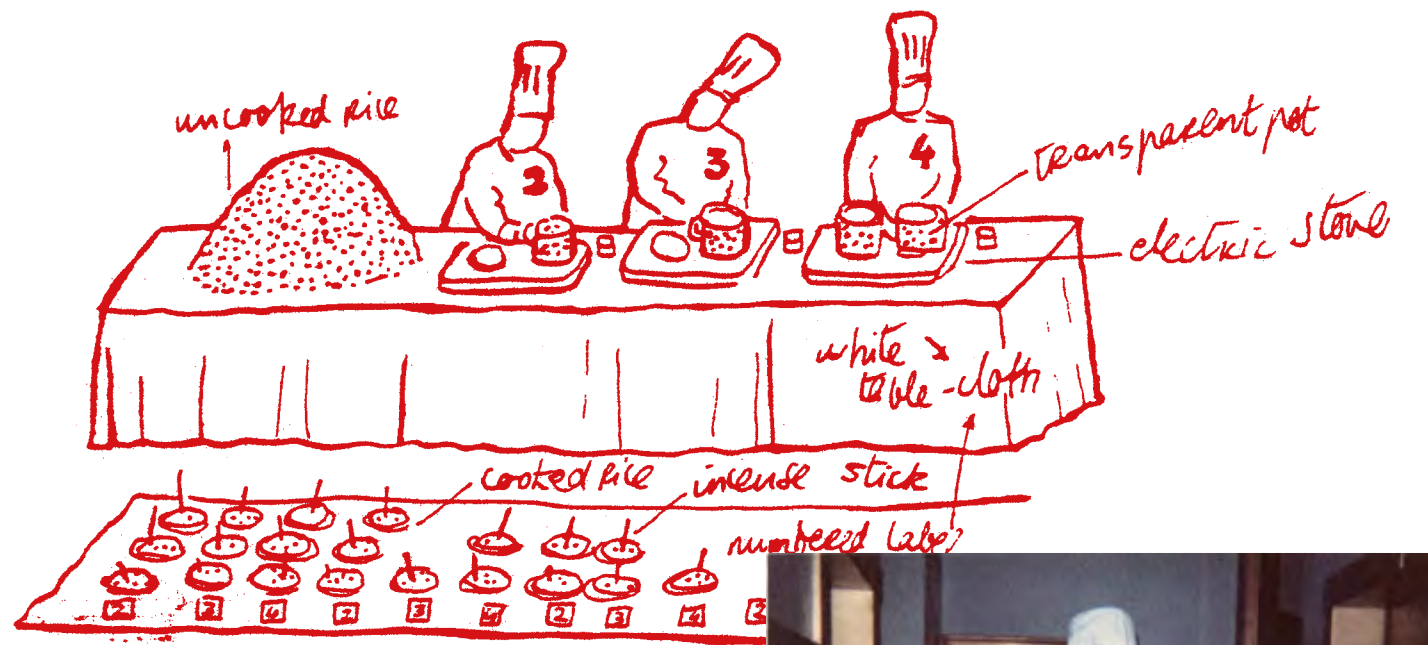
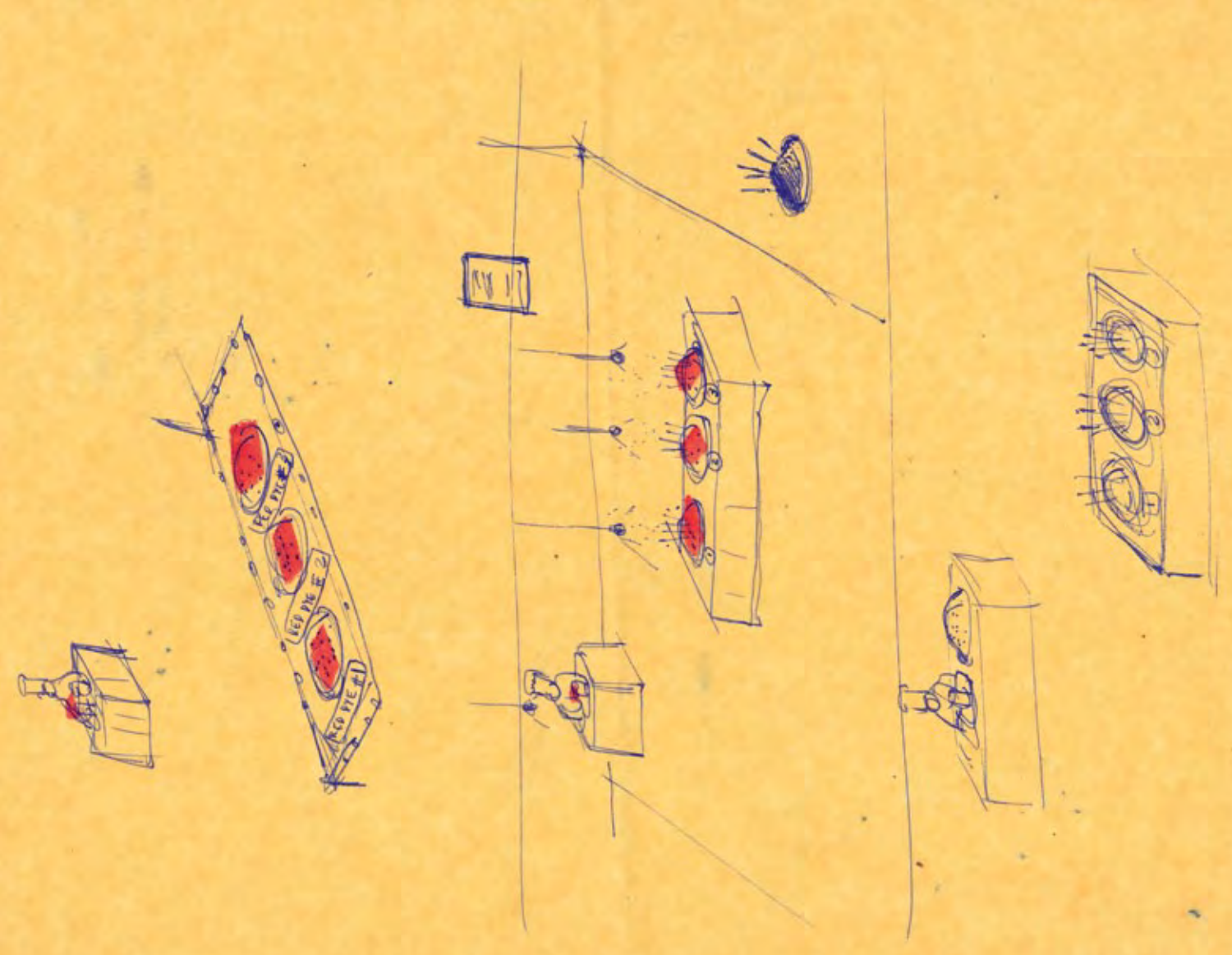
Each participant could select and eat rice prepared with the specified dye of his choice.

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925-3430

### RED DIE #2, Fine Arts Building, New York, May 22, 1976

Miralda devised a participatory performance to pay homage to the color red after the banning of Red Dye number 2 by the US and Russia, while the Europeans banned number 4. Miralda played on the homophones dye and die in an action in which three cooks, including Miralda himself, prepared three versions of a rice salad with three red colorants (2, 3, and 4) so that participants were able to freely choose which of them they wished to try.







PURNELL'S HISTORY  
of the 20 century  
Purnell / N.Y. Inc

AGRICULTURE 2641 (10)  
BARBER 1451 (6) X

- BARTENDER
- BOOKKEEPER
- DOCTOR
- EXECUTIVE

- FIREMAN
- GARBAGE MAN

GOGO GIRL 2186 (8) X

- HANG MAN
- HIPPIE

INTELECTUAL  
INSPECTOR  
LADIES OF THE CV. 1246 (5) X

- PRISONER

- SALESMEN

- SCIENTIST

GENERAL 2179 (8) X

- TEACHER

STAR & GRAPHER X

- STUDENT

THIEF 2179 (8) X

TOWNT

UNEMPLOYED 1467 (6) X

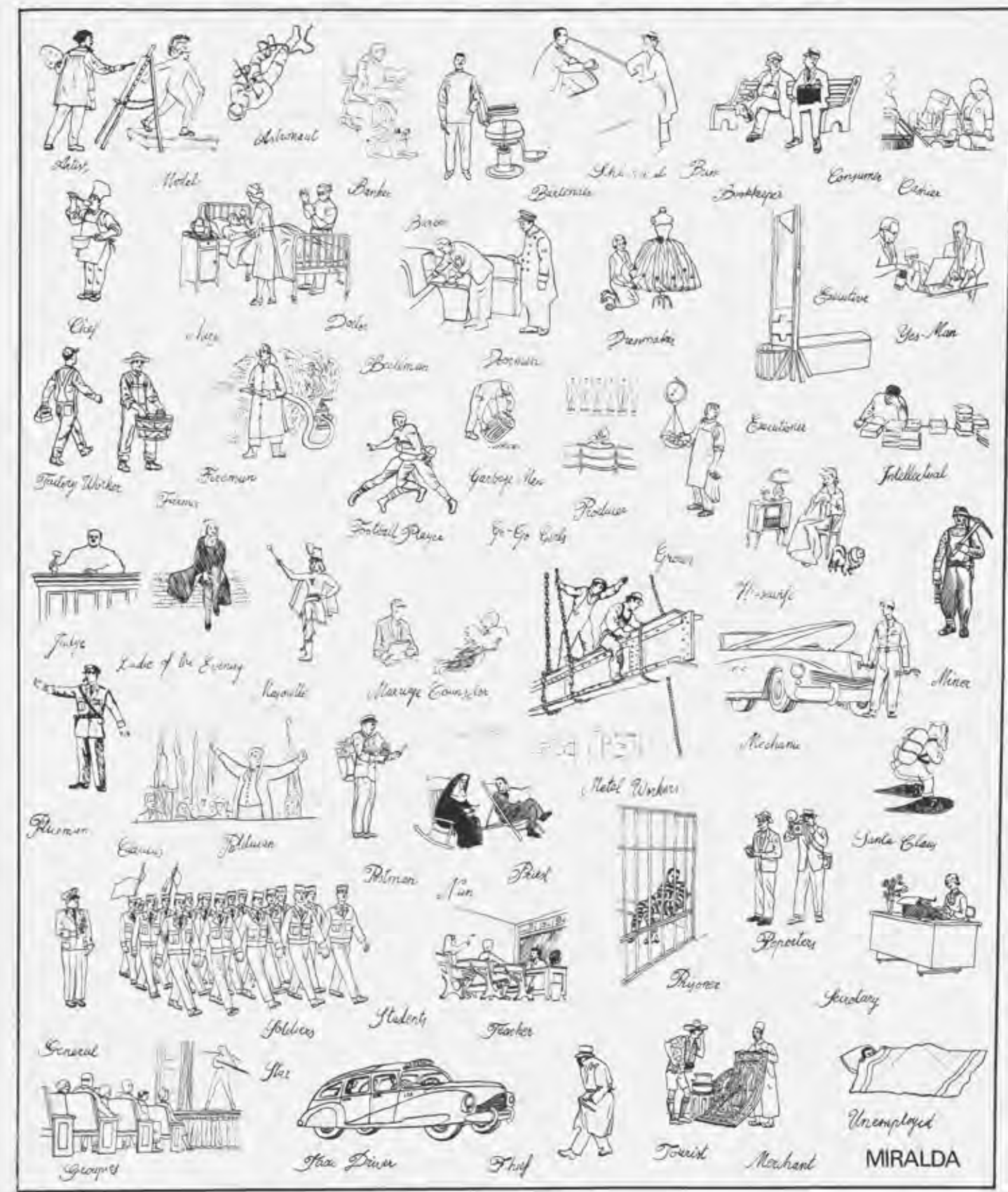
VETERINAIRE

POLITICIAN  
STEWARDESS

BURNING  
SUB-N.Y.



# LABOR DAY FESTA



Artpark 77 SEPT. 5  
(FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET)

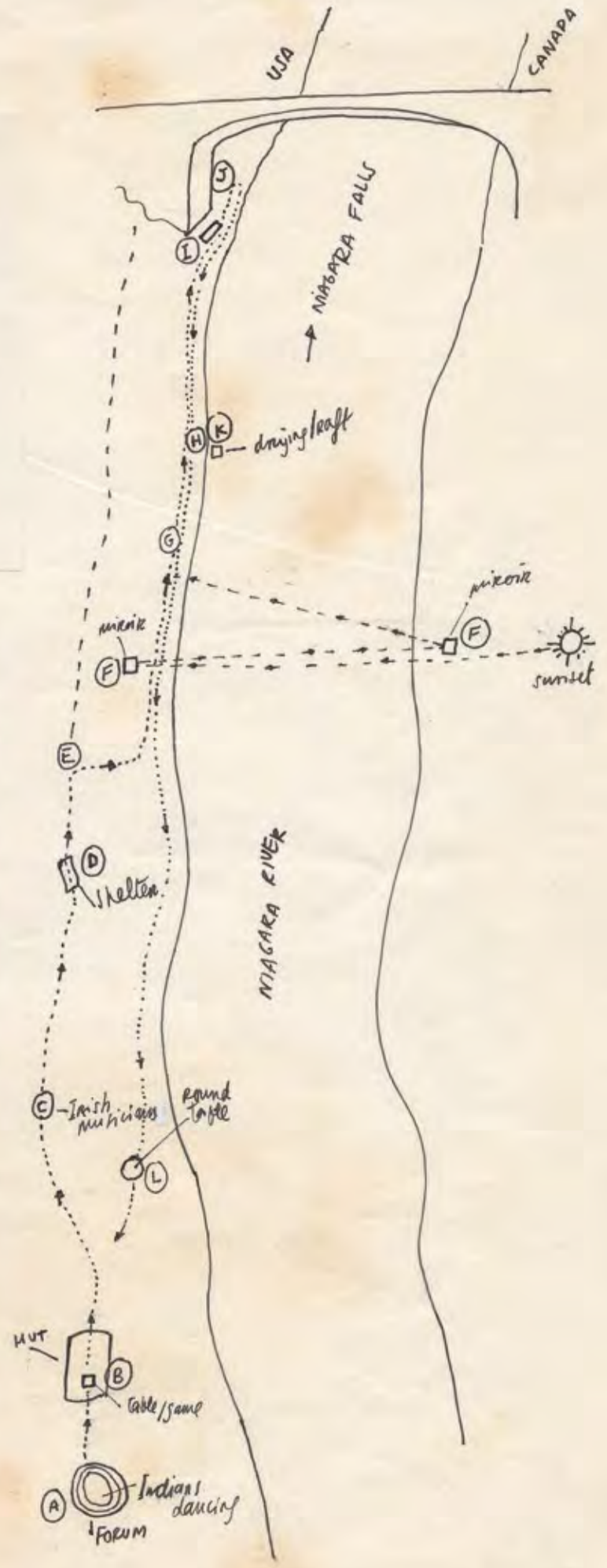
Preparatory drawing and printed poster for Labor Day Festa with illustrations of different occupations.

**LABOR DAY FESTA**, Artpark, Lewiston, New York, September 5, 1977  
In the United States, *Labor Day* (the equivalent of International Workers' Day or May Day in Europe) is celebrated on the first Monday in September before the return from summer vacation. Miralda held an action-procession with 300 participants based on the work/vacation opposition in the Artpark in Lewiston, a small town in upstate New York near Niagara Falls, on the banks of the river at the Canadian border.



LABOR DAY FESTA  
ARTPARK 77

- A. Gathering - performance
- B. Labor pool lottery
- C. Departure of the procession
- D. Dressing-shelter passage
- E. Path change
- F. Contraband light
- G. Unrolling of the table cloth
- H. Niagara washing girl
- I. Under-the-bridge cocktail
- J. Contemplation /picnic
- K. Clothes offering
- L. Color wheel



dressing-shelter  
ARTPARK entrance →

The participants were in the center of the park, in a candle-lit hut where a gaming table was set up. Each participant chose a number and received a folded dollar bill inside which was a drawing of a job. In a wooden corridor, red shawls with two enormous pockets were distributed, one containing a sandwich and the other confetti bearing typed messages to do with work and leisure.



Script proposal and preparatory drawing of the procession's route.



# Fighting Unemployment

By ANN CRITTENDEN

A year ago, in an Aug. 31 speech to the A.F.L.-C.I.O. Presidential candidate Jimmy Carter promised that the focus of his efforts to reduce unemployment would be on the creation of jobs in private enterprise, where 80 percent of all jobs exist.

"It is wiser to invest most of our new incentives to encourage the private sector to hire the unemployed," he declared. "Private enterprise is the major supplier of jobs and skills in our economy, and we will need the full participation of American business management if we are to achieve full employment."

Now as Labor Day approaches with more than 6.7 million Americans officially out of work and Mr. Carter in the White House, his suggestion of a private-enterprise approach has sunk beneath a sea of new Federal job programs, designed to create more than one million public-service jobs; that is, Federally financed jobs with state and local governments.

"We haven't yet looked seriously at private job creation," said a member of the White House domestic policy staff. He admits that officials now view the task as horrendously complicated and problematical.

Last spring, as part of his antirecession program, President Carter expanded the number of public-service jobs funded under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, or CETA, from 310,000 to 725,000, and the recently passed youth bill will finance some 200,000 additional public jobs for unemployed young workers. Two weeks ago the President's welfare-reform program called for the creation of up to 1.4 million full- and part-time public jobs, including the 725,000 authorized under CETA.

Arnold H. Packer, Assistant Secretary of Labor, acknowledges that in contrast, with the exception of the HIRE program, designed to assist Vietnam veterans in finding jobs with private companies and the funds for on-the-job training contained in the CETA and welfare proposals, incentives for private job creation are still "in the thinking and talking stage."

The fundamental reason for the relative neglect of private-employment incentives, according to a number of manpower experts both inside and outside of the Government—most of whom wished to remain anonymous—is an ideological commitment by top Labor Department officials, including Secretary F. Ray Marshall and Mr. Packer, to public-service jobs.

Few of the Carter economic advisers who had advocated private employment incentives and job training during the campaign joined the Administration. The White House staff members who were interested in exploring this approach have been so busy formulating the energy, welfare and illegal immigration programs that they have had almost no time to devote to other issues, one member of the domestic policy staff said.

Moreover, he adds, governmental departments currently have "less direction" from the White House than they did during previous administrations, leaving Cabinet members freer to follow their own policy inclinations. For the Labor Department this has meant an emphasis on public-service jobs, which, it is agreed, can be created far more easily and quickly than any other form of employment.

With unemployment seemingly stuck around 7 percent, and with consequent pressure to produce jobs, the Government has simply "reached for what was on the shelf," as another White House staffer said.

But some observers worry that the public-service route can provide at best only a temporary solution to the problem of the unemployed. Economists agree, for example, that much of the Federal money used to underwrite local public jobs simply displaces local funds that had been used for the same purposes. The Washington-based Urban Institute contends that after a year or more as much as 90 percent of the Federal funds are used for job programs that local governments would have financed anyway.

There is also some anxiety that the public-service

jobs will provide employment for some while displacing others. Government employees unions are particularly worried that municipal governments and other "prime sponsors" of CETA will use Federally subsidized workers from the welfare rolls to replace current workers.

Finally, some economists argue that the Administration's job proposals will actually draw workers out of the private job market, thus causing wages to rise as companies try to keep workers.

Under the new welfare plan, for example, an unskilled worker would have the alternative of a public job at or slightly above the minimum wage, if he cannot find a private job. Thus, his incentive to accept a dead-end job, such as dishwashing, in the private sector is considerably dampened, and, some experts believe, the program will encourage those already holding low-level jobs to leave the private workforce.

Labor Department officials admit that the substitution problem is serious, but they argue that the other fears are unfounded. They agree that the new public-service jobs will attract persons now working in the private sector, but these workers, they maintain, will be replaced by people who are currently unemployed, many of them teenagers and women.

Thus, the availability of a large number of public jobs will not only reduce unemployment, they argue, but will also enable the heads of families to leave dead-end, low-wage private jobs. And if the competition from public jobs does force private employers to upgrade the wages or working conditions of dead-end jobs, all the better, they suggest.

Mr. Packer wrote, for example, in an article in Challenge magazine a few years ago, that "disturbing existing labor markets (by guaranteeing family heads a job) may not be all bad . . . employers will have to make wage-job condition offers that compare favorably with the new jobs."

Administration officials also point out that the tasks to be performed by the new public-service workers, such as classroom and child-care aides, in waste treatment and environmental cleanup, and in such energy-saving activities as weatherizing houses, are filling important societal needs.

Nevertheless, a number of Administration experts concede that if a serious reduction is to be made in the chronic unemployment of certain groups, such as unskilled minority workers, some way must be found to induce the private economy to produce more jobs. As Mr. Packer said, "We have to have some way to move people out of the public-employment and training system . . . we have to have a greater thrust in the private system."

The problem is that officials seem deeply disillusioned from past experiences with on-the-job training programs and wage subsidies, where the Federal Government has paid part of the cost of hiring certain workers. Subsidies, some officials argue, provide bonanzas for employers to hire workers they would have hired anyway, encourage favoritism in hiring, create incentives for employers and employees to collude by splitting the subsidy instead of paying higher wages, or are simply ignored by employers as not worth the trouble.

"You can't run a private-sector program without wage subsidies," said George Johnson, the labor and manpower expert on the President's Council of Economic Advisers, "but there are considerable grounds for skepticism about the efficacy of subsidies in stimulating jobs."

A member of the White House staff believes that other fiscal incentives to businesses to hire more are needed and eventually will be devised—"something that speaks directly to the controller's interest," he said. But so far there are no indications that anyone in the Executive Branch is trying to analyze the probable impact on corporate hiring decisions from such upcoming and unconnected pieces of legislation as an increase in the minimum wage to \$2.65 an hour and an increase in the investment-tax credit.

Still, as one insider said this week, "After some experience with the public-service approach, I'm sure we'll have to go back to the private approach, and fairly soon—within six to eight months."

Thomas E. Mullany, who normally writes the Economic Scene, will be on vacation until Sept. 11.



Sandwiches wrapped in greaseproof paper on which an article on unemployment published in the New York Times was printed.

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THE MARKETS

Stocks Down, Bond



The participants, wearing the red shawls, unfolded a huge tablecloth of the same color and the procession went down toward the edge of the river. Halfway down they had a picnic and ate the sandwiches by the bridge that is the border between the USA and Canada. A waiter dressed in a tuxedo served a punch; mirrors were placed opposite each other on either riverbank to capture the light of each country and reflect it toward the other. Work clothes were washed and hung out to dry on a raft with four smoldering torches. Finally, the tablecloth was tied to the raft, which disappeared down the river by way of an offering.







Opening Routine Friday, Oct. 28 7:45 p.m.  
 performed by  
**KILGORE COLLEGE RANGERETTES**  
 AND STAGE BAND  
**CONTEMPORARY ARTS MUSEUM**  
**HOUSTON, TEXAS**  
 October 29 – November 27, 1977

## For Rita

Paul Schimmel

Antoni Miralda first visited Texas in the seventies at the invitation of his friend and eventual collaborator Rita Gardner. Having had limited direct experience in the United States (he had previously visited New York), Miralda was taken with Texas almost immediately. He discovered that its landscape, people, personalities, and rodeos were very much in alignment with his personal and artistic interests in popular culture. Gardner, who was a born Texan and made important introductions to local individuals, institutions, and organizations, provided Miralda with a unique lens through which he could experience Texas – both as a visitor and as a native. Working closely with Gardner and with great support from James Harithas, then director of the Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston (CAMH), *Breadline* (1977) was conceived in three parts: an opening performance, the installation in progress, and the exhibition itself, which consisted of the titular breadline; *Texas TV Dinner* (1977); *Macaroni Landscape* (1977); handwritten wall text about color and culture; and a room dedicated to the history of the Kilgore College Rangerettes.

*Breadline* was inspired by the space of the museum itself after its galleries were remodeled in the seventies and also by the time Miralda spent in Texas. Using 4,000 loaves of colored bread, provided by the Rainbow Bakery in Houston, Miralda envisioned a line of bread that would be added to throughout the exhibition until it formed a wall that divided the room. Each end of the line landed on a star (a “Lone Star” in tribute to Texas’ nickname) with alternately flashing neon signs that read “salt” in red and “sugar” in blue. He wanted to create a work that would evolve over time and could be interacted with, coupled with his interest in not only working with unique spaces but also involving those who would see the works. There was great commitment to movement in *Breadline* – it had to be seen from both sides, and visitors had to move around the work to fully experience it.

Miralda’s interest in the meaning of food was in both its place in culture as well as its connection to survival. The title serves as a double entendre; “line” refers to the literal line of bread that was built and also the Great Depression, when people stood in line to get food. The accompanying installation of *Texas TV Dinner* was comprised of seven videos that showed the preparation and consumption of meals in various Houston restaurants, and commented on different social and

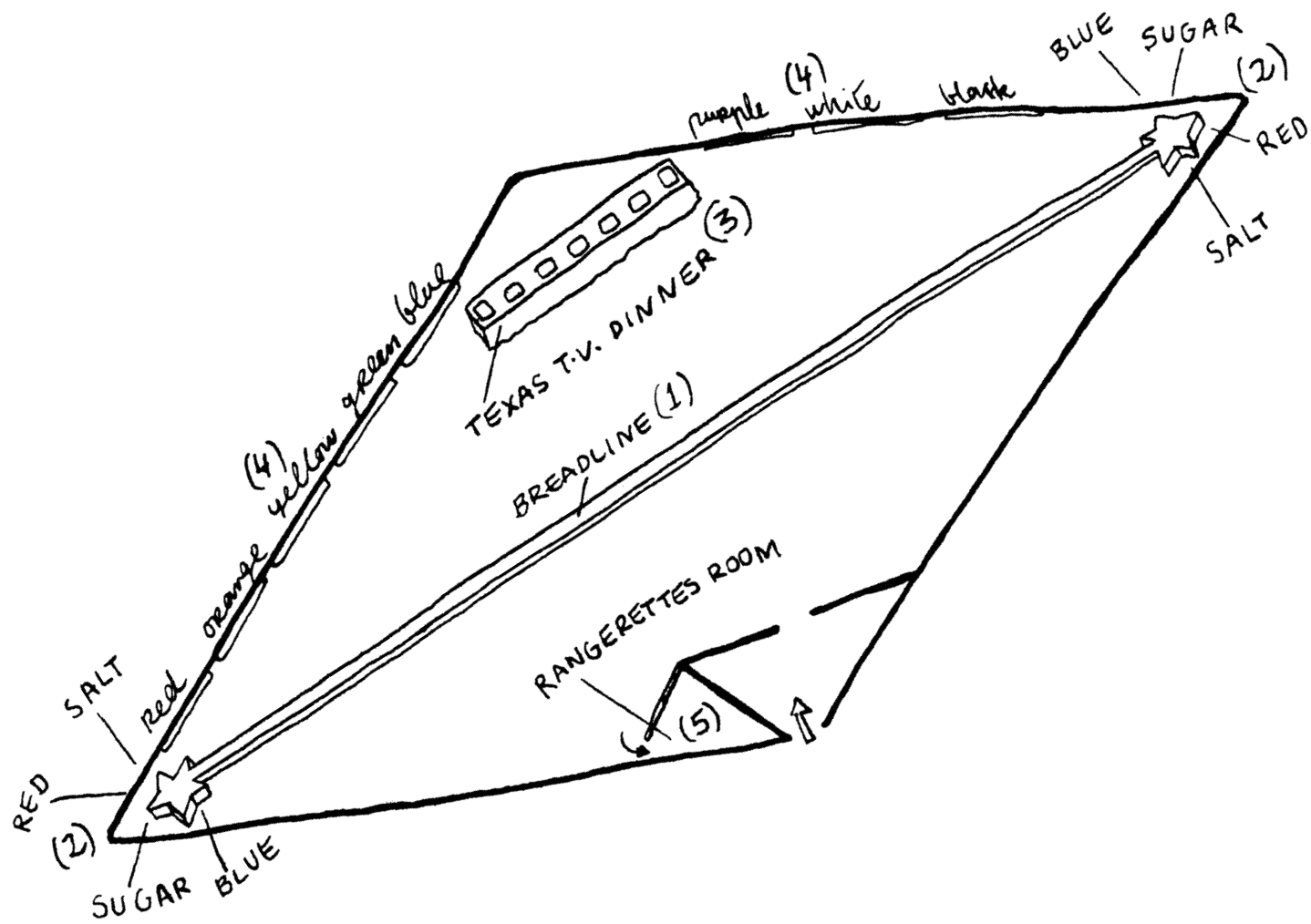
class structure through examining what people consume and where they consume it. Both *Breadline* and *Texas TV Dinner* used food as a sensible and powerful way to communicate human conditions – survival, politics, violence, mourning, tradition, and ritual.

The Kilgore College Rangerettes’ involvement stemmed from Miralda’s existing interest in and curiosity with the group, having previously discussed them with Gardner, who became a video specialist at CAMH. He was drawn to them because he felt they were uniquely Texan and the right participants for the project, even more so after meeting them and Gussie Nell Davis, founder and then director. The “sentimental” museum featured both Rangerette memorabilia and a new documentary by Gardner; the group also performed on the opening night of the exhibition to activate the project. Accompanied by the College’s marching band, 65 Rangerettes assembled the installation, which culminated in the building of the first layer of the breadline – placing just enough bread to form the line that would eventually become a wall.

There was great diversity in the audience the opening night of *Breadline* – art patrons, the communities of the *Texas TV Dinner*, real Texan cowboys, and of course the Rangerettes. The evening was joyous and celebratory but there was also great commotion as the crowd broke into a food fight that moved out of the museum and onto the street following the Rangerettes’ performance. The excitement of this turn of events invigorated Miralda, who understood then that this project could be bigger than simply a performance. He viewed it as an opportunity for everyone to participate by reacting to the performance and the ideas it represented and displayed. This very energy is the way he knew that the project was a success; he could feel in the moment that the ideas he was trying to put forth – the building of *Breadline*, the presentation of *Texas TV Dinner*, and his impressions of Texas – were being communicated to those who were present that night.

**BREADLINE**, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, October 28 – November 27, 1977  
*Breadline* (the name of the line formed to get free food in times of recession) was at one and the same time a gallery installation in five parts and an opening ceremony performed by the Kilgore College Rangerettes.





#### Opening Routine.

To signal the beginning of the exhibition, sixty-five Kilgore College Rangerettes and their marching band, performing their Flag Routine, march once around the outside of the museum. The Rangerettes unlock the front door to the museum, which until now has been closed, and lead the public inside. The gallery floor is empty. After the lights are turned on and the band starts playing, the Rangerettes perform three of their most famous routines. At the end of their last routine, the Rangerettes construct the Breadline, carrying tray after tray of bread loaves and piling them on a low platform.

#### Breadline (1).

The Breadline is a 170 foot structure made of 4 000 loaves of colored bread, "slicing" (dividing) the museum's diamond-shaped exhibition space. At the entrance to the museum, slices of fresh bread are available to visitors as souvenirs. The bread remaining at the end of each day is added to the top of the Breadline so that its height changes from day to day. At the end of the four-week duration of the show, the Breadline has become a "bread wall", resembling a geological cross-section. A gap is left in the center of the Breadline where people can cross to the other side rather than having to walk around the perimeter.

#### Salt and Sugar (2).

At each end of the Breadline is a star-shaped receptacle in which sugar is piled. The form of the star is reminiscent of the Texas Lone Star and, by its connection to the Breadline, a magic wand. On top of each pile of sugar are two neon signs, like labels, the word "salt" in red and the word "sugar" in blue. They alternate at short intervals and are coordinated so that each end/space is always a different color.

#### Texas T.V. Dinner (3).

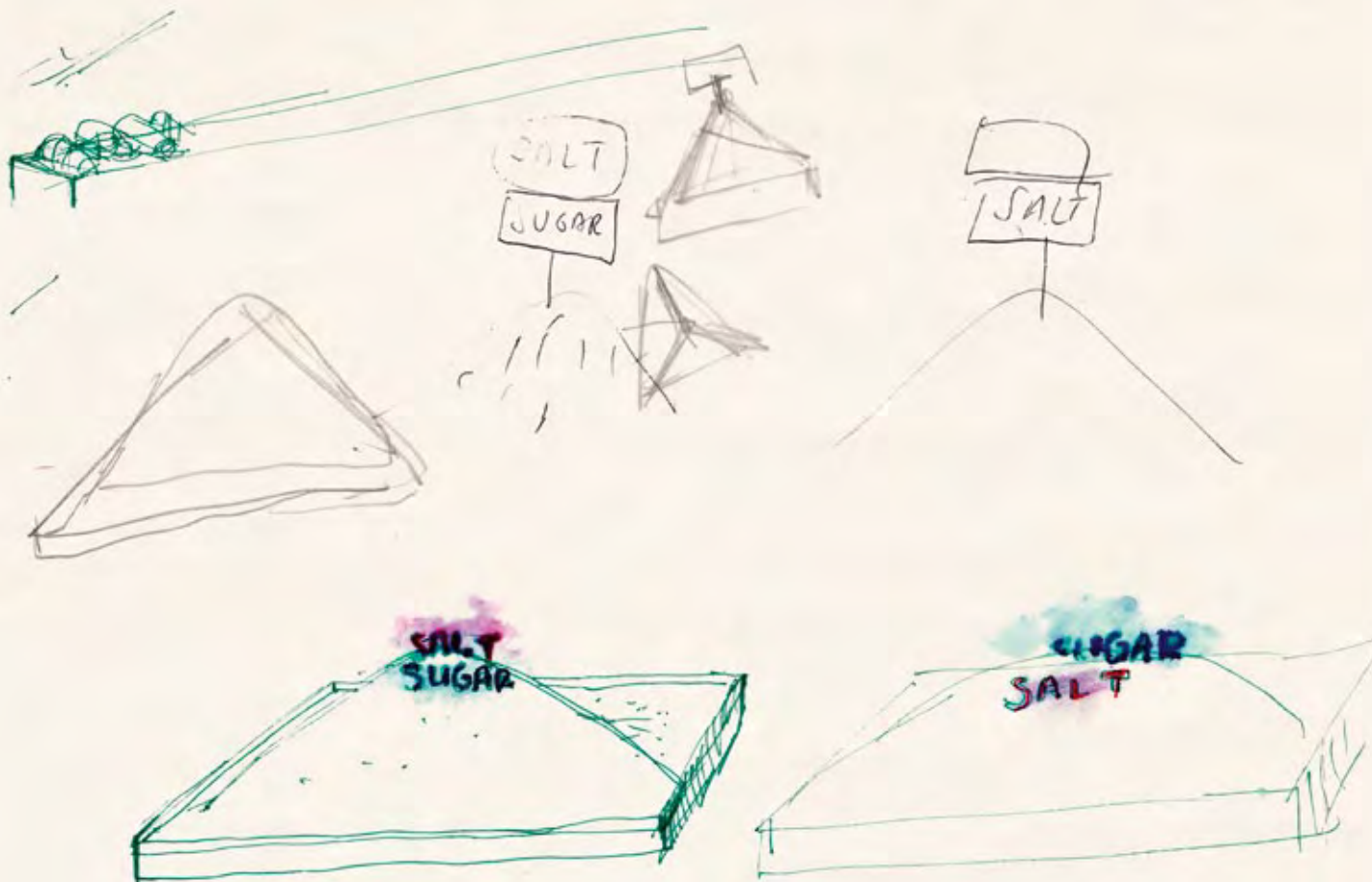
A banquet table with seven T.V. sets is placed at the apex of the diamond-shaped gallery. The T.V. screens are set in the table like plates and each is showing a color videotape from a different Houston restaurant. The restaurants, covering a sociological range, go from most elegant to fast food and the videotapes follow the preparation and consumption of a meal at each one. Musical sound tracks, different for each videotape, are transmitted through wired wine glasses on the table. A tray with the same seven condiments is located next to each T.V. screen.

#### Macaroni Landscape (4).

A series of enlarged, close-up photographs of colored pasta are mounted on the wall behind the Breadline. Legends are drawn explaining the symbolism, popular meanings, and significance attached to each color.

#### Rangerettes Room (5).

A chapel-like room was built at one side of the museum entrance to house a variety of memorabilia from the Kilgore College Rangerettes. The objects include: cut-outs used at the routines, furniture, costumes (especially boots and hats), flags, trophies, and pictures. The Kilgore College Rangerettes, which are a part of contemporary Texas Folklore are the oldest in that kind of American disciplined Institutions (1939). A television displays a videotape of the Rangerettes during their rehearsals, their training sessions, and more personal moments.











In the opening ceremony, the Kilgore College Rangerettes laid the first row of loaves in the central piece of the installation, *Breadline*. At the entrance to the show space, Miralda built a "sentimental" museum dedicated to the Rangerettes, their history, and to their memories.

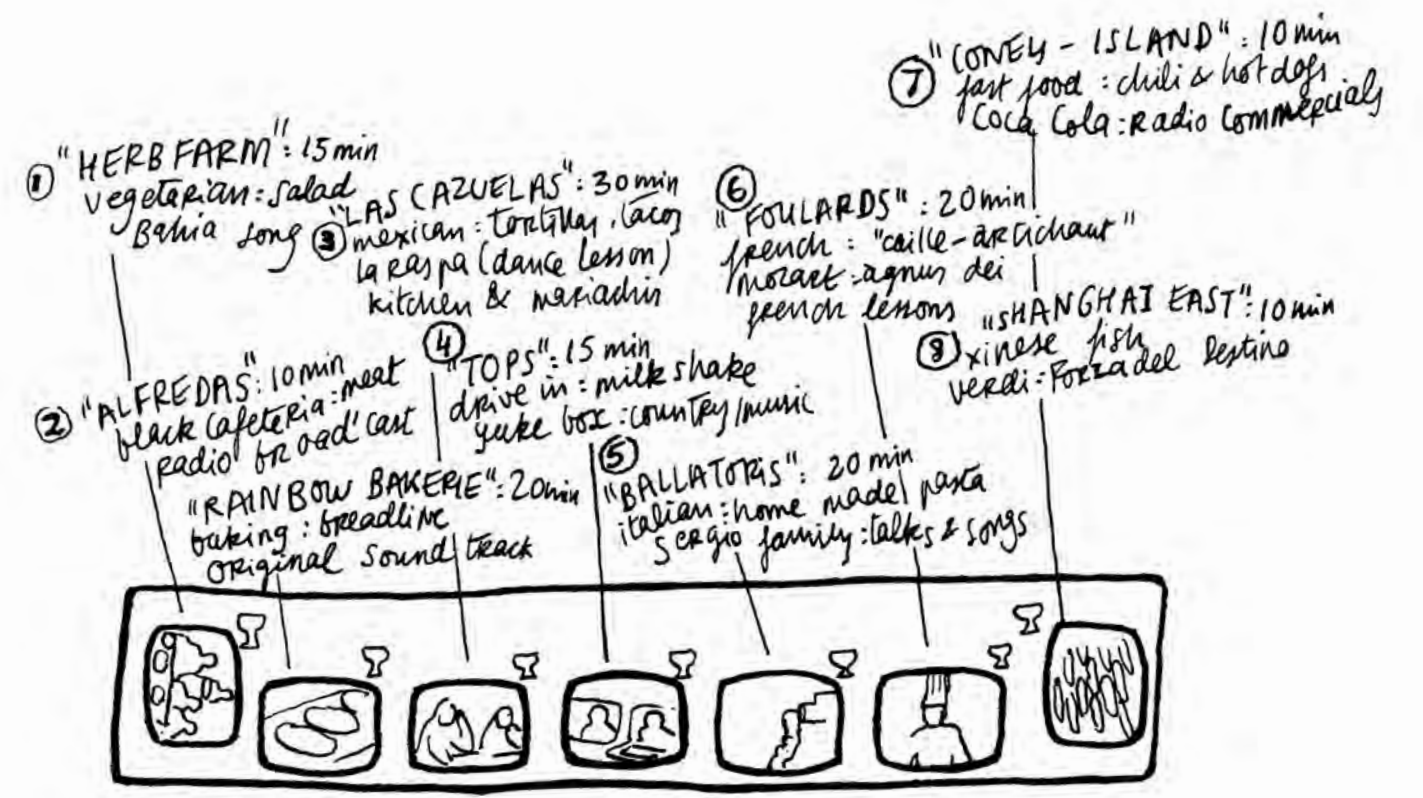




*Breadline* was a 60-meter-long wall, made up of 4,000 loaves of colored bread that divided the space in the hall. At each end of the *Breadline* there was a star, the symbol of the state of Texas, bearing the words "salt" and "sugar" with a red and blue neon sign.







The Texas TV Dinner installation consisted of seven trays/color TV screens that showed the preparation and tasting of each of the various Houston restaurants chosen by the artist and his team. A melody for each of the meals was played through a Tiffany-colored wine glass that acted as an earpiece.





The making of the videos for Texas TV Dinner.

Portraits of the staff, customers of the restaurants, musicians, etc., who were present during the filming of the videos.



## Observations and Collaborations: Understanding a City

Suzie Aron

"Miralda's work was a revelation to me showing how objects with which I am familiar every day, like a slice of bread, a stalk of wheat, and horse-riding equipment could be transformed by his amazingly facile use of color and design to make them into something else, something totally different."

Morton Sosland

I met Miralda through Dale Eldred, who had seen his *Breadline* show at the Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston in 1977 and later brought him up Kansas City to lecture at the Kansas City Art Institute. I went to the presentation and was absolutely blown away. I knew we needed to do something here in Kansas City and brought the idea to a group of collectors that were interested in exploring and funding public art projects. The Contemporary Art Society was organized through the Nelson Art Gallery (now the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art), and its then Director, Ted Coe. We had already done two projects – Christo's *Wrapped Walk Ways* in 1977-78, and Dale Eldred's *Sun Structures* in 1979 – and I believed, correctly, this could be our third project. Aside from the obvious conceptual and aesthetic differences of these projects, we knew this would be truly different in that it simply could not have been realized without the participation of many, many active volunteers, artists, donors, and the greater Kansas City community.

The project he eventually proposed was a celebration making use of popular themes, yet attracting different social groups and encouraging a cultural exchange throughout our community. Transmitted through his artistic imagination, the proposed events were an investigation of playful relationships and experiences that expanded the limits of formal museums, corporate collaborations, community groups, and public spaces. Miralda is an artist who provokes situations and creates environments that experiment with crowd behavior, unique artifacts, sculpture, photography, video, architecture, and city planning. His proposal was for a public art project in three events that celebrated our food culture in both the present and history of the Kansas City agricultural community.

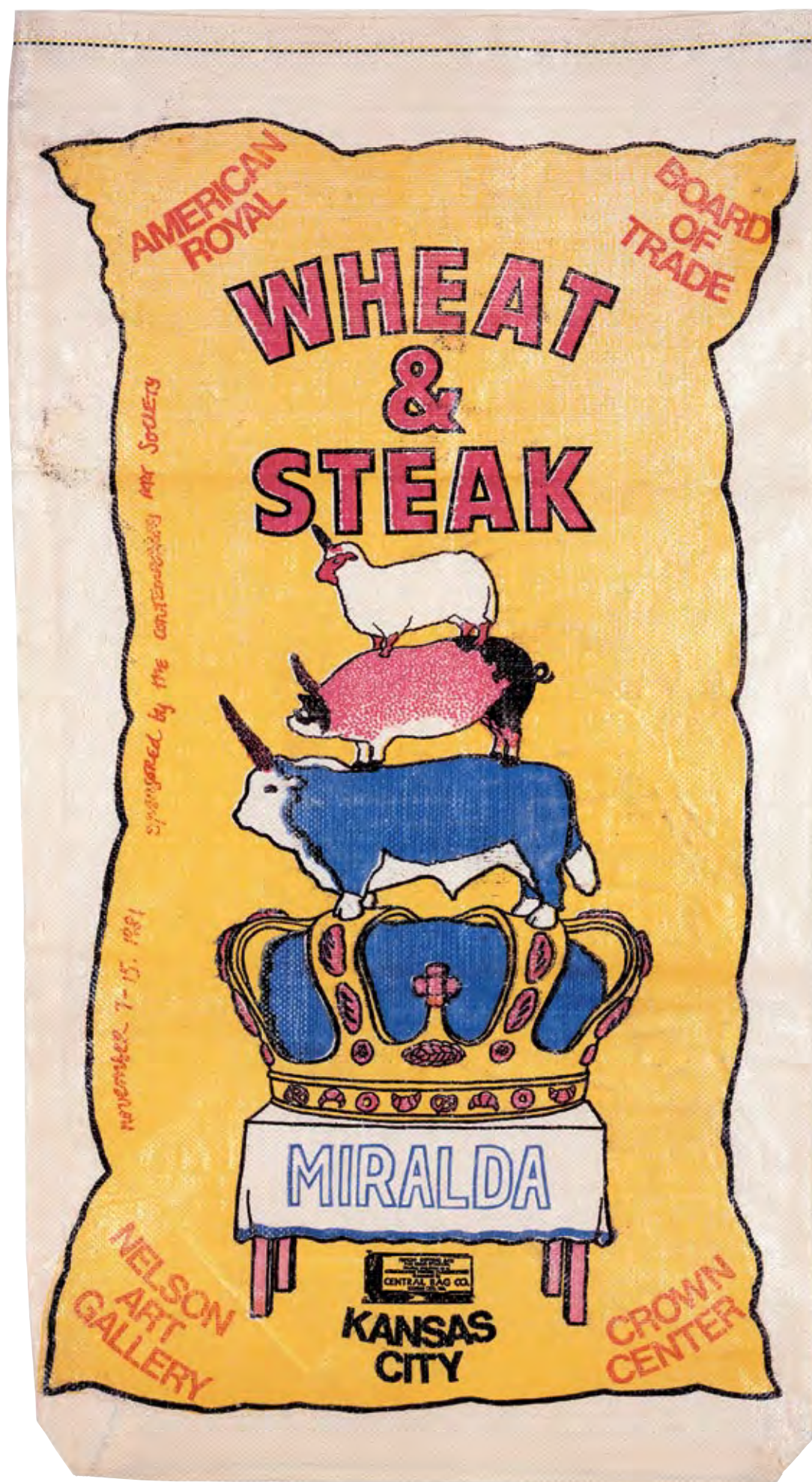
I was born and raised in Kansas City, and I thought I knew it very well until Miralda came to do his research, planning and execution. It took us about two years. Miralda was – is! – such a genius when it comes to observation and site specificity. On his first visit to Kansas City he noticed an invasion of young blue-jacketed boys and girls at the

airport, members of the Future Farmers of America Convention and a proliferation of crowns dotting the city... but they represented royalty of a different sort around here. There were thousands of participants celebrating harvest and breeding rituals at an American Royal Convention. The American Royal has been one of our most important annual events since 1899, and serves to celebrate our region's rich agricultural heritage through competition. But it was only Miralda who so keenly observed the odd juxtaposition of the "Belles of the American Royal" debutantes (whose well-heeled parents fund that event) being introduced upstairs in the dance hall, while livestock was being introduced downstairs in the arena... high society breeding, animal breeding... both meat markets of a different sort!

As it so happened, I had just found out that Kansas City Board of Trade (KCBT) would be commemorating its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1981, the year the project would be unveiled. The KCBT was an American commodity futures and options exchange, specializing in hard red winter wheat – the principal ingredient of bread. Miralda had come to Kansas City on that first visit just days before the Future Farmers Convention and quickly connected the dots that would form his proposal for this most spectacular project which would be called *Wheat & Steak*.

Clearly we were an agribusiness community to the core. At one time, one out of every six pay checks in Kansas City was related to some form of agribusiness and Miralda's creative wheels were turning based on that concept. Drawings, photographs, and writings were beginning to emerge, but of course we had to figure out how we were going to fund and organize the astounding series of events he had begun to envision. Today, communities, large and small, are looking for ways to engage in creative projects such as this, but it wasn't the case then. We had our work cut out for ourselves, and so we divided up into working groups, each focused on one component from his three-ring-circus that included (a parade within a parade) participation in the American Royal parade ending with an installation at Crown Center, an event at the KCBT, and an exhibition at the Nelson Art Gallery.

So, where are you going to find the people, equipment, and the products that made up the components of this project? At this point, public art – or rather participatory public art – had hardly ever happened in Kansas City. This was a



### WHEAT & STEAK, Kansas City, November 7-21, 1981

On the occasion of the American Royal, Kansas City's biggest annual event, about crop harvest and livestock rearing, Miralda conceived a huge public art project for which he mobilized thousands of citizens in Kansas. The project took place in three parts, the parade in the center of the city, the exhibition inside and outside the Nelson Art Gallery, and the ceremony at the Kansas City Board of Trade.



time when cities had not yet recognized the economic impact of the arts, but I knew that we had to reach out to publisher Morton Sosland, who is both an arts patron and well connected in the agribusiness community. While the Nelson Art Gallery lent a sense of prestige, the project simply would not have happened without Morton. He introduced us to the KCBT executives, the agribusiness Chamber of Commerce, farmers, and many folks who had never been invited to be a part of an art project – and they were all so receptive and excited.

Morton also enlisted the support of Interstate Bakeries' president and CEO Robert Hatch. Interstate was well known throughout the country for Wonder Bread, which was produced in Kansas City. To this day, one of the most visually thrilling days of my life was at that production facility watching six thousand loaves of colored bread descend through the machinery and conveyor belts... what a sight! Miralda's blue, gold, pink, colored loaves that were later used like bricks to build a screen wall in the *Gold Taste* ceremony/banquet at the KCBT.

The American Royal parade had been a beloved citywide event for many years. It was to be the largest parade to date, with the *Wheat & Steak* portion extending a city block in length. Miralda transformed the traditional elements of agribusiness into playful and bold celebratory symbols of history, virtue, ritual, chastity, and more. Plastic cows had been loaned by a number of restaurants we had connections to through my family-owned uniform manufacturing business. They were towed by several big, long Cadillac convertibles which held the "harvest queens"; and International Harvester dealers lent us the enormous combines that were transformed into "scarecrows" covered in gleaming "wheat." We invited Willie A. Smith, founder and director of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Marching Cobras drill team to participate: twenty of these kids held the giant silver and royal blue painted knives, forks, and sickles, another twenty carried large painted Styrofoam cutouts of sirloin, round steak, and pork chops, and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Marching Cobra Band brought rhythm and movement as they danced along the two-mile parade route. Dressed in gold NASA space-sheet capes, which glimmered in the wind, another twenty community volunteers carried bushels of "wheat" that were so heavy that it took two volunteers per bushel to balance the weight as they walked the route. A collection of historic and currently used grain bags were sewn together forming long banners that volunteers carried as part of the assembly.

Another major element of the parade and Nelson Art Gallery exhibition was the *Tri-Uni-Corn* fiberglass float that consisted of a steer, a pig, and

a sheep, each with one corn-encrusted horn, arranged in a pyramid stack. The skinned figures were painted with musculature and gold text labeling cuts of meat. It stood on a sacrificial table, which referred to the Harvest Supper, a traditional feast for which an animal was killed and eaten in the fields in celebration of the harvest.

And then, of course, there was the absolutely fabulous Harvest Queen Royal Crown float built from 2,500 pounds of pink, blue, and white slippery lard, accompanied by hundreds of ears of fresh field-picked corn and hundreds of loaves of colored bread.

I recruited my friend Albert Silverman, who owned the Central Bag Company that produced printed seed, feed, and flour bags, to help. Miralda designed a custom bag to be used for various aspects of the project. The original pattern was sewn together by Miralda's frequent collaborator Montse Guillén and it became a tablecloth for the Harvest Queen Royal Crown Float Sculpture Table.

Jim Dawson and Steve Doyal, Hallmark contact persons, assisted with securing funding and permissions from the Hall family. Hallmark hosted the building of the Harvest Queen Royal Crown float at their Hallmark company complex, where they also hosted a party for the parade community at the end of the route, giving everyone a Miralda-designed crown to wear. Thousands of people were engaged in this city in a way that had never happened before. They were used to seeing a standard parade and were totally surprised and thrilled when Miralda's section appeared.

Everything culminated at the Nelson Art Gallery, where, along with the *Tri-Uni-Corn* and other parade components, an exterior and interior exhibition explored much of the process with a special installation and the background documentation. These extraordinary drawings and notations – which were probably never meant to be seen when they were first created – were so enchanting and informational to viewers. It showed Miralda's unique gift of observing and understanding a city, and then presenting and celebrating it back with its own community.

One of the most important elements of the project was a significant amount of labor was needed. Fortunately there were many, many community volunteers like Willy Knight, Bonnie Winston, and Fehmi Zeko and the Baker family. There were also several Kansas City Art Institute students, such as Tom Miller, who became production assistants and built the bread wall, floats, props, etc. which undoubtedly was a terrific experience for them to have at the start of their own creative careers.

A special team of volunteers was working to transform the KCBT trading floor space with an

interactive presentation for a *Gold Taste* ceremony/banquet. There were strong smells of these stacked colored breads which were to become the backdrop for a slide show that displayed a poetical and critical audiovisual about grain and meat at the KCBT *Gold Taste* Ceremony.

Mornings the week of our event, brokers were at their trading tables on the phones buying and selling commodity futures, evenings *Wheat & Steak* volunteers were working on the bread screen wall.

This installation was held the next Saturday, one week after the American Royal Parade. It was a community celebration at the KCBT for their 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. No civilian had ever been allowed on the trading room floor, and there we were with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Marching Cobras drumming and dancing on the trading floor. There were thirty-five trading tables each wired with phones, each had gold foil table cloths, each table had transparencies on light boxes, all showing colorful images of either grains or meat. (The pre-sale of the light boxes helped finance the project.)

Miralda transformed the staff lounge, the Dr. Pepper Room, displaying the massive steer bust salvaged from the crown float, along with a video artwork about the food culture of both grains and meat. There were many hundred participants trading dollars for slices of royal blue bread covered in 24k gold leaf. Chefs and caterers served beef, champagne and mini cob-shaped caviar wrapped in corn husks from light box trays. It really was an amazing communion.

I don't know how Miralda survived through the intensity of all of this. He labored over this gift to our city, and slept and ate so little! In return for his heroic efforts, so many of our citizens came together to help make his vision a reality. A large part of *Wheat & Steak's* success was that it was a collaborative project in support of a creative idea. The documentation of the project is proof that a whole community of people stood up and said "Yes! How can we help?"



Greetings from Kansas



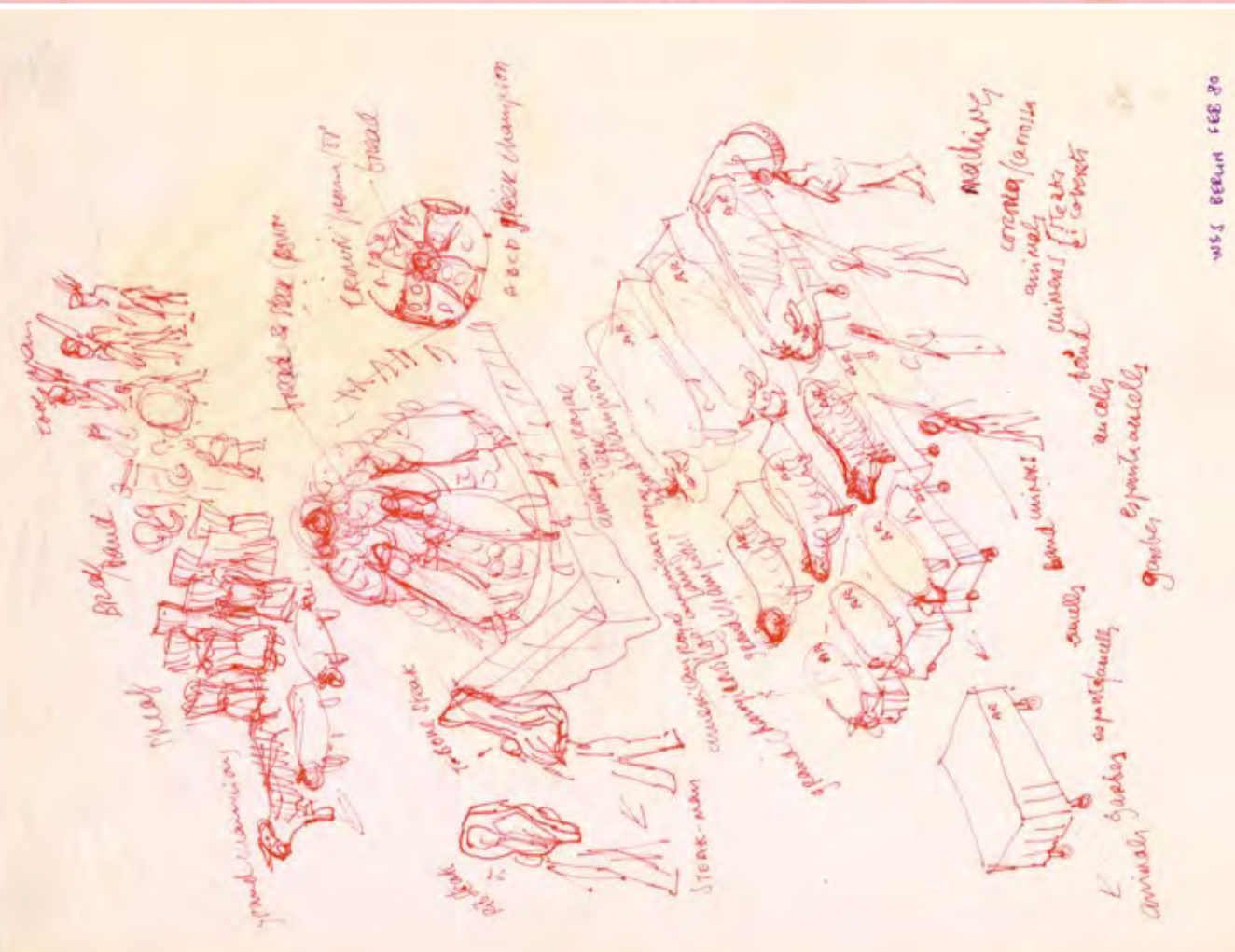
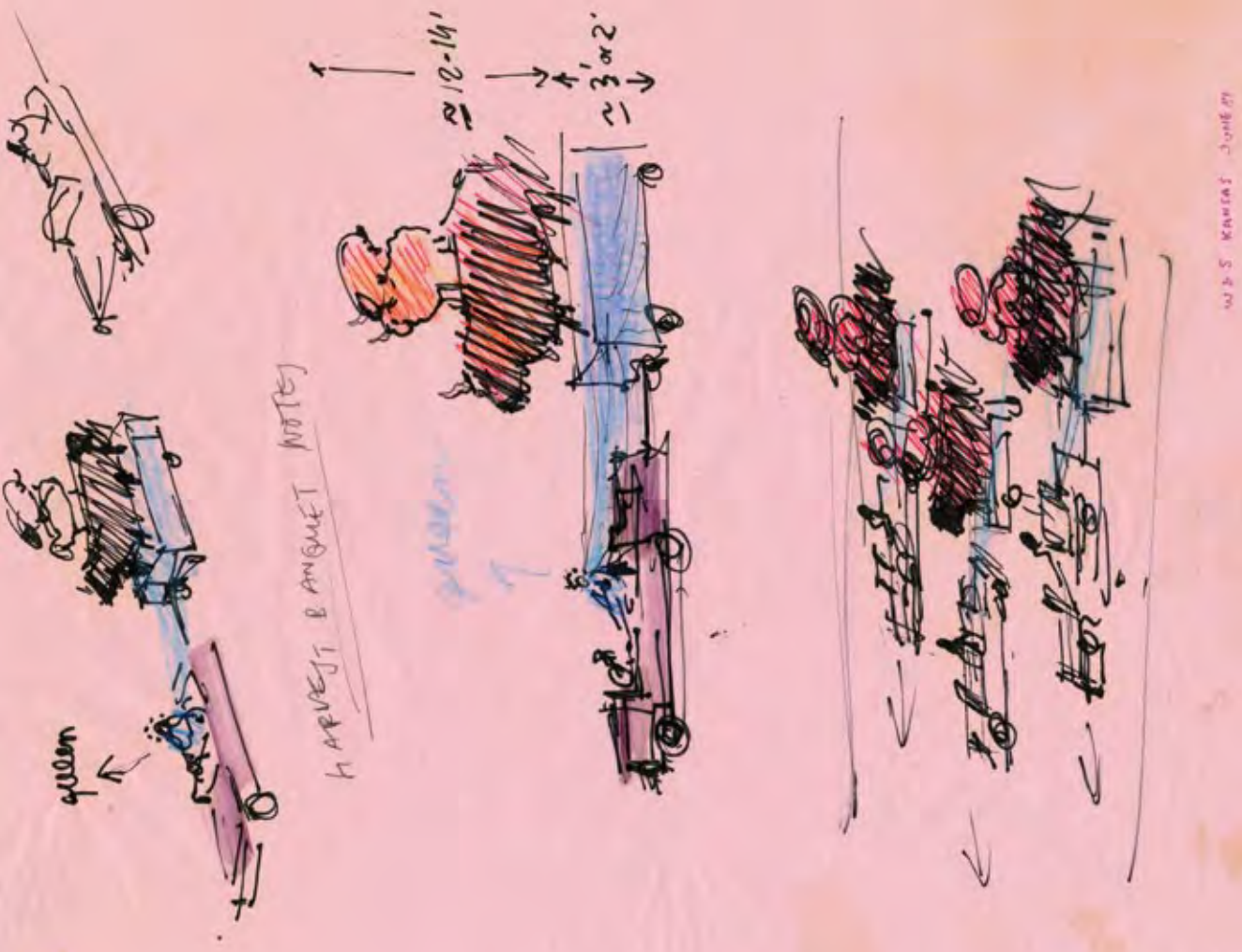
Visual report of Kansas City, as seen by Miralda, and preparatory drawing for the project.



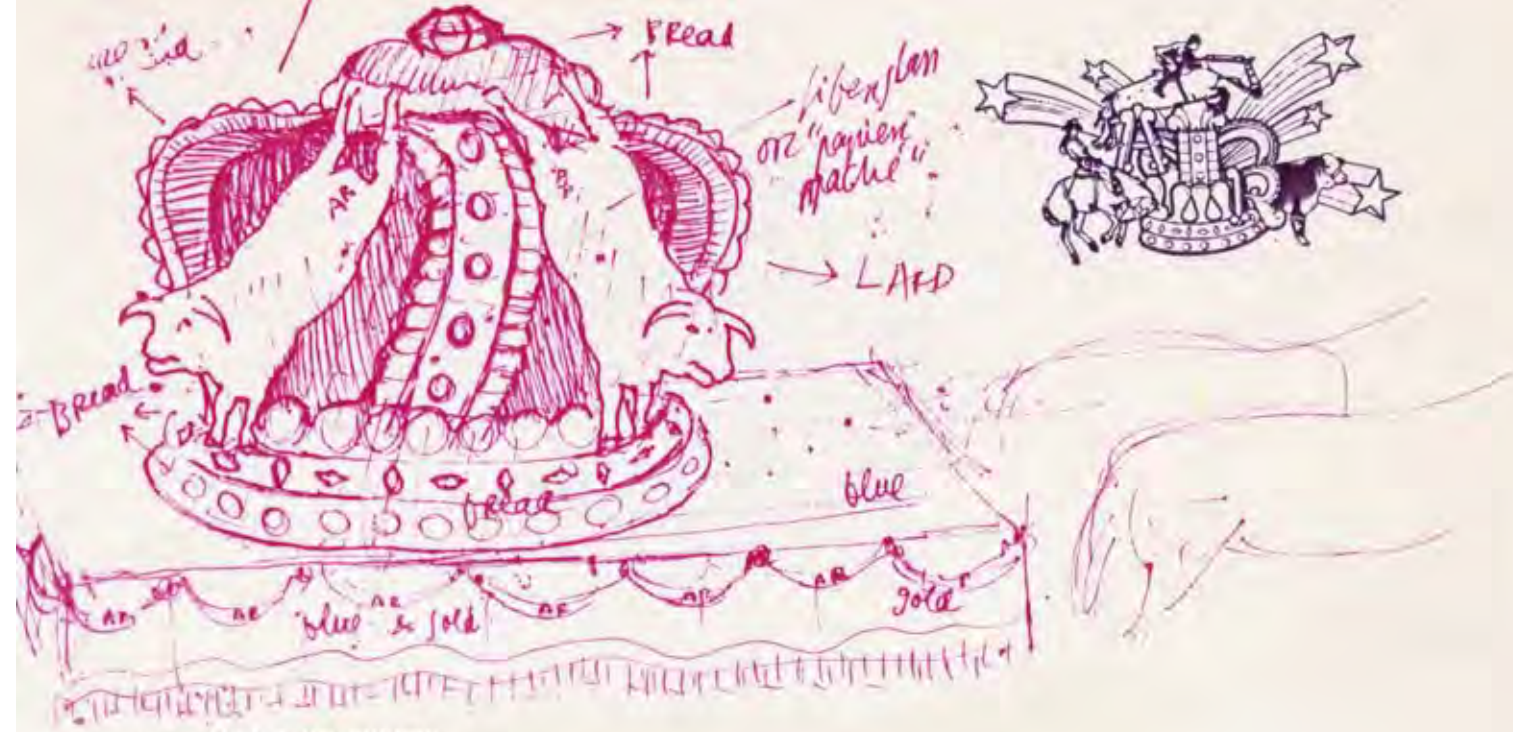


Pictures of the preparation and making of the different elements of the project. The last two pictures show the ultimate destiny of the head of steer, which, after surviving the crown of the Queen of the Harvest, was shown in the staff lounge, the Dr. Pepper Room, at the Kansas City Board of Trade, and ended up at the cemetery for animal remains, the same as any other beast.





Preparatory drawings for the parade and the project's original script.



ORDER OF EVENTS

THE AMERICAN ROYAL PARADE, Saturday, November 7, 1981.

Themes and elements of the project will be presented as part of the annual American Royal Parade.

The first element will be THE LAST SHEAVES, symbolic of the end of the harvest. Actual last sheaves from the Kansas City area harvest will be mounted on styrofoam blocks in the shape of sheaves and carried by marchers—a personification of the "harvest spirit"—that will resemble stalks of wheat waving in the street-field.

The second element, THE SCARECROWS, will be represented by harvesting machines dressed up to resemble scarecrows, complete with moving parts. Marchers will follow them carrying a variety of grain bags.

The third element is the HARVEST SUPPER, a reference to the traditional feast that took place in the fields after the harvest. A farm animal such as a pig, bull, goat, cock, or hare representing an embodiment of the "corn's spirit" was sacrificed in the fields as an act of propitiation, thanksgiving, and offering of the first fruits of the harvest benefits. The harvest supper originated in the breaking of the taboo of cutting and eating the corn crop. The feast will be represented by the TRI-UNI-CORN, a banquet table with a pyramid of three larger-than-life animals from the American Royal (steer, sheep, and hog), each bearing a single horn made of grains of corn. Each of the figures will be "skinned" and labeled to show the different cuts of meat. Several oversized steer sculptures lent by local restaurants will follow the display. All of the animals will be drawn by Cadillacs containing a Beauty Queen.

The last element, the HARVEST QUEEN, will be a float bearing a crown with a jumping blue steer similar to the blue-and-gold trademark of the American Royal. It will be made of bread, corn, and lard, and dedicated to Ceres, the goddess of the harvest. Placed on top of stalks of wheat, it will symbolize the last wagon of the harvest, bearing the reaper of the last sheaf home. The Twenty-third Street Marching Cobras of Lincoln Academy will accompany the Harvest Supper float, carrying the the ritual instruments of the WHEAT & STEAK feast and representations of cuts of meat.

CROWN CENTER, Saturday, November 7, 1981.

HARVEST HOME, a community event, will take place at the Crown Center Square after the parade. The arrival of the HARVEST QUEEN will symbolize the last wagon, marking the end of the harvest. The Crown float and the utensils will be installed outside the center of the square, an open public space where the crown was actually built a week before the event. Surrounding the float will be an installation of displays showing old and contemporary harvest iconography, different grains and bags, collected harvest games, and songs sung by harvesters bringing home the last load. During the afternoon a bread-making demonstration will take place, followed by the distribution of the elements of the crown and of bread made by local residents for a city-wide baking contest.



NELSON GALLERY OF ART, November 7-15, 1981.

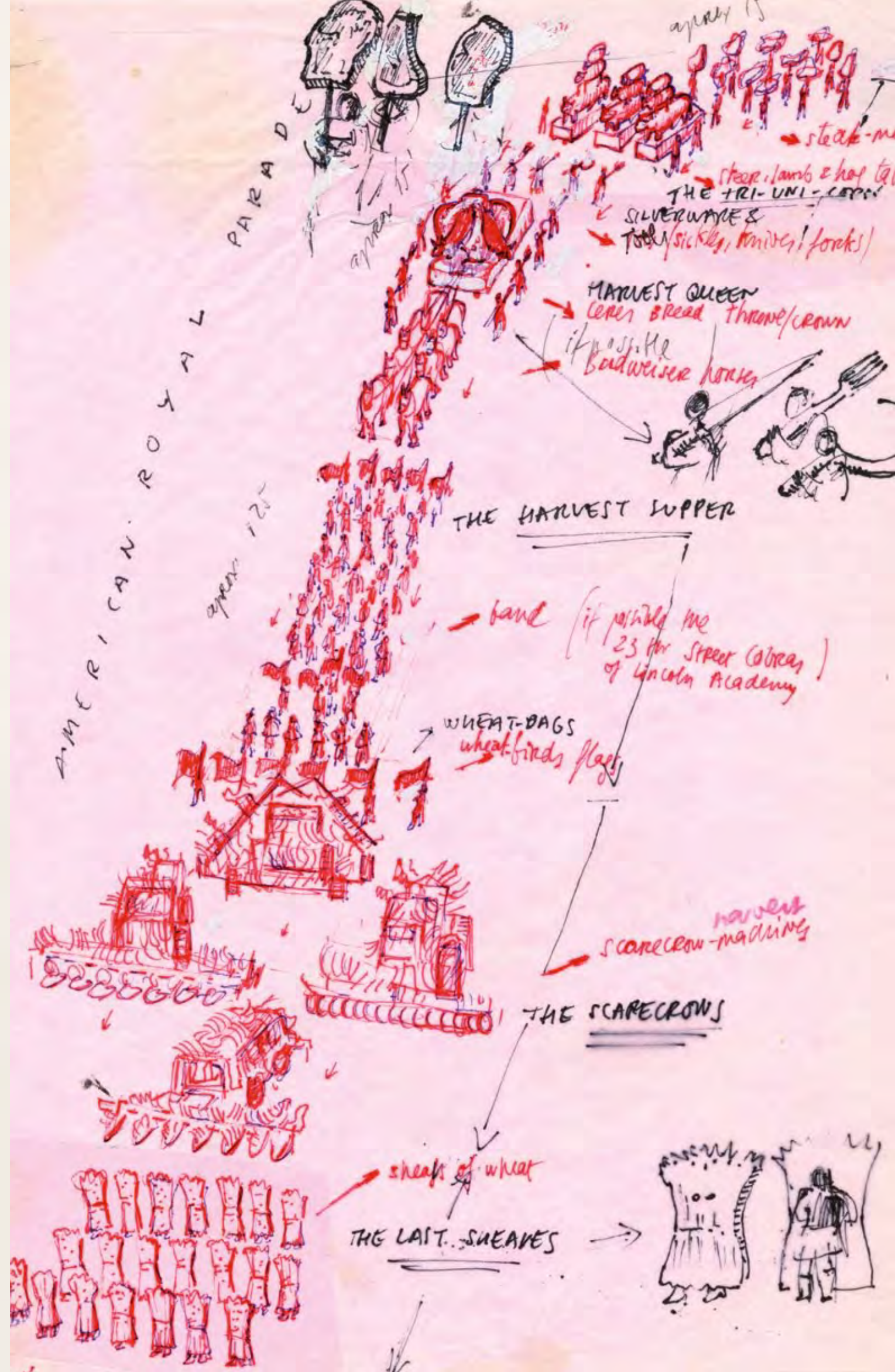
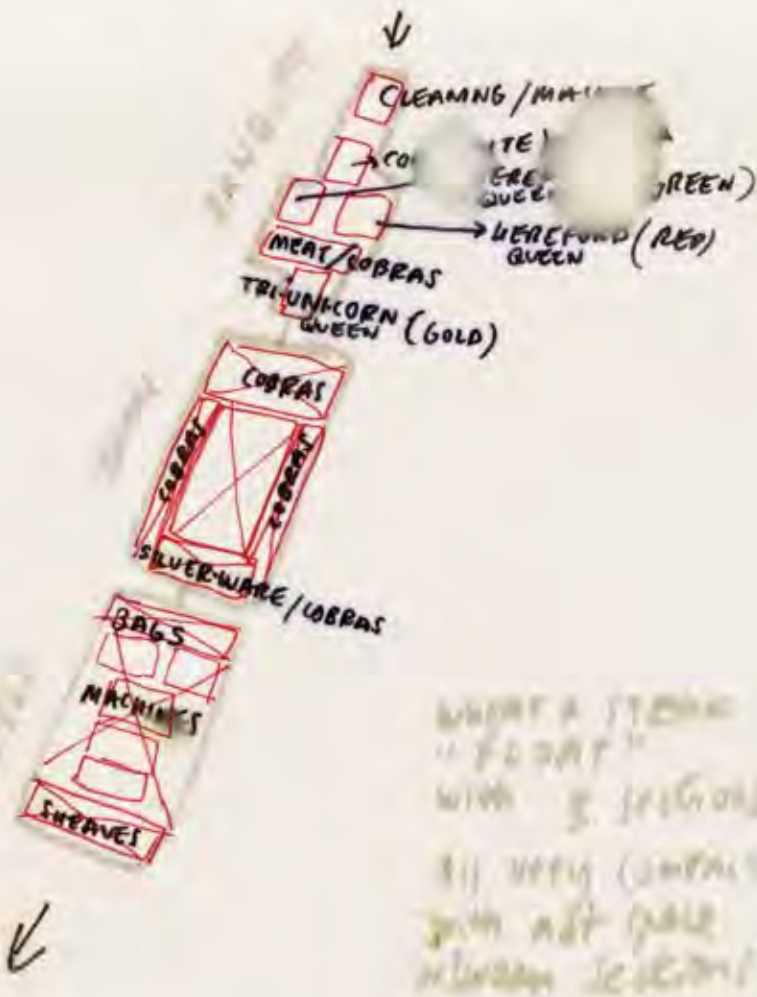
At the end of the American Royal Parade, the TRI-UNI-CORN will be set on the south lawn of the museum. The pyramidal sculpture of three animals is partly based on corn symbolism, hence the corn horn that each bears. The symbolic implications of the piece include: HORN--Bull horns have long been associated with virility and magic power. Today steers are bred without horns, castrated, and sold for beef. CORN--The Corn Spirit has the power to insure the future fertility of the crop and of the cattle that eat it. UNICORN--According to a secular medieval legend the unicorn, a symbol of virtue and chastity, could only be captured and tamed by a virgin holding a mirror, a role assumed here by the Beauty Queen and the rear-view mirror of the Cadillac.

BOARD OF TRADE, November 13-15, 1981.

The trading floor of the Kansas City Board of Trade will be opened to the public for the first time for a visiting and tasting event. This important center, where billions of bushels of grain are sold annually, will become the scene of a ceremony called GOLD TASTE. Visitors will be asked to trade a one-dollar bill for one grain of Golden Wheat, and then trade that for one slice of blue bread and butter with a gold leaf on the top.

The tables normally occupied by the telephones used for the transactions will become banquet tables, where a waiter dressed in blue will prepare the slices of Gold Taste on a lightbox-tray with pictures of colored bread. One wall of the room will be covered with white and colored bread and used as a screen for sound slide-show that will bring together images and sounds from the Harvest Supper and the American Royal Parade with others from the daily routine of the trading pit. Pictures will include the brokers' waves and bids, market prices, telephones ringing, grain processing, harvest and bread iconography, cattle breeding, the chant of auctioneers, champion animal farms, stockyards, meat-processing, advertising, and so on. The trading pit table will become a performance platform where the Twenty-third Street Marching Cobras will perform the Harvest Supper routine with the festive utensils during the three-day period. Other spaces of the trading floor, such as the electronic board where daily market prices are shown, and the television and refreshment room will be visually integrated into the event.

A project by Antoni Miralda sponsored by the Contemporary Art Society





American Royal parade, Kansas City, November 7, 1981.











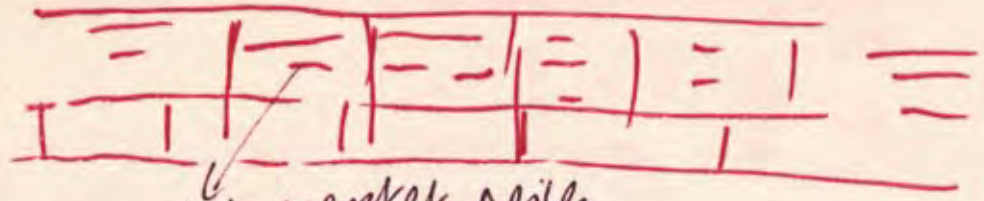




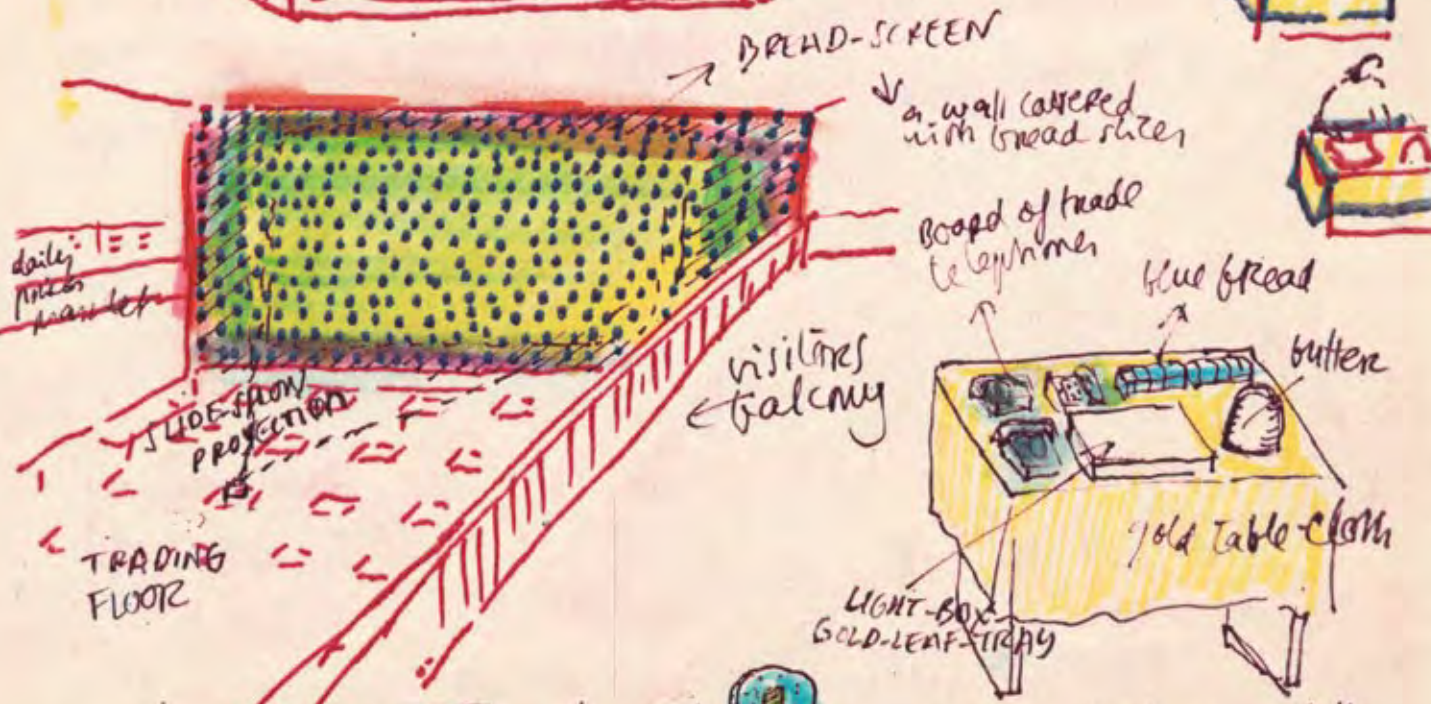
Wheat & Steak exhibition at the Nelson Art Gallery, November 7-21, 1981.



# GOLD TASTE - KANSAS CITY BOARD OF TRADE



daily market piles



TRADE EVENT: \$1 → 10 → 1  
 one dollar bill → one grain of gold wheat → one slice of blue bread and butter with a gold leaf on top



Drawing and preparations for the Gold Taste ceremony at the Kansas City Board of Trade, November 13-15, 1981.





The first cattle in the Western Hemisphere were brought to "Hispaniola" in 1493 with Christopher Columbus.



Table with columns labeled 'MAR', 'MAY', 'JUNE', 'JULY' and rows of numbers, possibly a calendar or a data table related to agriculture.



tion. Each farmer who dr up with animals helped to his own. Most of the calves, rangin age from two days to weeks, were killed by revo shots in the head. The thro of others were slit and t

**SEMEN.**  
Direct from the manufacturer.



The Seed Stock Breeder (Southern Star)  
The Commercial Breeder  
The Feediol Operator

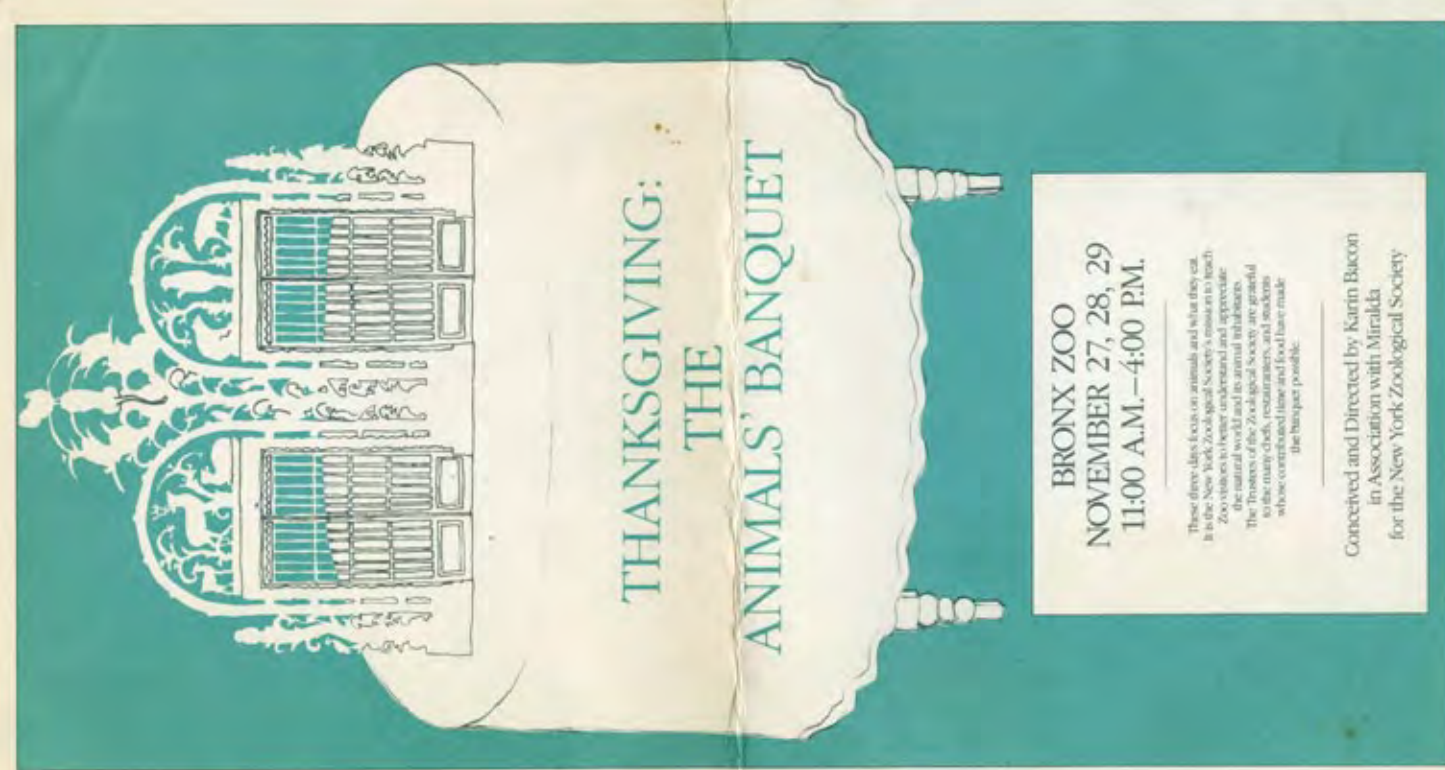
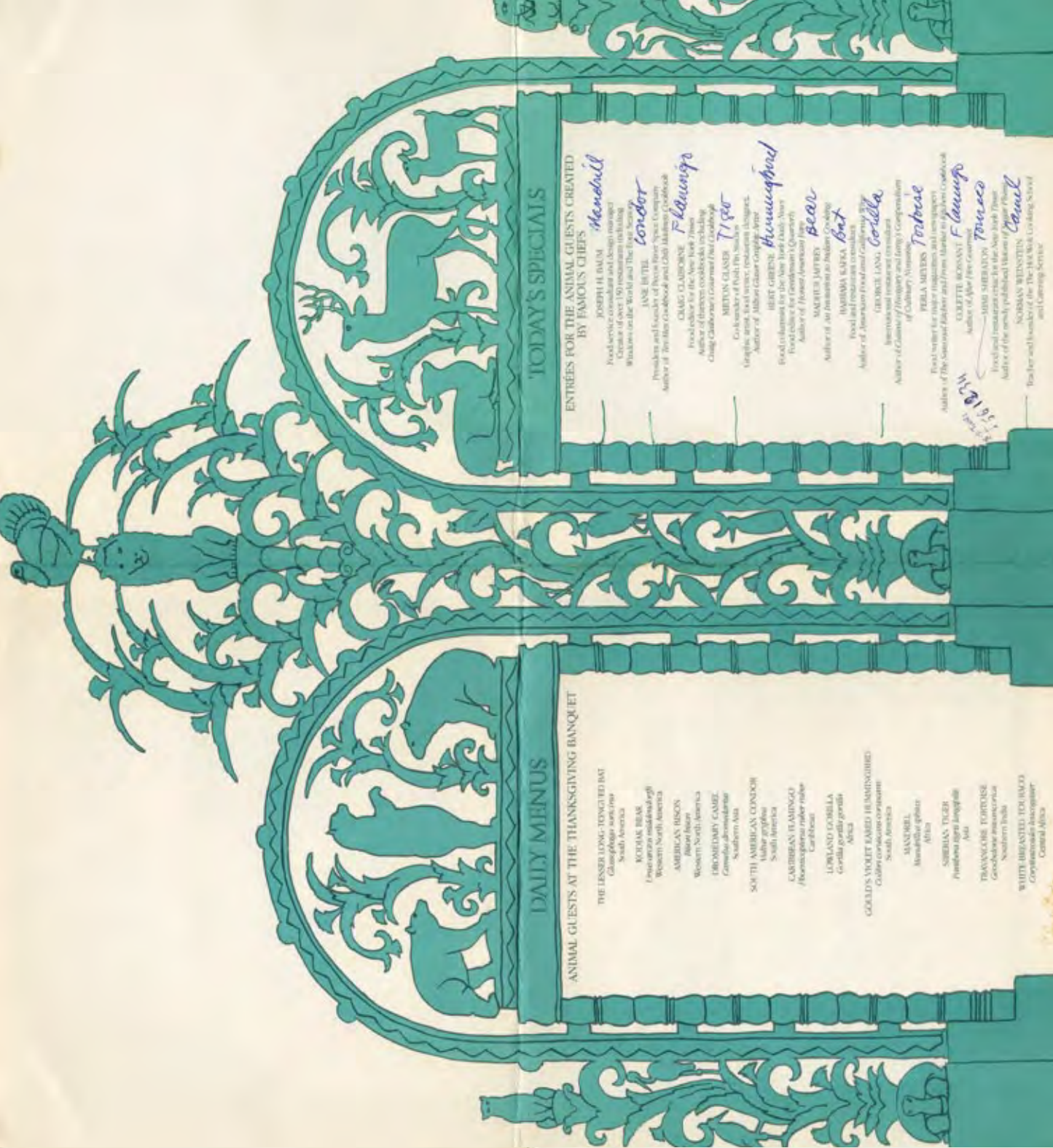
**STEAK Satisfies**











## THANKSGIVING FEAST FOR THE CREATURES

### CONCEPT

Thanksgiving seems to be the right time to educate people about animal food and eating behavior since families are preparing feasts for themselves. The idea for this event is to create a giant colorful feast for the animals which will be both a work of fantasy and a way to teach people about the Zoo's inhabitants.

Twelve animals are chosen to participate in this feast, seven important animals from the Bronx Zoo and five celebrity animals from other zoos such as the white gorilla from Barcelona. The animals will not be at the meal in person but rather on video tape made in advance and projected on twelve video monitors.

The feast is installed in the beautiful old Lion House on a line of tables which extends the length of the building. Along one wall we see the animals on video tape eating and on the tables in front of each monitor is a display of the actual food the animal eats in one day with basic information about eating times, the ingredients and the calories the food contains. \*open from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. On the main table a fantasy feast for each animal is created by food artist, Miralda. Each one is different. The feast for the polar bear, Snowflake, for example, might be all made of ice. The centerpiece of each display is a main dish cooked from a recipe created by six celebrity chefs using ingredients the animals eat. Julia Child, George Lang, Milton Glaser, Mimi Sheraton and others will be asked to submit recipes. People visiting the event will be able to walk along the tables viewing the fantasy food, the real food and the video monitors of the animals simultaneously. As they go by the alcove in the middle of the room, they can sample one of the dishes served by costumed waiters.

### Graphics

The program people receive will include recipes of the celebrity chefs, information about the animals diets and eating schedules and graphics by Miralda related to the feasts.

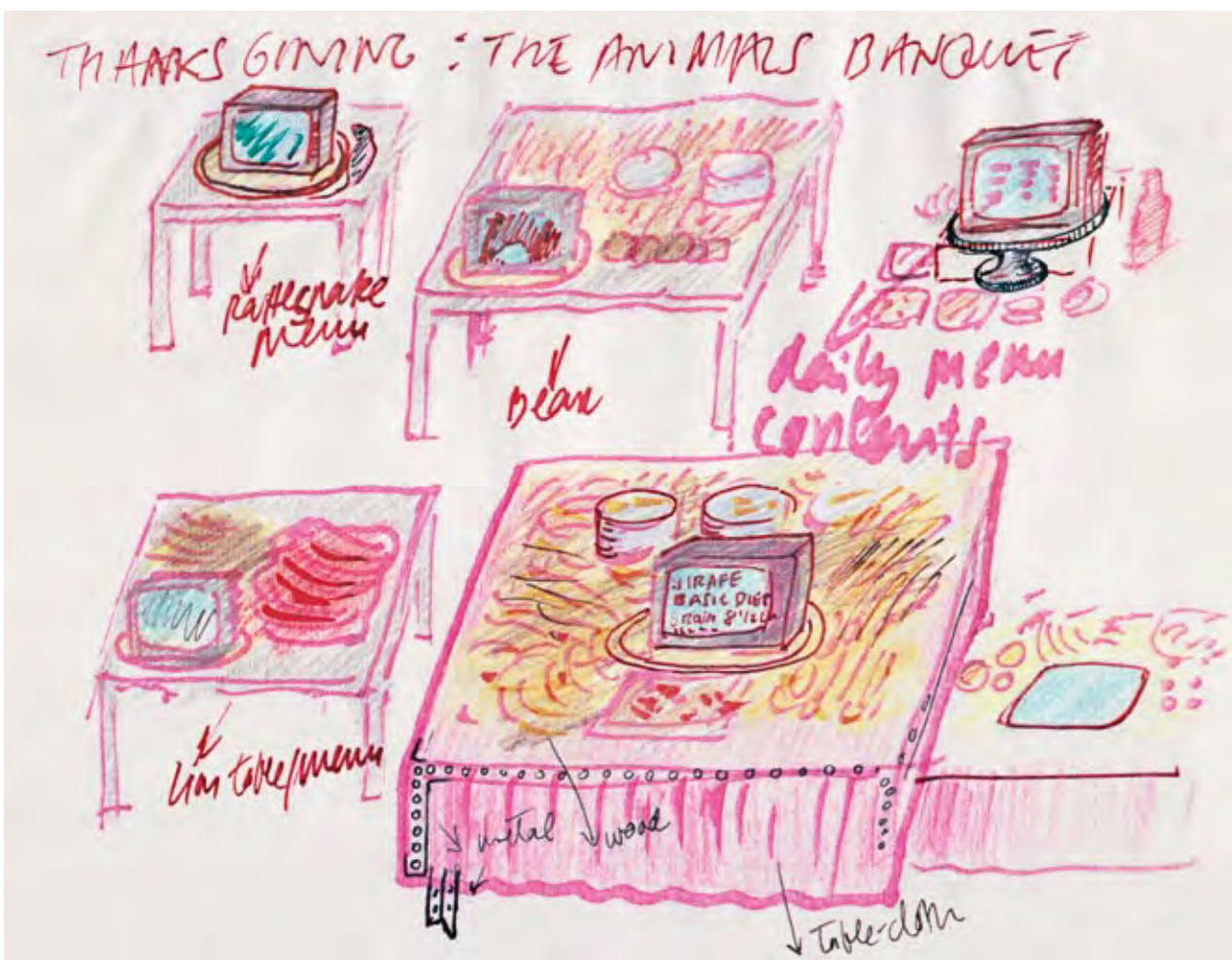
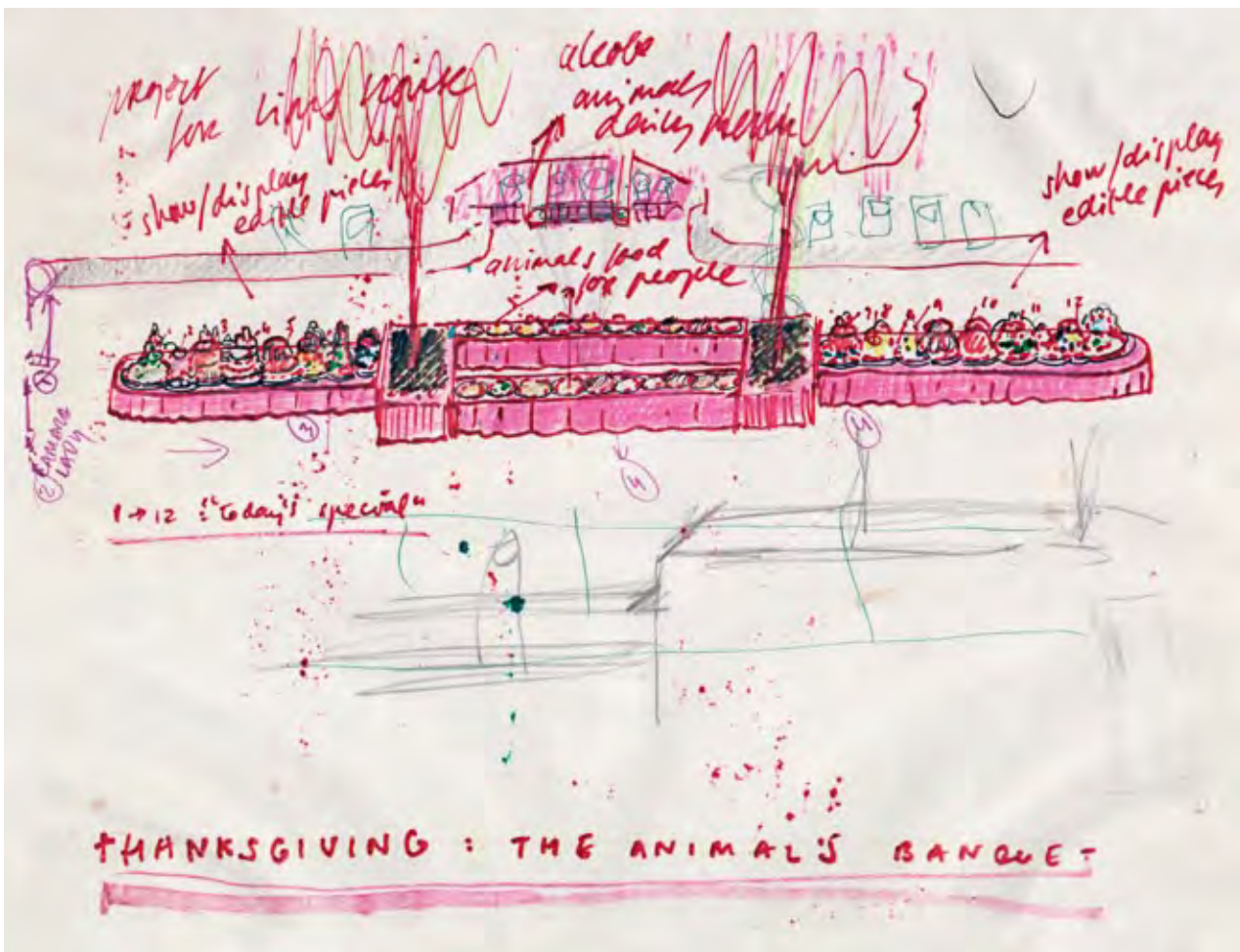
### Other Events

Feeding times will be announced and keepers will be available after feedings to answer questions from the public. Tours of Zoo kitchens will occur daily. The finale of the event will be feeding the celebrity chef dishes to the real animals. People are invited to bring snapshots of their Thanksgiving feasts to show to the animals. These are also projected on the video monitors.

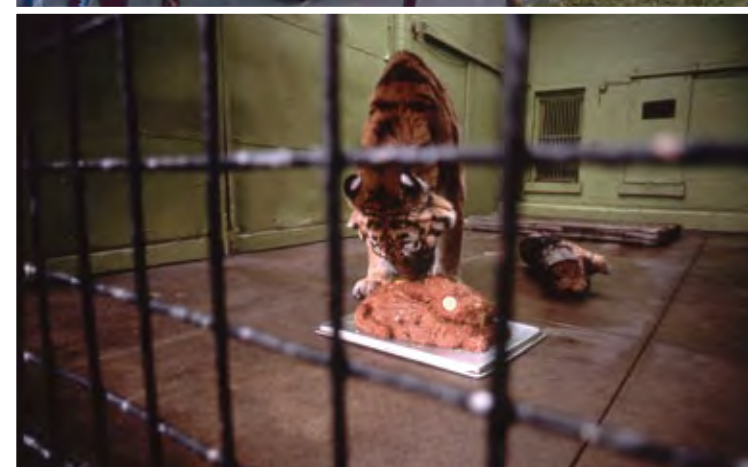
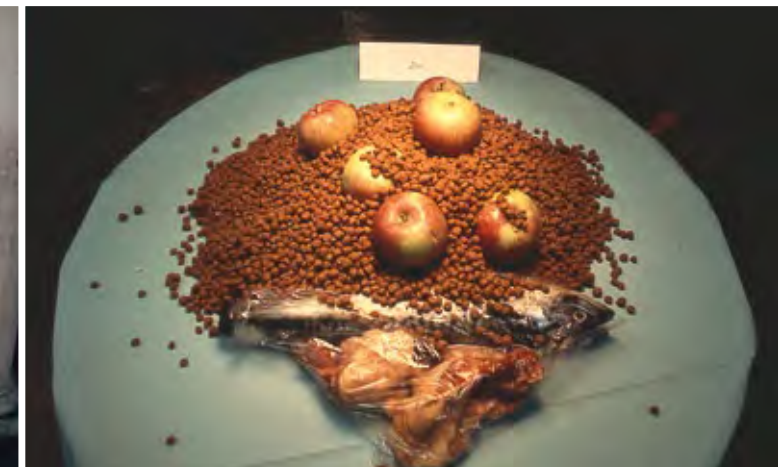
## THANKSGIVING: THE ANIMALS' BANQUET, Bronx Zoo, New York, November 27-29, 1981

A project, produced in collaboration with Karin Bacon - director of the Bronx Zoo's activity program - which reflected on the culinary and cultural implications of Thanksgiving. Miralda and Bacon based their project around the animals and took care of their menu. Twelve personalities from the world of gastronomy were invited to prepare a special dish for each of the twelve selected animals; the dish had to incorporate ingredients from each animal's diet.





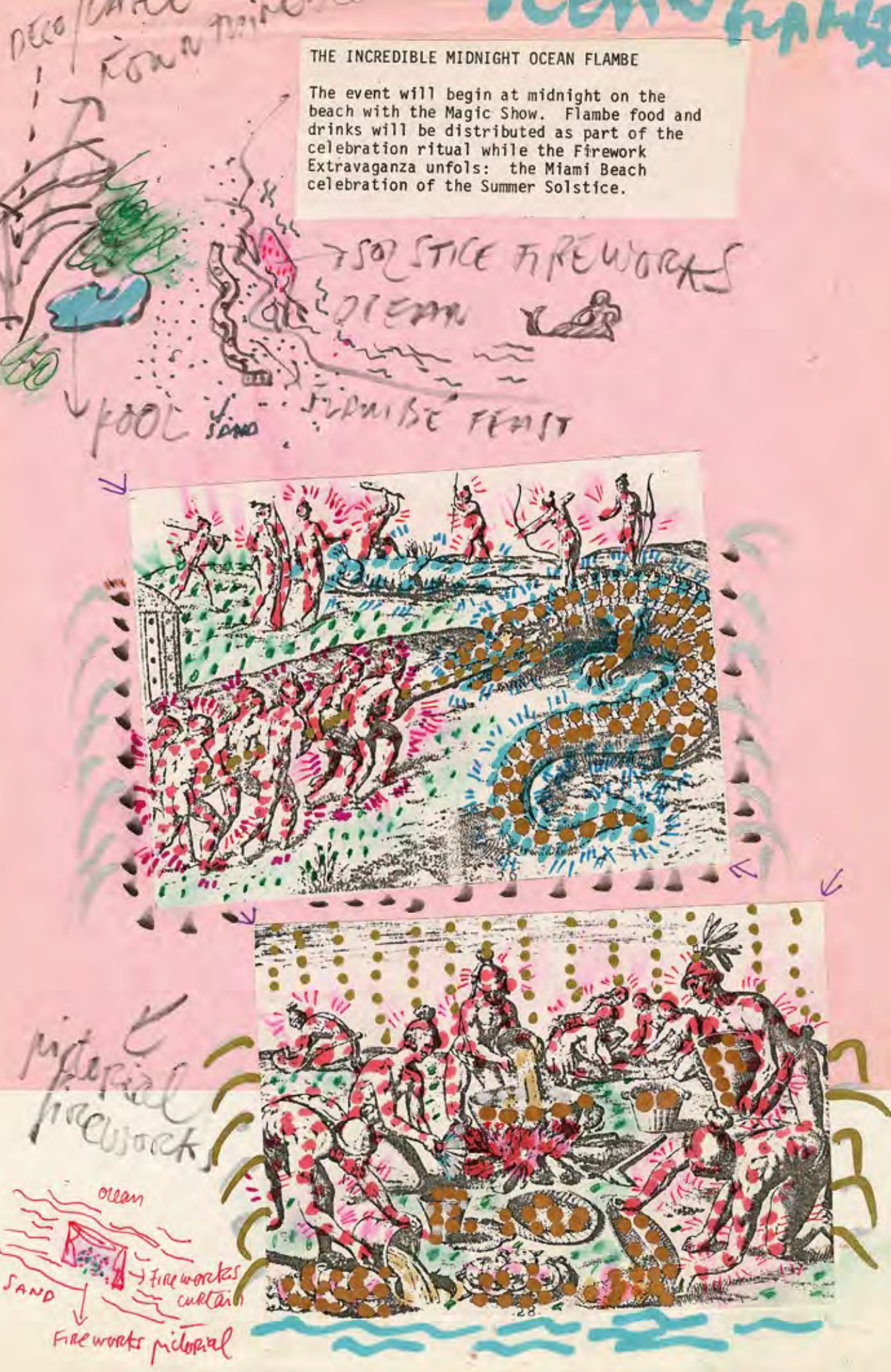
The installation consisted of a big table with edible mythological animals, an installation in the style of a restaurant, and a video installation with the animals' diet. A procession ended the project with the offering to the various animals of the prepared dishes.





### THE INCREDIBLE MIDNIGHT OCEAN FLAMBE

The event will begin at midnight on the beach with the Magic Show. Flambe food and drinks will be distributed as part of the celebration ritual while the Firework Extravaganza unfolds: the Miami Beach celebration of the Summer Solstice.



Preparatory drawing for Vizcaya Solstice Gala (unrealized project).

## Celebrations of the Summer Solstice and the Lure of the Big Moon over Miami

César Trasobares

For reasons both practical and poetic, Miami became an important and productive base of operations for Miralda beginning in 1981. He first visited South Florida at the invitation of the New World Festival of the Arts. The project to become the guest visual artist for the Festival was secured by Jan van der Marck, then director of the Center for the Fine Arts with the support of Micky Wolfson, the major benefactor and driving force realizing the ambitious cultural initiative. Miralda was the sterling artist to complement the performing arts components that included opera and musical programs in various venues throughout South Florida.

Montse Guillén accompanied Miralda and together they immediately adopted another home in America, since they still kept their New York loft in Tribeca. As soon as they settled in a downtown hotel they were interested in everything related to the tropical city: its history, people, places, neighborhoods, restaurants, and all else that they encountered as they drove around town, met locals and researched published historical accounts and images.

In the regional paradigm shifts of the early eighties, Miralda arrived during turbulent times in The Magic City with the recent influx of tens of thousands of Cuban exiles who had crossed the Florida Straits during the Mariel Boatlift. The sudden increase in population augmented the established Cuban expatriate neighborhoods, coexisting with the African American community, the old-time white Americans, and the enclaves of Jews and Jewbans, Cuban Jewish exiles, mostly in Miami Beach. Immigrants from South America began relocating as the economy and political climate evolved in countries in Central America as well as Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela. This vibrant mix of people and traditions fueled Miralda's creativity, inspiring him to "attack" the city with wild abandon and fruitful imagination.

Miralda immediately set out to assemble a work team. He asked me to serve as Project Coordinator to help with the development of his ideas for the Festival and coordinate specific aspects of the projects that evolved, but soon I learned my involvement would be bigger than anything I could have ever imagined. For bureaucratic purposes we set up an office in a corner of a city warehouse on the edge of downtown, on Biscayne Boulevard and 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The Festival had provided a hotel room in the historic Everglades Hotel within walking dis-

tance of what became our operations headquarters. Montse became involved in all aspects of the emerging projects, factoring in her human presence and drive, while also pursuing her own research of markets, *botánicas*, dollar stores, and restaurants. As soon as we had a telephone landline with a message center we installed a fax machine, an obligatory office instrument to stay connected to the growing local network and to the world.

Miralda's curiosity about South Florida was endless. We started exploring Miami neighborhoods systematically, stopping everywhere to grab a bite, buy objects and pick up samples or "take notes." The discovery of Coral Gables led to the early adventures in Little Havana. Soon he insisted in visiting Vizcaya, the Italianate mansion built by industrialist James Deering in the twenties on the edge of Biscayne Bay. Opa-locka followed, as did the Coral Castle, in the southern areas of town. At every turn, it was a commitment to absorbing the unknown and delighting in the regional surprises. Although the cultural overload was welcome and energizing for our team, he was pressed by the Festival organizers to address his duties.

Miralda had been asked by the Festival to produce an iconic image that would be used in different contexts and events. He came up with a celebratory mask, inspired in a historical drawing of a double-tailed mermaid, a fantastic sea monster that would also become a feast table. Miralda looked for historical images in libraries and books, and this fantastic image by Catalan artist Juan Joffre of 1520 proved to be the pungent symbol he was seeking. The mask, proportioned to be worn over anyone's face, was printed in turquoise and silver. The enigmatic transformed creature, revived from the depths of history, would be featured as a symbol for the festival and as an actual object/souvenir that was gifted to audiences attending the musical and theatrical performances.

On another front, proposals for site-works in various locales in South Florida evolved, all in a flurry of energy, some concepts and plans more realistic than others. Working in absolute independence of the reigning cultural organizations, Miralda felt free to pursue anything he envisioned, trumping institutional propriety and trespassing established cultural boundaries. Miami Beach, the main source of local tourism and international renown, was poised to be a fructiferous starting territory.

### MIAMI PROJECTS, New World Festival of the Arts, Miami, June 4-26, 1982

For Miami's New World Festival of the Arts, Miralda put together five proposals related to different aspects and locations of the city of Miami. The only ones that came to fruition were the *Mermaid Table* edible sculpture and the *Domestic Coral Castle* summer solstice celebration, in collaboration with Montse Guillén.



Inspired by the struggle of historians and preservationists to save Art Deco hotels from the wrecking balls of developers, Miralda decided to highlight buildings that had been demolished with a dramatic installation at Miami Beach's grandest of Miami Modern buildings, designed by the fabled Morris Lapidus: the luxurious oceanside Fontainebleau Hotel. The celebrated hotel on Collins Avenue had been opened in 1954 in the midst of Millionaires' Row and its architecture loomed large in the annals of Miami Beach as the principal site hosting historical events and glamorous guests, while also serving as a favorite venue for the film, television and music industries.

Miralda made drawings for a series of cakes shaped like the destroyed Art Deco hotels, to be made by local bakeries in the tradition of Cuban birthday sweets. The colorful cakes were intended to be installed in the main lobby of the legendary hotel symbolizing a legacy that would be lost unless someone came to the rescue. Barbara Baer Capitman, the leader of one of the most daring episodes in preserving an entire architectural district, led the contentious effort to obtain protection from the National Trust for Historic Preservation resulting in the largest district of historic Art Deco buildings in North America. Miralda's symbolic tribute at the time still resonates with the living architecture that survived.

For the formal gardens at Villa Vizcaya, in the style of Versailles, Miralda envisioned a participatory event with a fantastic barbecue, *Vizcaya Solstice Gala*. While referencing an American southern popular cooking tradition, he brought into play drawings by Jacques le Moyne of Native American Indians, some of whom once lived in the region. Miralda even suggested grilling local birds and reptiles, including the exotic alligators, probably staples of the diet of the original inhabitants of what became La Florida. This project embodied a critique of American postcolonial splendor and presaged the contentious global politics that became staples of the art of the late twentieth century.

For the seaport, a main venue of travel by ship and international trade, the actual "Gateway to the Americas," he proposed to install a giant sea snake made of orange slices spanning various buildings and encircling three monumental buffet tables in the shape of galleons. The oranges that formed the body of the *Sea-Serpent of the New World* referred to the state's fruit and industry and the banquet tables recalled Columbus's Niña, Pinta, and Santa Maria. Conflating travel and discovery, intensifying the regional and the universal, he alluded to the culinary bounty that resulted from the meeting of the Old and New Worlds.

*Santa Comida* reflected intense research of the principal deities in the Afro-Cuban Santería pantheon, a syncretic religion that evolved in the Caribbean and Brazil. Based on casual conversations with practitioners and believers, the information gathered focused on foods offered to the various gods. As reported by practicing Santeros, in addition to the recipes, the research included images of the dishes served to each *potencia*, as the gods are known. Examining an obscure corner of religion and anthropology, Miralda set the groundwork for his own subsequent investigations of the emerging multicultural awareness that now suffuses the work of artists in various parts of the planet.

These ideas survive in the publication *Miami Miralda*, produced by the project team as a newspaper handout distributed at all Festival events. Each project had a "page" with background information and with Miralda's drawings and notes. The only event realized, *Domestic Coral Castle* took place at a roofless "home" made of the native coral rock built by an immigrant from Latvia for a bride he was hoping would join him in America. Numerous people boarded school buses for the long drive from downtown Miami and the evening included a performance with a character actor playing the role of the homesteader as participants looked on in awe in the middle of the bizarre setting. A large bonfire fueled the flambeed wine served in seashells as sixteen teenage girls dressed as brides walked around the place with boomboxes playing loud music.

Reality and fantasy seamlessly blended in Miralda's own brand of site-specific art; the enchanting evening delighted, intrigued, and inspired the participants. In many ways, this event recalled Miralda's earlier ceremonial and ritual performances; participatory occasions involving gustatory and sensorial stimulation. The unexpected convergence of locale, people, drink, food, and the uncertain circumstances augmented the magical import of the evening.

In addition to the proposals and as a way of producing events at the major Miami museums, Miralda turned the double-tailed mermaid Renaissance symbol he had revived into a transformational table. The project team produced five versions of the *mesa*, each related to the sponsoring venue. Three of the main local museums hosted events featuring the *Mermaid Table* before it was cast into the Atlantic Ocean to float away with the Gulf Stream current.

At the opening event of the Festival the *Mermaid Table* served oysters and caviar on a base of cream cheese to the numerous VIPs, sponsors, and Miami glitterati attending the vernissage. The

mask and the publication also made their debut that evening, setting a tone for the visual arts component of the Festival and announcing the celebratory performances that would follow.

The Bass Museum in Miami Beach hosted an event with the table decked in delicious sweet edibles produced by Gilbert, a prominent baker familiar with Mediterranean breads and desserts. In the museum's main room, flanked by giant tapestries by Rubens, a lively crowd gathered to enjoy the special treats, including the exotic *huevo hilado*, a recipe Miralda insisted matched the delicacy of the golden threads in the woven artworks.

The Science Museum hosted a daylong celebration with the table featuring feathers, seeds, and bird food along with quail eggs nested in edible potato string nests. The table was sited inside the building surrounded by rooms that featured taxidermically preserved birds. The museum also exhibited a series of historic prints of birds. An elephant roamed the grounds with a replica of the James Audubon flamingo print painted on its hide. Bringing together depicted and real animals, food for humans and other species, the contrasts between live bodies and preserved carcasses, Miralda posed questions about the openness and freedom of artistic expression in a strict scientific context.

After the Lowe Art Museum director rejected the use of local grouper, red snapper, and flounder in the installation (fishy odor inside the museum would not be appropriate), the *Mermaid Table* sported delicacies from local bakeries, a compromise really, from the feast of Caribbean fish Miralda had envisioned.

For a private evening fiesta at the home of Jan and Ingeborg van der Marck the *Mesa Sirena* offered a banquet of different edibles, including *Brazo Gitano*, sweet confections, tropical fruits, and other party finger food. Invited guests, most of whom had seen the table in its various iterations and had shared the culinary bounty of South Florida, encouraged Miralda and Montse to spend more time in Miami. They took the advice with joy and passion.

After the Festival, Miralda resumed his myriad exhibitions, publications, and projects in other places, but the lasting impact of Miralda's initial investigations in Miami is impressive. *Santa Comida* was eventually expanded and realized as an independent work that is now in the MACBA Collection. He had vastly expanded his holdings of objects and memorabilia from throughout South Florida.

Much of the material that had accumulated in files and shelves was recycled in later projects like *Sabores y Lenguas* (2002). The *Miami Plate* became the model for a series of portraits of cities

in Latin America and other parts of the world through culinary maps that also included local markets, ingredients, recipes, and popular language about food and cooking. The project had expanded the collecting of *Grandmas' Recipes*, begun in 1998, encouraging residents of various cities to share treasured memories of the culinary traditions of their families. In a bend of fate, luckily, I have continued to participate in most of Miralda's initiatives to this day.

Miralda's projects usually engage a vast network of players: community representatives, volunteers, actual actors and hired workers, and the numerous other people who become involved while projects evolve. As projects move from ideas to reality a multiplier effect of all these people embody and broadcast Miralda's generosity as an artist linking past and present, ideal and actual, and, repeatedly, benefitting, informing, and inspiring his local and universal audiences. In all cases, the subjects of food and eating are expanded beyond nutritional sustenance into a wide array of disciplines: anthropology, literature, religion, film, architecture, popular culture, travel, design, furniture, and the numerous manifestations in art and political history.

A project for Lincoln Road in Miami Beach featured chairs made from automobile tires, inviting sitters to engage in intimate conversations. These chairs, commissioned by the Miami Beach Art in Public Places program, marked the early history of one of America's first outdoor pedestrian malls along a street once open to vehicular circulation. Recycling and repurposing components, in this case tires into chairs, has been a constant strategy in Miralda's practice. Working with local craftsmen, Miralda's drawings guided the construction, personally supervising the fabrication of these enigmatic functional sculptures.

Through the years Miralda set up various working and living spaces in South Florida while continuing to keep the New York base. In 1992 they moved into a townhouse on Española Way in Miami Beach invited by developer Craig Robins, as Miralda began a collaboration with his company, Dacra, revamping the company's logo, developing site-specific projects for a building on Washington Avenue, the Starfish Building, and creating a mural for the corporate office. Numerous dinners and events at the house served to strengthen and expand the evolving local cultural scene.

Miralda's exhibition at the Miami Art Museum (1998) showcased three large tongues made from exotic soda cans (one was rescued from the *Bigfish Mayaimi* restaurant), various large versions of *City Plates*, a group of photographs of



people's tongues along with the local research of *Grandmas' Recipes*, still growing and evolving.

As it remained a base of operations, they always came back to Miami Beach after numerous travels and projects in other countries and cities, mostly in Barcelona. Using his work space in Española Way, Miralda started to organize the collections of objects, menus, and food memorabilia that had been stored in his loft in Tribeca and eventually included in his *Food Pavilion* for Expo 2000 in Hannover.

In 2001 they moved to a warehouse in North Miami Avenue, *TransEAT*, before the area became the Wynwood Arts District. Their place continued to be a meeting point for numerous events, dinners, and receptions. Montse used the place as a culinary laboratory, mostly in her exploration of edible exotics, including insects, and as the incubation locale for a series of Artists' Dinners. In addition to their living quarters, this space was used to formalize and institutionalize the concept of the *Food Culture Museum (FCM)*.

The FCM ([www.foodcultura.org](http://www.foodcultura.org)) developed as a collective effort to consolidate objects and ephemera that had been gathered through the years. With the worldwide marketplace available through eBay, hundreds of objects were acquired for the collection. The library was organized and many of the undocumented holdings were classified and archived. In addition to recording and researching items, the FCM launched its own presence on the Internet as well as its own projects.

An initiative involving plates made by artists from the area and other cities was originally exhibited in the Design District. A collection of products initially assembled in Miami grew to become the exhibition *Power Food*, and the publication *POWER FOOD LEXIcom*.

After selling the Miami Avenue space, Antoni and Montse rented a larger warehouse to organize the "big move" of artworks and the collections to Barcelona. As they expanded their European home base, the collections and Miralda's art, formerly stored in various places, were assembled and consolidated in a large living and working warehouse in the city's Poble Nou district.

In February 2006 they bought a *lakay* in the Little Haiti neighborhood that continues to be their modest Miami home to this day. Over a period of thirty-five years, Miami became Miralda's New World beachhead conquered.



*Mermaid Table* for the inauguration of the New World Festival of the Arts, Reflections on the Bay, Miami, June 3, 1982.

► *Miami Miralda* tabloid, which brought together the different proposals for the New World Festival of the Arts in Miami, 1982.



# MIAMI MIRALDA

**NEW  
WORLD**

**PHOTOS**

**FESTIVAL**

**VIZCAYA  
SOLSTICE GALA**

**DOMESTIC  
CORAL CASTLE**

**OF  
THE ARTS**

**SANTA  
COMIDA  
HOLY-FOOD**



*double-tailed Catalan viper, painted by Joan Jolla 1520*

**6.4.26.82**

**FONTAINEBLEAU  
DECO CAKE**

**SEA-SERPENT OF THE NEW WORLD**

JOSE CARDET  
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MONTSE GUILLEN  
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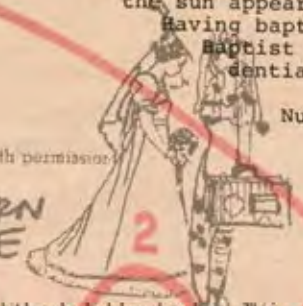




The guests will gather at the Courtyard of the Metropolitan Museum and Art Centers at the Biltmore in Coral Gables for an 11 pm departure to the Coral Castle. Upon boarding the buses and along the drive through US 1, a review of Coral Castle history and folklore will be presented. On arrival the groups will walk toward the Gate for the beginning of the Sweet 16 Tour. After the Tour the guests will meet at the Table of the Feast of Love for the start of the culinary fare. As each guest takes his/her place in the household, the 16 Sweet Sixteen will present the Midnight/Midsummer tasting.

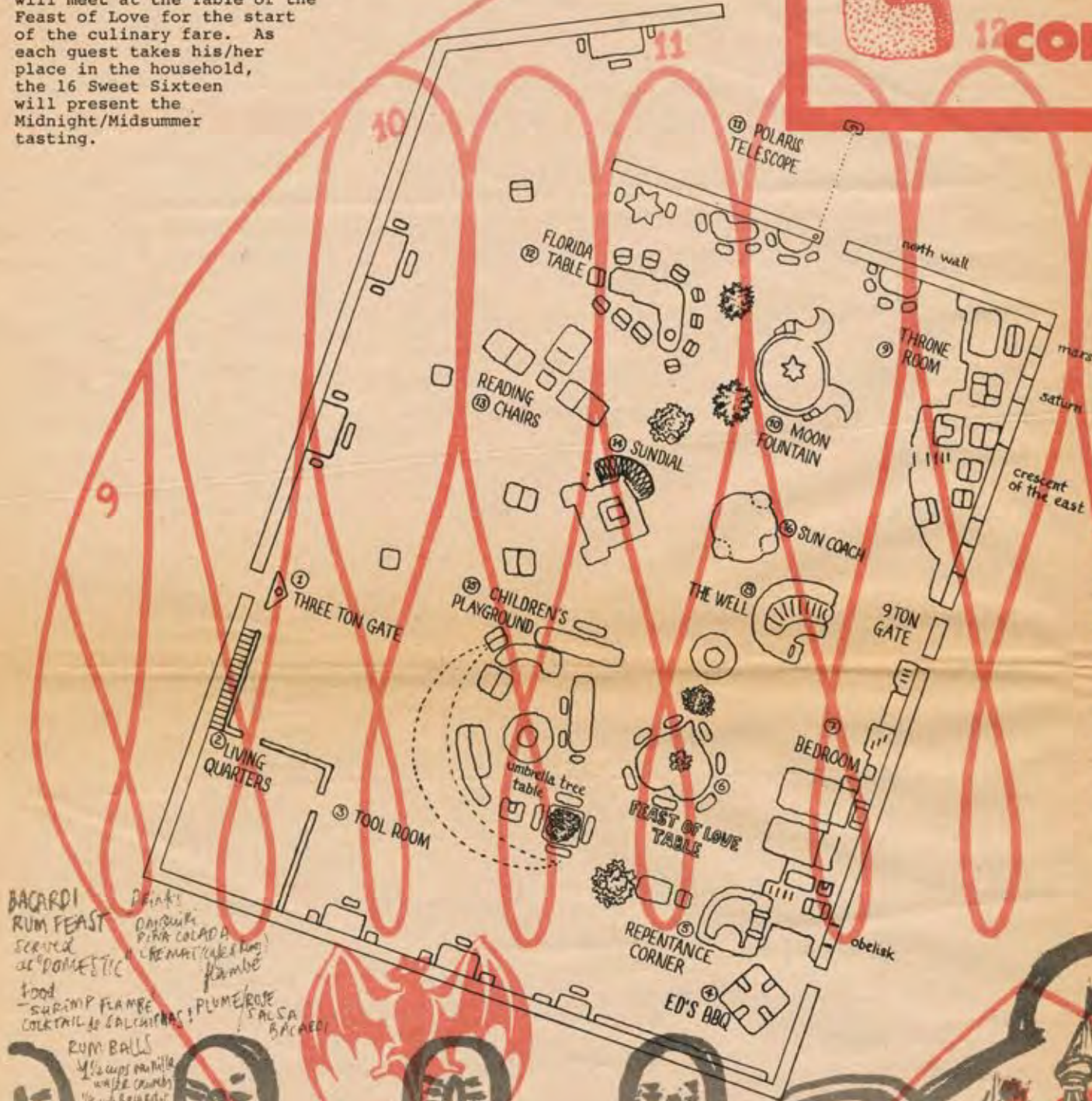
# DOMESTIC CORAL CASTLE

*DOMESTIC-CORAL Castle June 23*  
 Long before the Christian era, Midsummer Eve and Midsummer Day were celebrated throughout Europe near the time of the summer solstice, when the days are longest and the sun appears at its highest point in the sky... Having baptized Jesus Christ, St. John the Baptist was possessed of unparalleled credentials. His birth is celebrated June 24.



Numerous customs, Pagan and Christian, developed, notably dancing around the fires and leaping over the flames or embers to assure a variety of blessings... All night merrymaking became the rule, and sun worship faded as the emphasis of Midsummer Eve turned to young lovers and romantic fancies...

from a 19th Century Almanac



Coral Castle is a sight you will see nowhere else in the world. But it is one you will long remember, for this is a true love story told all in stone. Unlike your own beautiful love story, this one is sad, bittersweet and powerful. And it proves once and for all that true love can and does last forever.

Edward Leedskalnin was born and grew up in the tiny Baltic country of Latvia. The whole world seemed strewn with roses for him as he happily prepared for his wedding to the one girl he loved above everything else in the world. But his happiness was short-lived, for on the very eve of his wedding, his bride-to-be jilted him for a man of greater affluence and better education.

So, deeply hurt and with a permanently scarred heart, he left his native land and came to America, settling at last in southern Florida. Now his chief aim in life was to do something that would make him famous, with the hope that his love would hear about it, regret jilting him, and perhaps someday come back to him. She never came back to him, but he never forgot her, and he never married. Instead, he spent thirty long years carving out this magnificent memorial to his unrequited love.

Mr. Leedskalnin was a tiny man standing a mere five feet tall and weighing only ninety-five pounds. Here, despite his limited education, he exhibited the mathematical genius of a genius. No one was ever allowed to watch him at work; he worked alone, utterly unaided, behind a wall with a swinging three-ton

which he securely locked by a cleverly placed coconut. None of these pieces have been cemented together, each object was carved from one solid piece of coral rock. And how this doll-sized man managed to quarry, lift and balance these super-mammoth rocks is something that is still baffling some of our country's most able-minded engineers. Some of these rocks weighed as much as thirty-five tons. When asked how he did it, he replied that he had discovered the secrets of perfect balance used in the building of Egypt's pyramids. But he never revealed his secrets and, when he died, they died with him.

Among the wonders he has created here is his throne room. This throne is an enormous stone rocking chair, weighing two and a half tons, that rocks with the ease of a child's rocker. There are other smaller rocking chairs throughout the castle that weigh a mere 1000 pounds.

In a room he called The Feast of Love, there is a heart-shaped table topped by a heart-shaped center (still one piece of stone) with an blooming plant set in the middle. The little piece weighs six tons. In the bedroom there are twin beds, coral pillows, a split level floor, children's beds, and, beside the children's beds, a king cradle for

children he had hoped to have. This is called The Grotto of the Three Bears, carrying out the theme of the famous fairy tale, complete with the furniture and even a huge coral partridge bowl.

There is a perfectly constructed contoured chair here that Mr. Leedskalnin carved out twenty years before that style appeared on the furniture market. And also worthy of mention is his sundial, believed to be the most accurate in the world, for he has even made corrections for the change of seasons. On any day of the year, this dial will give you the correct time to the second.

And, as is befitting any castle, you will find a subterranean well with a circular coral staircase leading down to the water.

In the center of the rear wall, reminiscent of ancient castles of the East, there swings a gate weighing nine tons. And this is so perfectly pivoted and balanced you can turn it with your little finger.



**BACARDI RUM FEAST**  
 SERVED AT DOMESTIC  
 Drink: DAYQUIR, PINK COLODA, CREAM (takes long) FAMBRE  
 Food: SURIMP FEAMBE, COCKTAIL 40 GALCATHAS, PLUME ROPE, SALSA BACARDI  
 RUM BALLS  
 1/2 cup rum  
 1/2 cup vanilla  
 1/2 cup cream  
 1/2 cup brownie  
 1/2 cup lard  
 1/2 cup walnuts  
 1/2 cup raisins

Ed used parts and mechanisms from a Model T FORD throughout the construction of his home. The Three Ton Gate is balanced on the axle of a Model T FORD. Some of these parts are still in the Tool Room of the Coral Castle.



Thanks to the 16 Sweet Sixteen & Buford J. Miller (lighting/paint) RAYMOND BRADY (acting) & LARRY HILL (auto) & BACHARIT

*Miami Sweet 16 & Buford J. Miller  
 Miami Sweet 16, NORA SWANN, PATTY GROSS  
 to LOUISE SMITH!*





*willow*  
*Hyacinth*  
*willow*  
*Hyacinth*  
*willow*  
*Hyacinth*

**JUSTICE GALA**

*John James Audubon's  
 THE FLY OF AMERICA 1819 paper  
 reproduction, illustration of  
 the fly of America*



*1874  
 Gardens of Viscaya  
 Estate of Santa Barbara  
 Maria Florida*

*Capri painted by  
 me Viscaya Gollub  
 for Chuck Riden  
 Font: David  
 Champagne  
 FREEKNET*

*pent*  
*tableau*

*animal by a pair of  
 fireworks tableau*



"Augusta Owen Patterson, the art editor of *Town & Country* magazine, summed up several years later the somewhat breathless reports inspired by this complex decorating project. She wrote in her book *American Homes of Today* that Viscaya "was a sensation. Everywhere everyone seemed to know someone who was doing something for the Osering House. There were tales of weeks spent by expert fingers in constructing a grandly proportioned tassel to hang over a grandly proportioned bed; of ancient embroideries that were lifted from their tattered silken foundations to be applied with infinite patience and skill to modern fabrics. The rumors . . . of Venetian splendor . . . were endless." page 196, James T. Maher, *The Twilight of Splendor*

**ALLIGATOR SUPREME**

- |                          |                       |                     |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 2# ground alligator meat | 4 tbsp minced celery  | ½ cup flour         |
| 2 tsp salt               | 4 cups whole tomatoes | ½ cup chopped onion |
| ½ cup butter             | 2-4 tbsp chile powder | ½ tsp cinnamon      |



**PAPINA**  
(FOOD FOR OBATALA)  
3/4 cups of papina  
1 quart of milk  
2 lbs of sugar  
- 1 small milk  
- 1/2 cup of medium  
- 2 Allow to come to boil while stirring constantly  
- 3 After mixture comes to a boil, lower flame, and continue to stir for 2 min  
- 4 Remove from heat and stir in sugar  
- 5 Serve hot

**QUELE**  
(FOOD FOR YEMAYA)  
1 lb bag of black wild rice  
1/2 cup of pepper  
2 small onions  
2 stalks of garlic  
2 stalks of bell pepper  
- 1 Soak rice in hot water, remove shells, and place in cold water for 10 min  
- 2 Cook off water and drain  
- 3 Chop onion, garlic, pepper, and bell pepper  
- 4 Combine rice and water  
- 5 Place rice in pot of hot water and simmer for 2 hrs  
- 6 Drain rice and place in a medium flame for 2 hrs  
- 7 Serve hot with salt to taste

After extensive research of the Afro-Cuban and Afro-American customs of feeding their pantheon of deities, this exhibit will be organized to explore the historical practices and present usages of these religious rituals.

The research is being conducted from books and in the field, including consultations with learned experts and with practitioners. Considering the syncretism of the Catholic saints and the African deities, the exhibit will include recipes for each saint's meal as well as the actual food. Because the images will be displayed as a series of altars, it presents an experience of the deity and the prepared food. Thus, Chango/Santa Barbara will receive the traditional dishes of Catala, Almala, and Ila. The viewer will face the deity and its offering, both as an icon and as material fact within the referenced information.

Since this exhibition is designed to travel to major cities throughout the United States, there will be special musical and ritual performances associated with the deity by local practitioners. Thus, the *toque de santo* of Miami will be accompanied by the *caracol* thrower's divinations. In New York, practitioners from various parts of the Caribbean will prepare the traditional meals for their saints, emphasizing the regional culinary variations and the richness of the tradition.

# SANTA COMIDA HOLY-FOOD

**- CHEKETE**  
**SEKETE** (FOOD FOR OCHUN)  
1 gallon of corn liquor  
1 pound of bitter orange  
1/2 gallon of malajico (wine)  
- 1 Raw bitter orange in a blender & mix  
- 2 Put all ingredients in a bottle and leave approximately 2 months  
Note: **SEKETE** must be kept in dark colored glass bottles. The bottles must be tightly sealed.

**WINE ART MUSEUM**  
MAYO 21  
"FESTIVAL, CEREMONIAS & EVENTS" DE MIRALDA -  
SIEMPRE DE PINA, LIMON, FRESAS, UVA, HOJAS Y AZUCAR ROSA



**ELA** (GUINIGUAYO) food for (ORUGA)  
3 lb okra, 1 large onion, 2 green peppers  
1/2 cup palm oil, 1/4 tsp red pepper  
1/4 tsp black pepper, 1/4 tsp salt  
- 1 Sauté onion, red pepper & green pepper in palm oil  
- 2 Add okra  
- 3 Boil okra & chop  
- 4 Mix okra with green pepper & onion

**NAME MAHURADO**  
(FOOD FOR ORUGA)  
Take one large, well fermented, home and boil in water with salt. Add for one hour. After cooling, mash with water, strain in a deep dish.

**ETA PUPA**  
(FOOD FOR OCHUN)  
1 medium red chili pepper  
1 lb. onion  
1/2 cup of oil  
1/2 lb. of ham  
Salt & pepper to taste  
1 lb. potatoes  
2 lb. onion  
- 1 Boil onion & potatoes  
- 2 Add chili & ham  
- 3 Add salt & pepper  
- 4 Cook for 10 min  
- 5 Serve hot with rice



**OBATALA**  
**VIRGEN DE LAS MERCEDES**  
**PURISIMA CONCEPCION**  
símbolo: serpiente, mano de plata con corona  
color: blanco  
collar: cuentas blancas  
palo: amantia guapo  
yerba: chamiso  
día: septiembre 24  
comida: fiamos blancos, manteca de cacao, zapotes, habas, aves blancas y guineas, guandibas, tamalero, frijoles carita, pasta de arroz molido, canchales, jaitas, morrongon, pudin de arroz, chivas, leche, uvas, poño, no toma alcohol

Faz y Pariza  
sustancias blancas  
purosa y bondad  
le gusta el agua de lluvia  
Sol  
Lima  
4 manillas de plata  
2 huesos de marfil



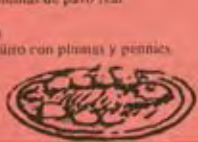
**YEMAYA**  
**NUESTRA SEÑORA DE REGLA**  
símbolo: caracolas marinas, calabazas, ahumicos  
color: azul y blanco  
collar: cuentas azules y blancas  
palo: jobo  
yerba: cucaracha  
día: septiembre 7  
comida: mariquitas y chicharrones, frijol de carita, melon de agua, maiz, plátanos y puerco, coco dulce, natia, lechuga, picotea, rosita de maiz

Maternidad, Femenidad -  
Madre del mundo  
lo encantan las batas ceñidas por un cintillo con un peto formando un rombo negro con pases divertida, graciosa, altanera  
adora el melado de caña  
madre se abanicaba vnejo que día  
bebida: chekete



**OCHUN**  
**CARIDAD DEL COBRE**  
símbolo: espejo  
color: amarillo, verde o rojo  
collar: cuentas azules  
palo: palo rosa  
yerba: yerbajo  
día: septiembre 8 u 14  
comida: conejos, chivo, aves, camarones con espinacas, canistel, calabaza, boniato, huevos, peces crudos o cocinados, miel, paña, melones, naranjas, dulces, bebe manzanilla

Amor, matrimonio, oro  
los peces le llevan y le traen noticias  
patrona de los enamorados  
usa agua dulce para sacrificios  
coral es su piedra favorita  
le gusta bañarse desnuda en manantiales  
usa abanico de plumas de pavo real  
nunca lura  
bandera amarilla  
se le ofrece un guiso con pinajas y pennies



**CHANGO**  
**SANTA BARBARA**  
símbolo: trueno, trueno, copa, espada, hacha doble  
color: rojo y blanco  
collar: cuentas rojas y blancas  
palo: yerbajo  
arma: trueno  
día: diciembre 4  
comida: harina de maiz y carne, manzana de corozo, pitahaya, oca, frijol carita, fufu, gallo, plátanos verdes, granada, espizaca, bebe vino tinto

Passión, Estrogo  
Dios del trueno y la tempestad  
guerrero, mujeriego  
patrona de artilleros y bomberos  
cuando se sube brinca de color  
reclama comida a cambio de sacrificios  
sus espadas, Oyá, Obá, y Ochun



**ORULA**  
**SAN FRANCISCO DE ASIS**  
símbolo: tabla de Iifa  
color: verde y amarillo  
collar: cuentas verdes y amarillas  
palo: guayaba  
yerba: salva  
día: octubre 4  
comida: ratas, chivos, caxidos, gallinas y aves, pargo, vino blanco, Rame machacado, ciruela

Adivinación es el orisha que más sabe  
símbolo del futuro y de la adivinación  
toque número 18 en su honor  
puede impedir que nos hagan daño  
se ocupa de todo lo relacionado con el destino de las personas  
manja las lunas de los orishas  
no lura



**OGUN**  
**SAN JUAN BAUTISTA**  
**SAN PEDRO**  
**SAN MIGUEL ARCANGEL**  
símbolo: hierro  
color: verde y negro  
collar: cadena de hierro con flecha, yunque, pico, hacha, machete, martillo, llave  
7 cuentas carmelitas seguidas por 7 cuentas negras  
palo: eucalipto  
yerba: venecador  
arma: espada, cuchillos  
comida: hamo, zapote, pescado, jutía ahumada, manteca, pargo, bebe sangre

Bebe aguardiente en posesión  
halla danzas guerreras  
Dios del Hierro y la Guerra  
Dicho de los metales  
le gusta la soledad y es espero  
vanguardia en las batallas  
mejor que guerrero, cazador  
tono  
surgido de Chango



**ELEGUA**  
**(ECHU)**  
**SANTO NIÑO DE ATOCHA**  
símbolo: clavos de hierro, gallo de hierro  
color: rojo y negro  
collar: cuentas rojas y negras  
palo: abre caminos  
yerba: itamo real  
comida: chivitos pequeños, pollos negros, jabados y colorados, aguadiente de caña, hame, pescado, jutía, café de azúcar, guayaba, puerco, pescado ahumado, miel, plátanos maduros

Mensajes abre y cierra puertas  
Anima sola del Purgatorio  
San Bartolomé  
guardian del hogar y del camino  
mensajero entre hombre y dioses  
comeño - el primero  
le gustan las botas, los papalotes, y los garabatos  
se sube



**GUINIGUAYO**  
(FOOD FOR OCHUN)  
1 lb. onion  
1/2 cup of oil  
1/2 lb. of ham  
Salt & pepper to taste  
1 lb. potatoes  
2 lb. onion  
- 1 Boil onion & potatoes  
- 2 Add chili & ham  
- 3 Add salt & pepper  
- 4 Cook for 10 min  
- 5 Serve hot with rice



esencialmente todo lo que el negro necesita para su magia, para la conservación de su salud y de su bienestar; todo lo que le hace falta para defenderse de cualquier fuerza adversa,

Lydia Cabrera, *El Monte (Jobo - Finda: Ewe Orisha, Vititi Nfinda)*

RECIPES FROM OCHUN...  
by GARY EDWARDS & JOHN MASON - *Yemba Theological Archivist* - NOV 1981





# SEA-SERPENT OF THE NEW WORLD



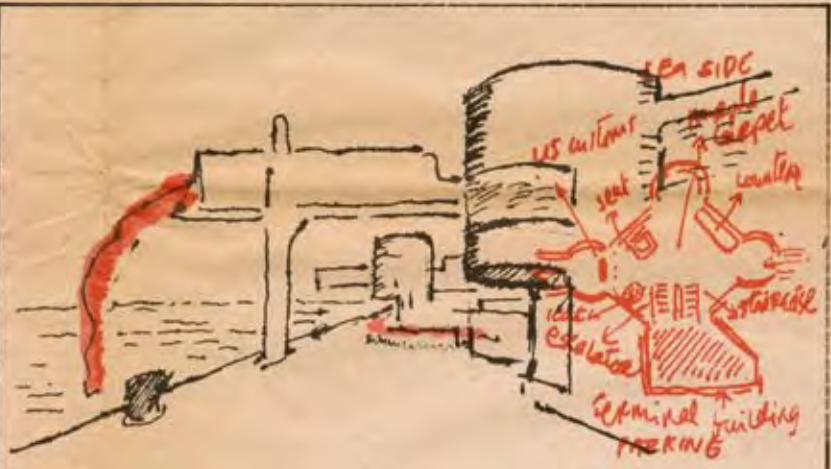
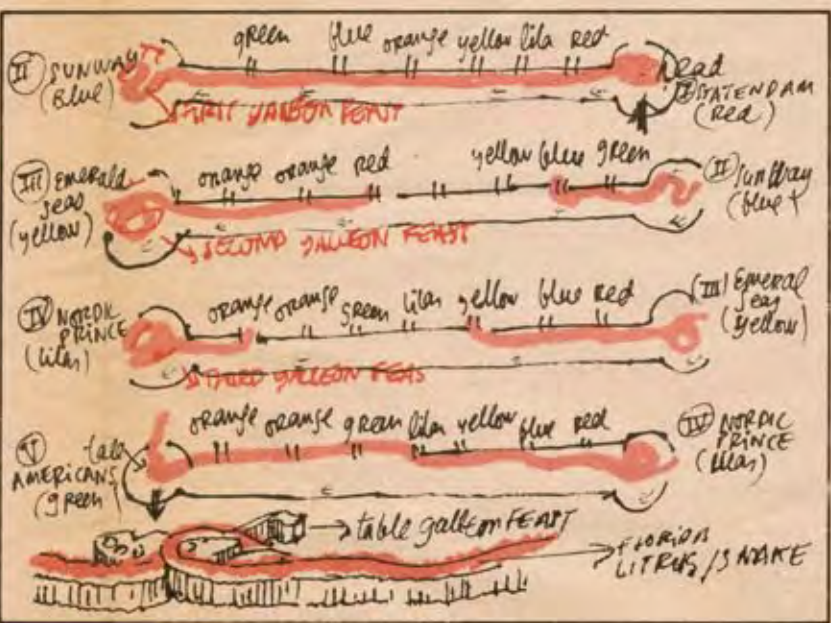
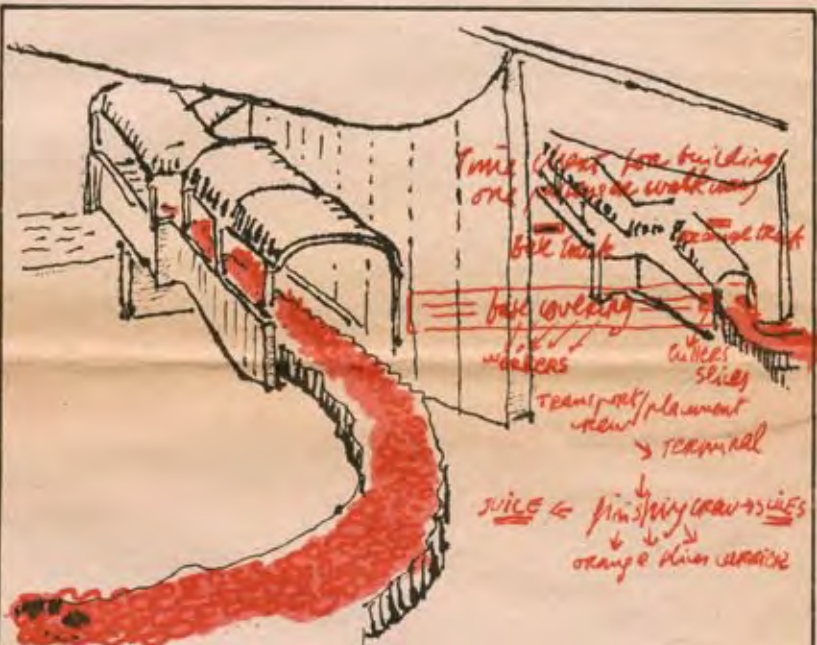
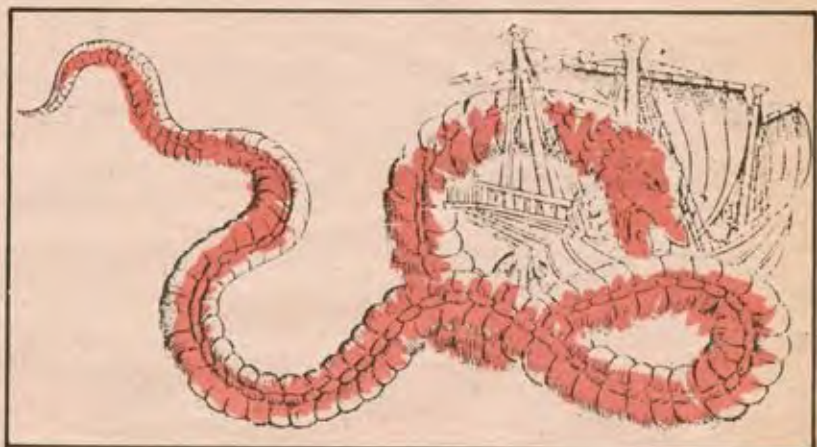
Based on an engraving of a "Sea Serpent in the Sea of Darkness" of 1655, the Sea Serpent of the New World is conceived to celebrate the Sea of Light around Biscayne Bay in 1983. The Sea Serpent comes to life in the Passenger Terminal Building of the Sea Port of Miami as a messenger of the past and as a presence for the future. The Sea Serpent comes almost as a guest of the building, an invitation and an encounter.

With a body completely covered with citrus 'scales,' the Sea Serpent will wind around the building and around three Galleon Feasts. A day and a night of celebration will bring the people of Dade County together with thousands of visitors passing through the Port—all in connection with one another, with the spirit of travel, and with the sharing of symbolic and real food and drink.

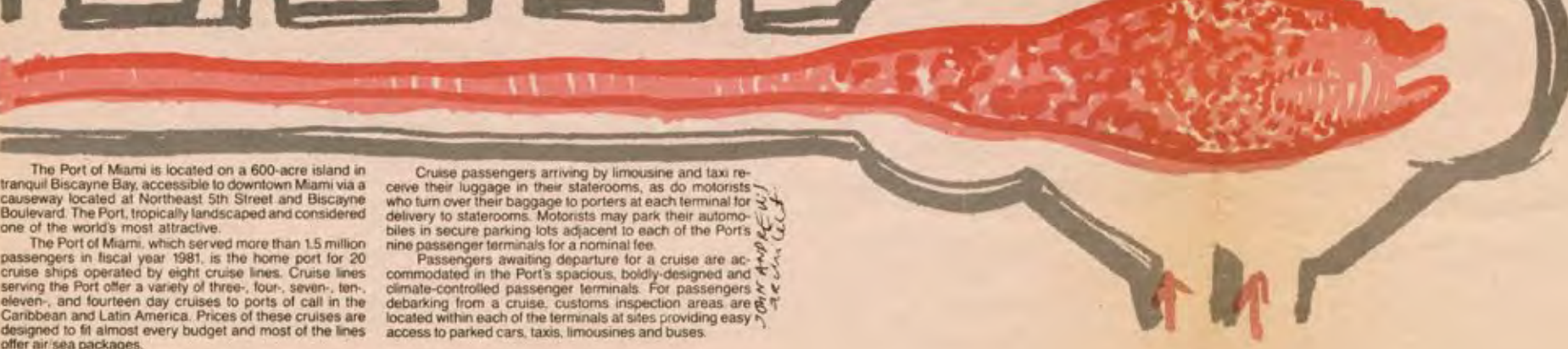
The Sea Serpent will be constructed in various stages by a crew of more than 300 persons. In the preliminary phase the wood and wire armatures will be realized along with the training of the workers and the coordination of the events and the culinary feasts. The day of the feast, the crews of workers will cover the bases with orange slices at 10 working stations along the building. Another crew will transport and place in situ the individual modules of the serpent's body and the Galleon Feasts. At the same time, various catering groups will work on the gastronomic bounty.

Throughout the day there will be activities involving the trade and travel functions of the Sea Port. A series of events will celebrate the orange as the official fruit of the State of Florida.

The evening will commence at 8 pm with the inauguration ceremony: The Skinning of the Sea Serpent. Followed by the Sea Serpent Circumambulation, the phases will continue with the Arrival of the Sea Monsters. At 10 pm, the Cannonade: Assaulting the Galleons will announce the beginning of the culinary feasts and The Galleon Treasure Hunt. The visitors will serve themselves from the feasts. Following the Feeding of the Sea Monster, the Midnight/Medianoche Finale will culminate the night's activities.



MONTSERAT - Plymouth, American Atlantic Lines, MARTINIQUE - Fort-de-France, Major Line, Royal Lines, Pan Atlantic Lines, JAMAICA - Kingston, GEORGETOWN - George Town, Royal Caribbean Steamship Company, NANTUCKET - Nantucket, Royal Caribbean Steamship Company, PUERTO RICO - San Juan, World Wide Cruises Management, Inc. ST. LUCIA - Castles, American Atlantic Lines, ST. VINCENT - Kings Town, American Atlantic Lines, W.B.C. Line, TORTOLA - Road Town, American Atlantic Lines, GRENADA - St. George's, American Atlantic Lines, W.B.C. Line, DOMINICA - Roseau, W.B.C. Line, ST. MAARTEN - Philipsburg, Pan Atlantic Lines, GRAND CAYMAN - George Town, Kirk Line, GUADALOUPE - Pointe-a-Pitre, Major Line, Royal Caribbean Steamship Company, Line, AMT, Alexandria, Costa Line, MOROCCO - Casablanca, Line, ALGERIA - Algiers, Annaba, Oran, BARTOLUCCI - Costa Line, MALAYSIA - Singapore, P&O Line, SINGAPORE - Harbor Line, FELANG - Penang, BRASLET Blue Sea Lines, HONG KONG - Hong Kong, Harbor Line, HONG KONG - Port Swire, National Lines, PANAMA - Port Swire, Royal Caribbean Steamship Company, RIVIDAD - Port Swire, Royal Caribbean Steamship Company, SINGAPORE - Singapore, Indian Ocean Lines, SINGAPORE - Singapore, Indian Ocean Lines.



The Port of Miami is located on a 600-acre island in tranquil Biscayne Bay, accessible to downtown Miami via a causeway located at Northeast 5th Street and Biscayne Boulevard. The Port, tropically landscaped and considered one of the world's most attractive.

The Port of Miami, which served more than 1.5 million passengers in fiscal year 1981, is the home port for 20 cruise ships operated by eight cruise lines. Cruise lines serving the Port offer a variety of three-, four-, seven-, ten-, eleven-, and fourteen-day cruises to ports of call in the Caribbean and Latin America. Prices of these cruises are designed to fit almost every budget and most of the lines offer air/sea packages.

Cruise passengers arriving by limousine and taxi receive their luggage in their staterooms, as do motorists who turn over their baggage to porters at each terminal for delivery to staterooms. Motorists may park their automobiles in secure parking lots adjacent to each of the Port's nine passenger terminals for a nominal fee.

Passengers awaiting departure for a cruise are accommodated in the Port's spacious, boldly-designed and climate-controlled passenger terminals. For passengers debarking from a cruise, customs inspection areas are located within each of the terminals at sites providing easy access to parked cars, taxis, limousines and buses.

NEW WORLD FESTIVAL OPENING CEREMONY. REFLECTIONS ON THE BAY SERPENT. LATERAL WITH CAUSEWAY (RED) ORANGE & GOLD, OYSTERS & FISH (GOLD) CHOCOLATE



FLORIDA IS THE MOST PRODUCTIVE CITRUS AREA IN THE WORLD. WITH A SEMITROPICAL CLIMATE, FLORIDA'S WEATHER WITH WARM AND HUMID SUMMERS AND COOL WINTERS IS IDEALLY SUITED TO THE GROWTH OF CITRUS.

Commercial production of oranges is the primary citrus industry of Florida; however, the state also produces Pummelos, Grapefruits, Tangelos, Citron, Mandarins, Limes, Lemons, and Kumquats.

The dominant orange varieties grown in Florida are 'Valencia', 'Hamlin', and 'Parson Brown'. Lemons are not as well adapted as limes, but some varieties of the latter such as 'Persian' and 'Mexican' are well cultivated.





Set of elements utilized in *Domestic Coral Castle*.

A ritual bath in the coral stone tub of one of the 16 sixteen-year-old girls, dressed as a bride, during the summer solstice celebration the night of June 23, 1982.





# Miralda's Mahamastakabhisheka\*

Vicent Todolí

“Brisk preparations are going on for one of the most colorful events in the age-old history of Jainism – the mahamastakabhisheka or the head-anointing ceremony of the Gomateswara statue at Shravanabelagola, about 160 km from here [...] On the appointed day, the statue would be bathed in milk and curds. Pots containing ghee, jaggery, dry fruits, and precious stones will be emptied over the statue by devotees who consider it an act of reverence.”

*The Indian Express*, Bangalore, July 22, 1981

“The art of a primitive culture, seen now as the whole ritual, the symbolic expression of the meaning of life, appeals to all of the senses, through the eye and ear to the smell of incense, the kinaesthesia of genuflection and kneeling or swaying to the passing procession, to the cool touch of holy water on the forehead. For Art to be reality, the whole sensuous being must be caught up in the experience.”

Margaret Mead,

*Public Opinion Mechanisms Among Primitive People*

Miralda has created a new installation, *Santa Comida / Holy Food*, in El Museo del Barrio (New York). This transcultural venture – with African roots, that have been slave-transported and Caribbean developed – meshes and coalesces two contemporary time/space segments, the eighties and New York/Miami. The protagonists of the installation-in-progress are the Afro-Caribbean nature forces or Yoruba gods, metamorphosized into saints. Their story can only be told through the feast, the food ritual that their cult has generated over time.

Miralda's last “religious” undertaking was his archaeological reconstruction of *The Last Supper* (PS1, New York, 1976), the most important banquet in Catholic religion – with certain cannibalistic connotations – which provided the rules for the table etiquette of the Mass. After the profane world of the American parade that he dealt with in his *Wheat & Steak*, Miralda discovered the rich and multifarious tradition of the “Santeria” in Brazil, Miami, and Spanish Harlem. He was amazed to find that his path had already been trodden many times and in many ways and, most surprisingly, that the Yoruba religion had not only managed to circumvent the white structures of power but also had implanted itself amid such assimilating urban machines as Miami and New York.

Miralda momentarily abandoned his artist ID and started his search for the divine roots of food, its offerings and displays. Halfway through, he realized that only by baring himself to the saints could he be allowed to enter their initiation mysteries. Only through head-anointing ceremonies could he later be able to develop his own “santero's” ways and build his “altarship.” This stance was not new to him. He only had to ask of himself what he had always asked of his public: “solidarity and complicity, the initiate's act of faith.”<sup>1</sup> The modernist tenet of detachment would only be a barrier. Or going back to Margaret Mead, “for art to be reality, the whole sensuous being must be caught in the experience.”

At present this is where he finds himself. The master of public ceremonies has taken an apparently obscure side road and only at the end of the trip of this installation-in-progress will we know where he stands. And to think that it all started with a neo-Dada staging of toy soldiers and a derisive view of military ritual...

Miralda was a textile engineer until he was called for military service. There he began tearing to pieces military scenography through drawings of soldier's

positions and apparel taken out of context, which he exhibited at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts in 1966. He came upon white plastic toy soldiers, setting them to transform – or, to use his term, “improve” – canvases of everyday objects. The toy soldiers were used to build large, decorative pieces from apparently conventional paintings – a sort of wall furniture. Later, departing from the gallery, Miralda took to the streets of Paris, and paraded his soldiers on human bodies (*Le Chien du général*, 1969), benches (*Projet d'un banc pour le Square des Invalides*, 1968), tables (the *Tableaux-Tables*, 1967), public monuments (*Essai d'amélioration de la façade du Palais Galliera*, 1969), pseudo-classical sculptures (*Portrait d'un chef d'oeuvre*, 1969), or in printed form over “toile” fabrics. The military world was reduced to mere decoration and their empty rituals were fully exposed.

Then Miralda started his own rituals as a logical evolution to his mock parades. For this he relied mainly on precedents from his native Catalonia, where the centuries old spirit of the feast is still very much alive.

Miralda's early ceremonials were very simple in structure and color as opposed to the complexity and myriad of colors of the more recent ones. *Mémorial* (Oise, France, 1969) was an attempt at engaging the participants in an evocative challenge. The structure of the ritual was partially inspired by the necrophilic spirit of vernacular celebrations such as All Saints Day and Easter. A country house became a cemetery, another dream paradise – an improvement. The cemetery is represented as a place to inhabit and symbolically make use of. Purple was the color that dominated the ritual, and the placement of objects and the evolution of the ceremony suggested a liturgic scheme: this liturgic aspect would become less apparent as the ceremonies grew more complex.

The *Fête en blanc* (1970), held in the same village, was conceived as a cyclical sequel to *Mémorial*: after death, rebirth. The white annihilated the purple and hinted at the release of colors that took place in *Rituel en quatre couleurs* (Kürten, Germany; Paris, France, 1971), an event in collaboration with the Grand Magic Circus. Here an explosion of saturated, heightened colors permeated food, masks, capes... The ascetic, black-and-white tradition of Spanish painting was set aside and gaudy colors took command. The mystical “tableau” was transposed into “table.” Cooking, and table design in the context of the ceremony, was substituted by painting as an action.

Whereas most of the happening artists were closer to drama and theater, Miralda, although escaping the literal definition of painting, still remained inside the magic realm of painting. He built *tableaux-vivants* or *tableaux-morts*, life paintings or still lifes: his work became a metaphorical choreography of painting.

Miralda's work continually evolves around two axes: public/private and interior/exterior.

*Sangría 228 West B'Way* (New York, 1972), in collaboration with Antoni Muntadas, occurred in their Tribeca loft. An audience of invited guests tasted and smelled the installation, which consisted of a display of multicolored aromatic rice and sangría. At the same time a projection of slides and films by Muntadas conveyed a cumulus of sensorial experiences. When the private celebration was over, the next morning, the left-overs were carried out into a public space – the street – and rearranged as a rice rainbow. Outside it slowly disintegrated as pedestrians walked and cars drove over it.

In *Mona a Barcelona* (1980) the public domain was brought into a gallery (the exterior into the interior) and the gallery became a representational unit of what was happening in the street. The “mona” is an Easter tradition in Catalonia. It consists of a hollow chocolate egg with a three-dimensional scene, and eventually is eaten. In this sense it could stand well as a folkloric metaphor

\* First published in *Santa Comida / Holy Food*. New York: El Museo del Barrio, 1984.

1. Pierre Restany, in *Miralda! "Une vie d'artiste."* Barcelona: Àmbit, 1982.



for Miralda's art. Miralda transformed the Joan Prats Gallery into a "mona" by spraying the walls with a layer of pink and gray chocolate, and by building, with the assistance of the confectioners' guild, a chocolate panorama of the city of Barcelona and its most characteristic monuments. Here Miralda reversed the usual process followed by the guilds in their feasts: their traditional efforts in borrowing from "art" were reversed and an "art institution" borrowed from them. Craft went into art.

Miralda's works are made out of the context from where they originate. The elements or ingredients of the ceremony are determined by the cultural and sociological conditions of the site. Miralda assumes the role, as Pierre Restany puts it, of "a mimetic sponge that attaches itself to a situation, and analyzes its causes and effects, its sociological structures and their semantic correspondences. A prying anthropologist, he studies customs and isolates usages and habits; he heightens their symbolic content, and organizes their aesthetic and poetic transference, their projection into the universe of the feast."<sup>2</sup>

In 1977 Miralda took part in Documenta 6 in Kassel with the *Fest für Leda* project, in which he took up the revivalist spirit of earlier ceremonies like *Mémorial* or *Fête en blanc*, but in Kassel the ritual was tinged with a romantic glow: a *mise en scène* where ancestral memories went hand in hand with a visionary interpretation of Western European culture. The theme was that of the classical myth, Leda and the Swan, channeled through the tradition of courtly feasts and inspired by the temple with the statue of Leda in the sculptural gardens of Documenta. The feast flashed forward and back between a bacchanal or kermis and a utopian departure for Cythera. For Miralda, as Umberto Eco (who compares him to the French poet Gerard de Nerval) points out, the recreation of these feasts is only a gesture of memory: "In the feast, life becomes a symbolic project... The ritual of the feast is lost for Nerval, who describes it as one more sweet memory of a past that cannot be regained. And the ritual of the feast is likewise lost for Miralda, for otherwise he would not be obliged to reinvent it, moreover within the artificial framework of an 'artistic' event... Contemporary societies have lost the sense of the feast but have kept the obscure desire for it."<sup>3</sup>

The feast deals with time and memory. In the feast, time elapses in a way determined by the tempo of the ceremony. An indelible past and an ungraspable present interlock inextricably, and nostalgia can always be detected. But in Miralda's feast this nostalgia goes together with an appropriation of the machinery of the present.

On his return to the United States he traveled to Houston, where he built the *Breadline* at the city's Contemporary Arts Museum. Here he brought the spectacle of the football halftime into the museum and made the Kilgore Rangerettes' routines sacred by devoting to them a memorabilia chapel and by delegating in them the actual construction of the theme of the exhibit: the multicolored breadline on the floor, which was accompanied by "pasta-pictures" on the surrounding walls and an altar/tablepiece with seven video screens on one side – the *Texas TV Dinner*.

In *Wheat & Steak* (Kansas City, 1981), Miralda momentarily placed his historicist impulse under a "suspension of belief" in order to appropriate a moment of Midwestern America. No room for nostalgia, no flashbacks, but a strategy of concealment that allowed him to change, in a subtle but effective way, the meaning of the quintessential American parade. This was the most complex of Miralda's projects (it addressed a whole community): one where his intervention was extended to interior and exterior, artistic and commercial,

public and private spaces. The marching band, carrying Oldenburg-like steaks, marched behind human sheaves; and the harvest queen rode in a Cadillac that pulled a gigantic unicorn. Finally the Kansas City Board of Trade (KCBT) was transformed into the *Gold Taste* exchange: a gold leaf was placed over blue lard and offers invited to taste it in exchange for one dollar, while rodeo and farming images were projected on a huge colored bread screen.

Most of Miralda's ceremonials are deliberately ambiguous. When asked by the Kansas City Star what the meaning of *Wheat & Steak* was, Miralda answered: "Who am I to tell them how to understand this? Perhaps I can give people the motivation to think about these elements and why they are going to be marching together on the streets, sheaves close to cereal, the cereal close to the meat." But sometimes the context requires a more straightforward and committed approach in direct relation to the stiffness and aggressiveness of the military, patriotism, or religion. As in *Coca-Cola Polenta* (Venice, 1978), *Piedesthalles* (Paris, 1979), or *Charlie Taste Point* (Berlin, 1979), which was held in a gallery near Checkpoint Charlie (the allies' control point for transit between the two Berlins). Here, the rabbits, the only inhabitants of the no-man's-land around the Berlin Wall and a symbol of the division of Germany, were the leitmotif of the installation in a number of forms of representation. The leitmotif could also be tasted, while listening to music from the American Army radio station. Rabbits were cooked to eight different recipes.

In general, Miralda is trying to unite a group of people in a ritual for the sake of the ritual. This does not imply that the rituals are devoid of meaning: a subtle change of perception takes place. There is no shock, no radical provocation but a disturbing sense of breaking away from preconceptions.

Miralda's works are different, almost opposite, to those of performance or happening artists such as Vostell, Lebel, Kaprow, Nitsch. Miralda does away with psychodrama. His rituals are not dissonant or cathartic but hedonistic, of a calm mood, formally rich, and visually complex. In them, food is generally the material element. In Miralda's work, the act of tasting stands as a metaphor for the experience of aesthetic consumption. "Eating" is important not as a gesture (Spoerri) but as a process of taste, a sensorial experience.

Miralda's concern with the formal structure of his work has a pictorial character. His attention to color, formal distribution, the importance attached to the graphic elements that surround his events (video, sketching, posters, procession designs, drawings, manufactured objects, "improved food") also place him in a different realm. If Kaprow's actions were considered as a conceptual follow-up to Pollock, it could be said that Miralda uses their guidelines with formal borrowings from artists that in some way share some of his concerns, such as Oldenburg, Christo, Arman, Yves Klein, Spoerri...

Miralda always eventually comes up with his own version of a traveling carnival, a personal Disneyworld.

2. Ibid., p. 21.

3. Umberto Eco, in *Rituale perduto e ritrovato*, unpublished essay.





**OYE**  
(FOOD FOR YEMAYA)  
1 lb bag of black eyed peas  
salt & pepper  
1 small onion  
2 gloves of garlic  
2 tblsp oil  
-1 Soak peas in hot water, remove shells and place in cold water for 10-15 min  
-2 Pour off water and wash peas  
-3 Chop and sauté onion, onion and garlic  
-4 Combine peas, onion and garlic  
-5 Place 3tblsp of the mix into aluminum foil  
-6 Place shells in double boiler over a medium flame for 1 hr  
-7 Seave hot & salt to taste



**FARINA**  
(FOOD FOR ORATALA)  
3/4 cups of farina  
1 quart of milk  
2 tblsp of sugar  
-1 combine milk & farina over medium  
-2 Allow to come back to boil while stirring constantly  
-3 After mixture comes to a boil, lower flame and continue to stir for 2 min  
-4 Remove from fire and stir in sugar  
-5 Seave hot

**EJA PUPA**  
(FOOD FOR OGBUN)  
1 medium Red snapper  
1 lg green pepper  
1/2 cup of oil  
1/2 tspn oregano  
salt & pepper to taste  
2 lg potatoes  
1 lg onion  
-1 Wash and scale fish  
-2 Slice onion & green pepper & slice potatoes  
-3 Place layer of potato on bottom on baking pan  
-4 Place layer of green pepper and onion, and add another layer of potato  
-5 Place fish on top and sprinkle with oregano  
-6 Pour oil over fish  
-7 Bake at 350° until done

**NANNE MAHARADO**  
(FOOD FOR ORULA)  
take one large, well formed nane and boil in water with salt & lard for one hour  
After cooling make pieces well - seave in a deep dish -

**QUAVA TARTIS**  
(FOOD FOR ELEGUA)  
1 box of pie crust mix  
1/4 tspn of nutmeg  
3 or 4 tblsp of water  
1/4 cup of milk  
sugar  
2 eggs yolk  
1-2 62 jar of quava jelly or paste  
1 cup quava per sq.



**SEKETE** → CHEKETE  
(FOOD FOR OGBUN)  
1 gallon of corn liquor  
1 pound of bitter orange  
1/2 gallon of molasses (dark)  
-1 Place bitter orange in a blender  
-2 Put all ingredients & mix in a bottle and leave approximately 6 months  
Wine when put away this mixture must be placed in dark colored glass bottles - the bottles must be tightly sealed



**IJA (QUIMPOPO) food for ANGO**  
1 lb okra, 1 large onion, 1 green pepper  
1/2 cup palm oil, 1/4 tspn red pepper  
1/4 tspn black pepper, 1/4 tspn salt  
-1 Brown onion, red pepper & green pepper in palm oil  
-2 Add salt  
-3 Boil okra & chop  
-4 mix okra with green pepper & onion



# Santa Comida. Miralda and John Mason

John Mason

The paths of kindred souls that are meant to meet, endeavor, and create together are traced in the bedrock of perdurable destiny. Antoni Miralda and I, John Mason, are two such souls.

In 1982, while preparing for the New World Festival of the Arts in Miami, Florida, Miralda discovered my book, *Onje Fún Òrìṣà*<sup>1</sup> (Food for the Gods), the first book written in English about the recipes and foods offered up to the òrìṣà/Yorùbá deities worshipped in West Africa, Cuba, and the United States. He was exploring, in a religious article store called a *botánica* that sold, along with my book, fresh and dried herbs for medicinal and spiritual purposes. Statues, candles, teas, oils, various Catholic icons, beads, soup tureens, and myriad items used in the worship of various African and spiritual religious practices (Lúkú mí, Candomblé, Vodun) were also sold. His appetite was whetted and his imagination fired. He had discovered his Rosetta Tome and its creator.

In the fall of 1984, the telephone rang at my home in Brooklyn, New York; Miralda had found me. We spoke briefly about his intriguing plans and I invited him to visit. The Catalan from Barcelona who came to my door proved to be my spiritual, mystical, distant relative. My mother's father, Pedro Miró, born in Guanabacoa, Cuba, in 1876 was also of Catalan ancestry. The linguistic, ancestral oracle predicted that our praise names, Miralda and Mason-Miró, if faithfully fulfilled, would inspire alertness that would spur us to contribute wonderful designs. Our paths were destined to cross.

I agreed to join Miralda, advising and instructing him in the use of culinary, cultural symbols, and philosophic language needed for creating the exhibit *Santa Comida / Holy Food*. I would write the exhibit catalog, contributing the anthropological and art historical overview. We sealed the deal in Miralda's Tribeca loft like true artistic hunters, with a ritual fish-dish of baked Red Snapper that is usually presented to the òrìṣà Ògún, deity of hunter-artists and witness to brotherhood pacts. We followed in the tradition of primordial hunters who were the first to eat fire-cooked food, thus changing the way human brains developed. Montse Guillén, master culinary magician and Miralda's partner, pluperfectly recreated the dish

from the recipe in my book. That meal would foreshadow many familial meals and enlightening conversations to come.

Miralda had decided on building six arched triptych altars, approximately 12 ft x 4 ft x 1 ft 4 in., honoring the Yorùbá òrìṣà Èḷẹgbá, Ògún, Obàtálá, Şàngó, Yẹmoja, Òṣún, and their Cuban and Brazilian Catholic masking counterparts: El Santo Niño de Atocha, El Diablo; John the Baptist, Saint George; la Virgen de las Mercedes, la Purísima Concepción; Santa Bárbara, Blackamoor; Nuestra Señora de Regla; Our Lady, Star of the Sea; Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre, the Lady of the Candles. I related to him that at all times Africans thoughtfully and actively resisted the cultural oppression of the whites. They resisted in the ways they prepared their food, the colors they chose to wear, the style of houses they built, the way they talked, the music they made, the songs they sang, the dances they danced, and the images of God they clung to and recreated. Africans did not compromise with the white man's images - they transformed them. Catholic statues and chromoliths were transformed into mask-costumes for the òrìṣà. Miralda would employ New World òrìṣà tactics of secrecy in plain sight. He would create his triptych shrines as portable òrìṣà masks that could dance about the house/gallery from window to room or from house/gallery to house/gallery as the dictates of New World visionary revolution dictated. The divine occupants of these mask-shrines would be crowned/initiated/invested with light bulb, nimbus-halos in specific colors empowered by alternating electric current and the vital energy of their favorite foods. The divine trios behind the masks were seemingly veiled by sixteen rays that allowed each to come into sight as the viewer moved right or left of center. Miralda would create alluring traps prompting the òrìṣà to come for a taste and be ensnared. His tactics not only acted as an incentive obliging the òrìṣà to materialize but caused them to also touch the artist and whisper in his ears. They revealed themselves to him and became his guides. If creation equals God as artist, then all artists are possessed by the godliness of their creations.

Miralda searched for and exposed the anima, the true inner self, and the aura colors that reflect archetypal ideals of conduct, of the òrìṣà and suggested by their foods. Èḷẹgbá, Owner of the Cosmic Power of Vitality (red and black); Ògún, Blacksmith Architect of Civilization (green and

1. The author wishes to respect the original spelling of the names of African deities and peoples. (E. N.)

Drawings reproduced in the publication *Santa Comida / Holy Food*, El Museo del Barrio, New York, 1984. Preparatory drawings for the installation in Barcelona and Paris (p. 121).

## SANTA COMIDA, New York, Miami, Barcelona, Paris, 1984-89

Linked to the colonial history of slave-trafficking, *Santa Comida* reflected on the relationships between the imposition of Christianity and the survival, in secret, of the Yoruba religion, taking the vast symbolic territory of offerings as its starting point. The different presentations brought about changes in the appearance of the project, the nucleus of which was made up of seven altars, each of which displayed elements connected to seven deities or *orishas* respectively.



black); Obàtálá, Aged Creator Ruler (white); Şàngó, Warrior Ruler of Òyó (Yorùbá) (red and white); Yẹmoja, First Mother of the World (blue and white); Òşun, Charming Chief of Women (yellow). He understood that the important connection between eating and belonging to prestigious societies is ritually underscored for òrişà devotees in Yorùbáland, Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. The Yorùbá use food as a means of prompting the memory of important, life-enhancing proverbs and philosophic values. So inspired and lettered, Miralda entered El Museo del Barrio.

We looked at the main gallery, easily 30 feet wide by 60 feet long, with different eyes. The industrial ceiling, some 20 feet high, with its unsightly, insulation-wrapped steam and water pipes and utilitarian lighting jarred Miralda's and my sense of esthetics. But, seemingly unfazed, he suggested covering the entire ceiling with paper streamers like the *barracões* (ritual dance spaces) of Brazil and some altar rooms in Cuba. I saw only the daunting dimensions of the room and the amount of labor required. Hundreds of feet of paper streamers in each of six colors, plenty of adhesive, a rolling scaffold, two determined workers, and in a few days the ceiling was transformed into a light-filtering, ciliary rainbow. Miralda taught me a valuable lesson about not allowing a surmountable obstacle to turn you from fulfilling your dreams. I looked on as he, like an artist evangelist, bringer of good news, touched other souls and they embraced his vision. Miralda wanted collective, viewer participation. I watched as modest, intense Keith Farington, following Miralda's designs, channeled the untiring ardor and precision of Ògún's cutting knife into the construction of the six triptychs. The young artist Manny Vega was also touched, and painted a picture of a Şàngó dance wand with an offered plate of food and glass of wine on the wall outside the main gallery. The gift was incorporated. Miralda's reach exceeded his grasp and in so doing made me realize the way to perfection and the recognition of a kindred spirit. He bent the room to his vision and will. The shape and size of the gallery windows dictated the shape and size of the triptych altars. The number also demanded that five altars would be in their window niches and one would be displayed with elaboration on the gallery's raised-floor stage.

Each òrişà has, and uses, its own special cloth. Billowing, flowing fabric used in the exhibit is a reminder of the presence and movements of ancestral spirits and memories of Miralda's birthplace of Terrassa (Barcelona), Spain, an old textile manufacturing town founded during the time of the Roman emperor Vespasian (69–79 CE).

Miralda rethought ideas, reviewed visions, revolutionized the novel, and reshaped artifacts as he did with plain red cloth, and white, stacked, upturned china plates as cigar-holding mouth, and eyes, shaped into an 8 ft wide by 10 ft tall cloth Òrişà Òşun, alms-begging, eternally hungry watcher of the roads. Steel knives, forks, and spoons in the shape of Òşun's bèlèké (protruding head-blade) were added in Miami, Barcelona, and Paris.

The "novel" use of real, fresh and dried meats, and vegetables, to frame the triptych altars really alarmed the museum's understanding director, but Miralda held firm; the food stayed. The gallery faintly smelled of the market with a strong dash of dried codfish. But it was when Òrişà Obàtálá's triptych's turn on center stage came that nature got out of hand. Following the Yorùbá creation tale, which credits Obàtálá with forming mankind from the clay of the earth, Miralda created a clay figure rising out of a mound of rice dotted by live snails. It was beautiful except that no one told the snails not to move. In a few days, they had spread across the floor, up the walls and throughout the gallery. The director was not amused although we were.

In the rear section of the gallery, Miralda created a contemplation room that was dark and empty except for the red and chrome, double-headed (two cassettes could play at the same time) cowry-encrusted ghetto blaster boombox sitting on two Pepsi-Cola cans. There was also a 20-ft-tall image of a Şàngó ax, strobe light projected, emblazoned on the wall over the boombox that was repeatedly playing the sounds of torrential rainstorms and thunderclaps.

The culminating ceremony of the exhibit took place on February 5, 1985. Food and music are two hallmarks of Africans' religious statement. It is not considered proper to display God's food in abundance without inviting those present to break bread with us and share the bounty. Miralda said that this act of hospitality captured his heart: "I was overwhelmed by the devotees' sense of humanity. Everybody was invited to eat the food of the gods, initiate and uninitiate alike." The event was held in the gallery, a trio of òrişà priestesses hired to sing a *cappella* songs of praise. My wife Valerie brought a gallon of black-eyed pea batter, an electric frying pan, and cooked àkàrà (fried bean paste fritters) for the guests. Was it the òrişà or the tasty fritters that possessed the guests? At the close of the event, when I asked my wife where my àkàrà were, she replied, visibly flustered, "Those crazy fools were sticking plastic forks into the hot frying pan trying to get the last of the fritters. That's where your àkàrà went!" The affected epicures suggested our next chapter.

After the February 5, 1985 El Museo del Barrio closing of *Santa Comida/Holy Food*, Miralda added a seventh sojourner, Òrişà Babalúaiyé, Dread Mystery, covered in palm fibers (purple), and his Saint Lazarus mask and sent him to the Miami Dade Art Gallery. In Miami, on March 14, 1985, the now cape-wearing saints went marching into the gallery and stood in a line with Babalúaiyé bringing up the rear. He stayed with the divine group and continued on to Barcelona and Paris. I believe Miralda included him because Babalúaiyé's diseased, sore-covered body, which was healed only to later die and rot, represents the ultimate cautionary tale of cynical reformation. People are like the most wonderfully prepared food that rots, becomes excellent excrement, manure, night soil, and is fed upon by flies, maggots, and dung beetles, resurrection messengers of Babalúaiyé. The Yorùbá grant each person or thing the right to exist. The essential nature of a thing, no matter its state of transformation, is the precondition of its beauty.

This same consideration of worth reminds me of the day in the office of Robert Sindelir, Director of Galleries and Visual Art Programs at Miami Dade Community College. Miralda was introducing me to him as not only the exhibit consultant but as one of the presenters in the upcoming symposium "*Santa Comida: Transcultural Survivals*." Dr. Sindelir's reaction and questions about my background and qualifications to be on the same panel with such august "white" scholars as Dr. Mercedes Cros Sandoval, anthropologist, and the renowned Dr. Robert Farris Thompson, professor of African and Afro-American Art History frankly surprised me and amused Miralda. He, Robert Thompson, and I knew quite well my scholarly qualifications. The symposium was held on April 8, 1985 at Miami Dade Community College South Campus, Leonard A. Usina Hall. Dr. Sindelir was quite excited and had planned a special dinner after the symposium to celebrate the honored guest, Professor Robert Farris Thompson. Bob, my friend for close to twenty years at that time, was deservedly quite a scholar celebrity. The legendary Cuban ethnographer Lydia Cabrera had come to hear our presentations. I was scheduled to present first, Dr. Sandoval was second, and Bob would present last. This is when Dr. Sindelir's best laid plans went awry. Bob informed him that he had to go first because there was a plane at the airport waiting to fly him back to Yale University. The special dinner, to Dr. Sindelir's chagrin, didn't convince Bob to stay. Bob presented the seven glass slides that he had and gave a nice talk about "food" from the art historical point of view, a subject that was not his

forte. As he made for the exit, I began my presentation. By the time I got to the fourth slide Bob had taken a seat near the back of the room, pulled out his note pad and began to take notes. He didn't leave until I had finished my presentation, some eighty slides later, after paying me a wonderful compliment on my research. Dr. Sandoval gave a great presentation; the symposium was a rousing success, and I, in this new light, became the "hero" of the special dinner. Miralda and I were both amused and gratified. It seems the ex-academy traditional scholar proved the equal to his colleagues and carried the day.

African slaves in the West Indies, who were given cheap, reject, salt codfish that was not acceptable to the discerning Mediterranean populations, transformed it into a wonderful culinary staple. The best fish was always sold in Spain. Salt cod, slaves, sugar, tobacco, cotton, and molasses became commercially linked. In West Africa, slaves could be purchased with cured cod, and to this day there is still a West African market for salt cod and stockfish. Codfish (*bacalao*) weighted cloths were hung in both the Miami and Paris *Santa Comida* exhibits. Miralda's *botánica* memories found an outlet for his collection of *botánica* memorabilia, as the reconfigured Miami, Barcelona, and Paris exhibits attested. Miralda learned what shrine-constructing òrişà devotees know, that the "exhibit" space determines the type and number of artistic elements that can be used fittingly. In Barcelona and Paris, he added to the *botánica* display, with its soup tureens, assortment of spiritual figurines, incense, money baths, good luck sprays, and love potions, the collection of unpainted plaster saints that he had purchased from a factory, which was closing down, in Olot (Catalonia). He painted the faces and hands of the statues black. Circa June 1985, the cloth Òşun situated himself on the main stairs in Barcelona's Palau Robert where his begging paid off, and then moved, in 1989, with cowrie shells, stacked plates mouth and eyes, to a long table in Paris' expo *Magiciens de la terre* at the Centre Pompidou. In Barcelona, a long table was also used to display religious photos, record albums, book covers, incense, and spiritual bath envelopes. Şàngó's ax projection and sound pieces remained in Barcelona and Paris. In Palau Robert, the ax projection was topped by a statue of the black Madonna, patron saint of Catalonia, Our Lady of Montserrat, *La Moreneta* (the little dark skinned one). A Brazilian song to Yẹmoja and a Cuban song, *Angelitos negros* (Little Black Angels) replaced the sounds of rain and thunder. The multi-colored paper streamer ceiling was reshaped and made narrower in Paris with a crowd of centrally



placed, stringed ìlẹ̀kẹ̀ (beads), representing the òrìṣà, hanging down.

1984 to 1992 were years of overlapping creations by Miralda and company. 1984 found Miralda and Montse working on the opening of *El Internacional*, a Spanish restaurant and New York's first tapas bar located in the Tribeca area of the city. With the success of the àkàrà at the culminating ceremony of *Santa Comida*, I suggested to my wife Valerie that we see if Montse would be interested in serving àkàrà at their new restaurant. She and Miralda had tasted it in Bahía, Brazil, where it is called àkàràjẹ (àkàrà to eat). Montse opened the gallon jar of batter, tasted it and told me to bring her five more gallons. We were in business. By the time Montse and Miralda had left *El Internacional* we were delivering ninety gallons of àkàrà per month.

The period from the spring of 1985 to the fall of 1986 was a whirl of àkàrà, new, wonderful sights, and tastes. My weekly deliveries of àkàrà batter to Montse always ended in Miralda's little second floor office with him showing me the latest drawings he had for the *Honeymoon Project* and giving me updates on the movements of *Santa Comida*. The best part of many of my visits was the mandatory sampling, for my "professional" opinion, of some pastry wonder prepared by the always amiable, master pastry chef, Antonio Buendía. He would always address me as the professor. Those samplings always took place at the *Columbus Trophy Bar*, constructed by Keith Farington, builder of the òrìṣà triptychs. The *Columbus Trophy Bar* with its hanging cod, hams, peppers, braided breads, sausages, and assortment of liquors and *porrones* (long-spout glass carafes) reminded me of the hanging displays of medicinal and magical goods in *botánica*. The *tortilla de patatas* (Spanish potato omelette) tapas was exactly the same dish that my aunt, Graciela Miró, would prepare for our lunch all throughout my youth.

During an early visit to *El Internacional*, Miralda gave me the grand tour. Wow! The "Dalmatian façade" and sidewalk, implanted with coke cans, shouted that you were in for something new. Elements of his *Miami Projects*, *Santa Comida*, and *Coke & Miss Information*, etc. looked out at you from every corner of the art-restaurant-installation. National flags and bygone celebrities' photos were encased like archaeological curiosities in a resin floor and under Plexiglas. Yẹ̀moja in her guise as the Bahian mermaid, La Sirena, greeted diners in the *Marina Room* with a floor vault displaying the preserved bodies of four of her "acceptable" codfish children. With her wealth of pearls, she holds court in her hundred-gallon

aquarium domain. Beside her vital, water world, Miralda had created a display case on the second floor of the restaurant for his collection of soup tureens that the òrìṣà could use to store their sacred stones and other treasures.

*El Internacional* served as the first meeting place for the *Honeymooners*, the Statue of Liberty aka Santa Luz de America and Mirador de Colón (Christopher Columbus monument) aka El Conquistador. The July 17, 1985 crowning ceremony celebrated the placement of a 12-meter-wide, 1,130 kilo, life-sized replica of the Statue of Liberty crown on the roof of *El Internacional*. Miralda dressed the crown, the façade of *El Internacional*, and its sidewalk, with two immense panels of red cloth that tied his two homes, Barcelona and New York City, together. As one approached, the sight of the radiating spikes of the crown represented the sanctification of *El Internacional* as a guiding, pilgrimage site and the recognition, for me, of the eternal, spiritual connection between Yẹ̀moja, Libertas, Stella Maris, Columbia, Native American Women, African Women, and Lady Liberty. The proposed, mock saber and spear-pointing shotgun wedding represented the European invasion and rape of the Americas that brought missionaries, mercenaries, malaria, syphilis, chattel slavery, genocide, and a power and economic imbalance that still exists today. 1492 was the crucial date for major food crop distribution, territorial appropriation, and the economic reshuffling of national wealth that continues in evolving forms between the Old and New Worlds.

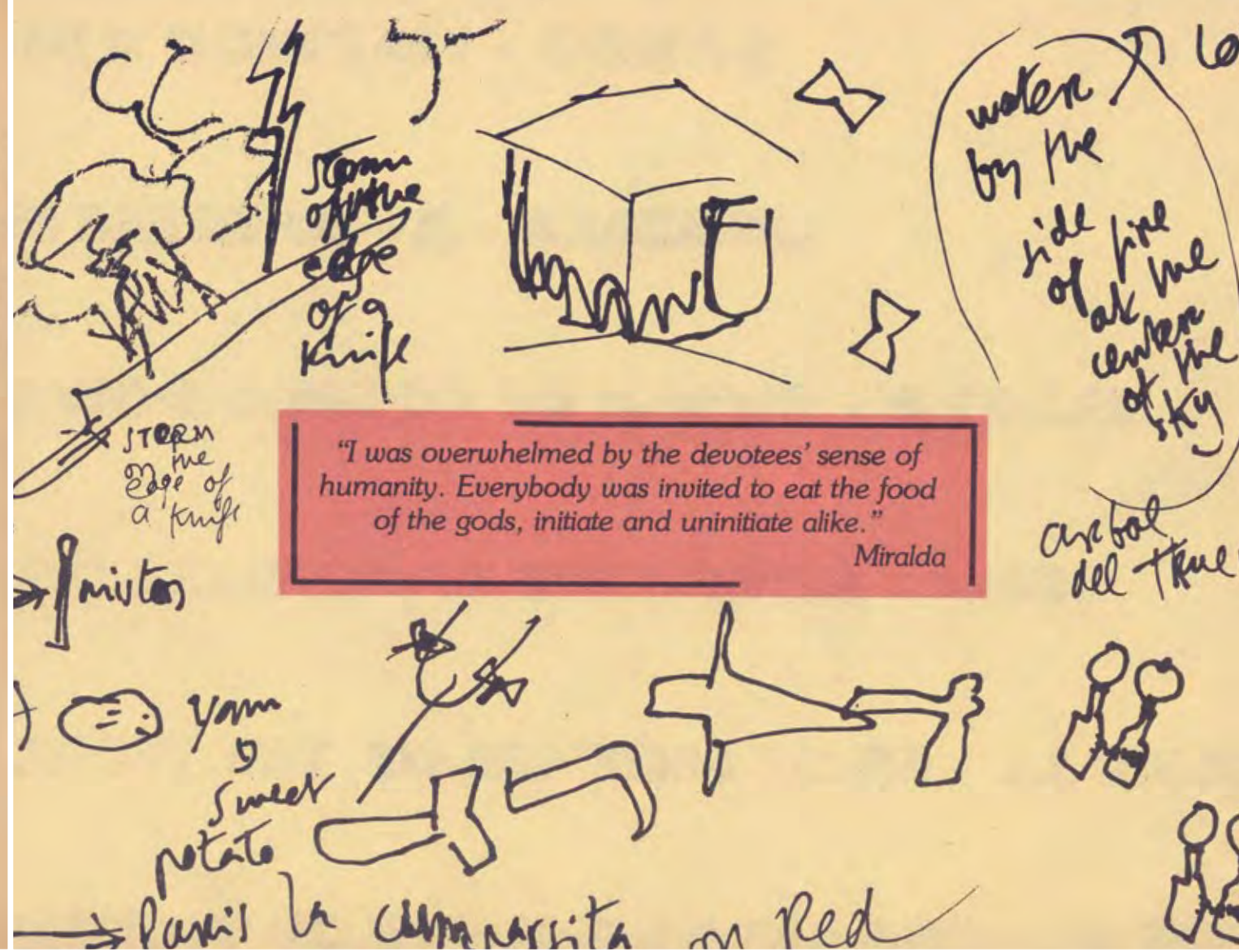
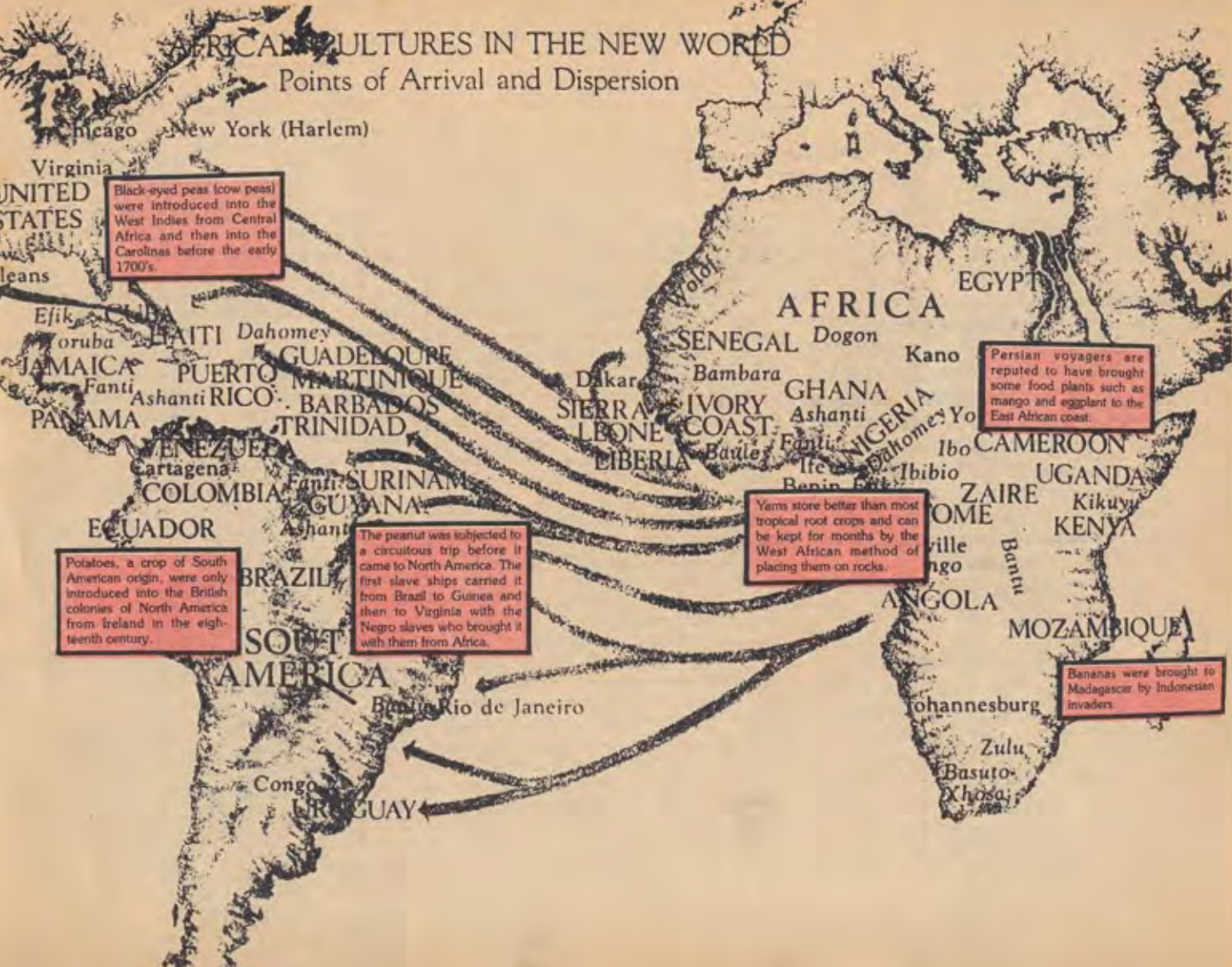
The actual, officially published wedding registry of international gifts for the "engaged" pair became a series of celebrations that hid the pent up tears of rage at the waste that denied the sick, poor, destitute, and abused. The spectacle, dressed in the tailored cloths of many nations, neatly hid Miralda's sense of revolt, political critique, breaking down, and outing of national prejudices, gender prejudices, ethnic prejudices, and the economic schemes of favoritism that they breed.

Did the happy couple sail into the sunset? I don't know about Christopher Columbus and Santa Luz/Lady Liberty, but Miralda and Montse flew to Miami and opened, in 1996, a wonderful restaurant, *Bigfish Mayaimi*, right on the Miami River. The honeymoon gift, *Gondola Shoe* was giving the patrons river rides when not standing on the dock with removable heel attached. Miralda's La Sirena mermaid, laden with pearls, still greeted diners from her watery domain. Henry Drewal's and my exhibition, *Beads, Body, and Soul: Art and Light in the Yorùbá World* was opening at the Miami Art Museum in June of 1999 so I had nine

days (June 22–30) to visit with my adopted family. Montse's paella and ceviche made me want to relocate to Miami. As usual Miralda and I talked about the whereabouts of *Santa Comida* and plans for future projects.

From 2012 to 2013, *Santa Comida* was exhibited in Barcelona and included in *Critical Episodes (1957–2011)* as part of the MACBA Collection. Miralda created a *botánica* temple where the seven òrìṣà triptychs were hung, shoulder to shoulder, against the gallery wall with Ògún, Obàtálá, Òṣun raised higher and Èṣẹ̀gbá, Yẹ̀moja, Şàngó and Babalúaiyé a shelf down. Soup tureens commanded the entire first shelf from end to end of the triptychs. Catholic saints' and American, spiritual and folk-hero saints' statues manned each end of the altar line. Shelves of spiritual baths, lucky oils, incense, and candles were placed on each end next to Èṣẹ̀gbá and Babalúaiyé, as well as sequinned, two liter, Vodun Coke bottles. The large cloth Èṣẹ̀gbá wasn't present, but an offering shelf was built on an adjacent wall, and people gave. Blue paper streamers, covering and beautifying the ceiling, added the finishing touch. On December 22, 2012, a bàtá drumming ensemble, with singers, performed sacred òrìṣà music while people danced in the gallery. The circle was completed.





Old World	New World Transculturation
<p><b>Sango:</b> God of fire; Lightning bolt hurler; Generous provider.</p>	<p><b>Saint Barbara:</b> Egyptian maiden beheaded by her father. He in turn was killed by a bolt of lightning. She is the patron saint of firefighters.</p>
<p><b>Elegba:</b> Principle of uncertainty created by the need to make choices; Uncertainty is seen as evil in a stable society.</p>	<p><b>Blackamoor:</b> Symbol of New World wealth delivered up for Europe on the backs of toiling Blacks.</p>
<p><b>Obatala:</b> Wise ruler who is merciful and just. Provider of children to the barren.</p>	<p><b>Infant of Antloch:</b> Transcultured Elegba as child prince of the road, the pilgrim.</p>
<p><b>Yemoja:</b> Rules-oriented mother with voluptuous hips.</p>	<p><b>Satan:</b> Incorrectly associated with Elegba. Uncertainty and the bad choices that follow are seen as the source of all man's ills.</p>
<p><b>Osun:</b> Her special title, Iyalode. Mother to the Stranger. Her river water purifies and rejuvenates.</p>	<p><b>Our Lady of Mercy:</b> The one who the faithful turn to for forgiveness and solace.</p>
<p><b>Ogun:</b> The soldier who opens the way for the others to follow.</p>	<p><b>Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception:</b> She gave birth yet remained pure of spirit. She is called on for easy births.</p>
	<p><b>The Virgin of Moderation/Regla:</b> Mother of Christ seen as a source of order and a model of proper decorum.</p>
	<p><b>Goddess of the Sea:</b> Comely, possessing great wealth and a giving nature.</p>
	<p><b>Our Lady of Charity of Cobre:</b> Renown for gifts of health bestowed on those that pray to her.</p>
	<p><b>The Lady of Candelmas:</b> On this feast day we celebrate the purification of the Blessed Virgin.</p>
	<p><b>St. James/Santiago the Apostle:</b> A soldier in the army of Christ. The military patron of Spain.</p>
	<p><b>St. John the Baptist:</b> The One who prepared the way for Christ.</p>









*Santa Comida / Holy Food* installation at El Museo del Barrio in New York, 1984. View of the Changó altar, with the radio-cassette player and the *Matador Candelabra* from *El Internacional*.

Action at El Museo del Barrio with Papo Colo, Velia Mason, John and Valerie Mason, Musheer Siddiqui, Robert Smith, and the three singers Latonya Bryan, Denise Dejean, and Amma Mcken, among others.







Objects and offerings to the deities.  
Installation at Miami Dade Community College, South Campus Art Gallery, 1985.







Detail of the offerings to the deities on one of the *Santa Comida* altars, El Museo del Barrio, 1984.

Projection of the Changó ax, Palau Robert, Barcelona, June 1985.







Objects and images from the *Santa Comida* installation.  
The *Elegua*, which was placed on the steps at the Palau Robert, Barcelona, June 1985.





debut

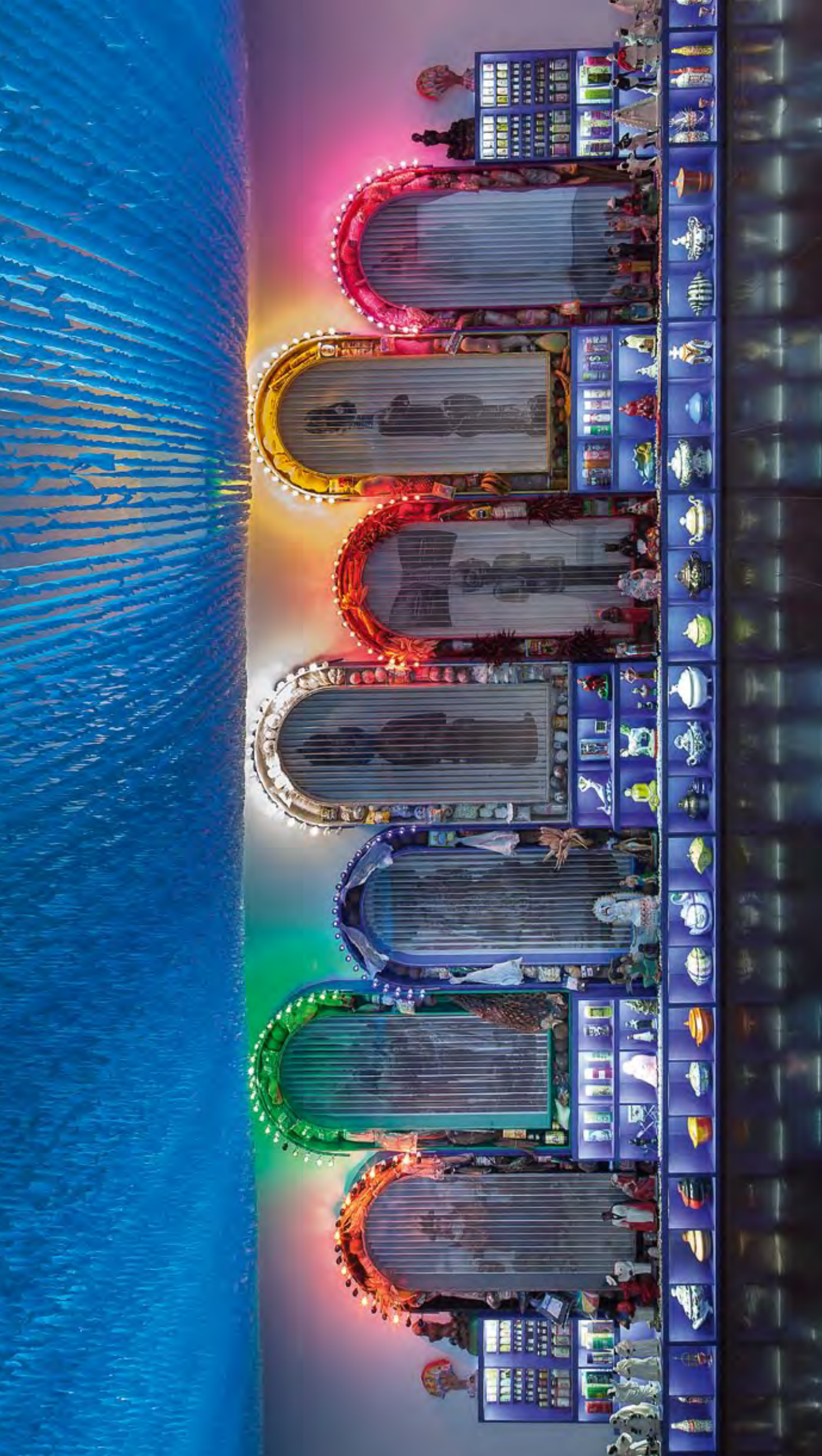
NOIR	X	A	NOIR	2	B	AA	B
3	B	SAINT AVEC EPEE FEU	4	B	épée diable	8	B
5	B	DRAGON soufflant le feu	10	B	grille	12	B
9	B	DRAGON sainte en tunique bleue	11	B	LORENZO SAINT AVEC GRILLE	16	B
13	B	penitents dans le feu	15	B	vierge aux serpents aux pieds	18	B
17	B	vioux saint avec des serpents aux pieds	19	B	AGNUS DEI	20	B
21	B	VIERGE MONJERRATE NOIRE	22	B	SAINT NOIR DIFFRIBUANT PAINS	23	B
23	B	VIERGE MONJERRATE NOIRE	24	B	MONJERRATE BLANCHE	25	B
A EDITER AVEC LES CHROMOS (STAMPES RELIGIEUSES)				23 Saint noir remonant aux lieux: 3 diapo egale			
24	B	JUMEAUX (soldats)	25	B	JUMEAUX HABILLÉS EN ARABE	26	B
26	B	plat avec côte coupées des jumaux (foie jaune)	27	B	plat et 2 coupes (des jumaux)	28	B
28	B	JAUNE	29	B	VIOLET	30	B
31	B	En trois dieux sur le ciel	32	B	VIOLET	33	B
34	B	VIOLET	35	B	VIOLET	36	B
37	B	BABAU AYE fond violet	38	B	VIOLET	39	B
40	B	VIOLET	41	B	MYSTERE RECOUVERT DE PALMES	42	B
43	B	VIOLET	44	B	fond violet	45	B
46	B	VIOLET	47	B	SAINT LAZARE, avec des croix et des blessures sur les jambes lachés par le diable	48	B



Projection script for the Santa Comida installation at the Magiciens de la terre exhibition, Centre Georges Pompidou - La Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris, 1989.

Views of the Santa Comida installation at the Magiciens de la terre exhibition.





View of the Santa Comida installation at the Critical Episodes (1957-2011) exhibition. MACBA Collection, MACBA, 2012. Santa Comida was the setting for tribute to be paid to the deity Orula, through music, singing, and the playing of drums. MACBA, December 22, 2012.







## EL INTERNACIONAL TAPAS BAR & RESTAURANT, New York, 1984–86

Miralda and Montse Guillén turned the famous Teddy's into *El Internacional Tapas Bar & Restaurant*, New York's first tapas restaurant.

## Cuisine as Context

### Miralda, Environmental Art and *El Internacional*

James Wines

“Life is a combination of magic and pasta.”

Federico Fellini

In recent years, Antoni Miralda has attained his rightful place on the international cultural scene as a major contributor to the environmental art movement. Too often his lifetime of extraordinary innovation has been summarized (by a combination of lazy critical labeling and a slogan-obsessed media) as “food sculpture.” Sadly, this kind of knee-jerk cataloging of an artist’s oeuvre has become the ubiquitous short cut for summarizing memorable achievement. The proclivity for reducing an entire career to a single word or icon has the effect of discouraging the popular need for further information and reducing a lifetime of conceptual thinking to a brand-identity poster. In the tabloid world, Andy Warhol can never escape his “soup-can” heritage. Jasper Johns will always be that “American flag artist,” Jackson Pollock is simply “the dripper,” and Alberto Giacometti prevails as that “sculptor of skinny people.” Miralda’s work embraces the subject matter of food: but it is also a miraculous fusion of architecture, sculpture, graphic design, archaeology, celebration, performance, ritual, and technology; plus an absorptive monitoring of social change.

In the current institutional/curatorial scramble to reassess the significance of various art world tendencies over the past fifty years, a lot of the sacred canons of orthodox formalism and abstractionism – as well as several categories of post-modernism – have been diminished in favor of a new appreciation of the aesthetic hybridism of the seventies and eighties. For example, the seminal impact of environmental and performance art – somewhat marginalized during a two-decade long proliferation of faux avant-garde, derivative “appropriation art,” and that commerce-driven careerism promoted by too many New York galleries – has become an esteemed beneficiary of this insightful 2016 period of revised evaluation.

This seventies/eighties revolution emerged during the waning years of Pop and Minimalist art, which were by then in the process of being overshadowed by an emerging variety of conceptual, contextual and prosthetic sources of content. It was an era of gnawing impatience among progressive artists, who felt uncomfortable with the “salability” compromises of art commerce, the claustrophobic confinement of galleries (as the only legitimate showcases for visual ideas) and the lack of connec-

tions between art experience and the public domain. Escape to the streets, public places, landscapes, and any enclosure resisting the definition of conventional exhibition space, became the venues of choice for creative liberation. In this context, the work of Miralda has continually offered an evocative orchestration of ceremony, nourishment, and habitable enclosure.

When Miralda moved to downtown Manhattan in 1971, the SoHo community was already populated by many of the leading environmental artists – Robert Smithson, Nancy Holt, Gordon Matta-Clark, Alice Aycock, Mary Miss, Alan Sonfist, Michael Heizer, and others – so the New York scene was conceptually sympathetic to his unique contributions to environmental thinking. The ideas exchange also included a wide range of European and American architects, as well as product/interior design groups who contributed enormously to a provocative interface between art and architecture. This ensemble included Archigram, Archizoom, Superstudio, UFO, Coop Himmelblau, Haus Rucker, Ettore Sottsass, Ugo La Pietra, Gaetano Pesce, Franco Raggi, Gianni Pettena, László Rajk, Emilio Ambasz, Peter Eisenman, Frank Gehry, Ant Farm, Robert Venturi, Morphosis, and SITE.

The symbiotic flow of ideas between art and architecture was already an intrinsic ingredient in Miralda’s work before he arrived in New York. His sensibility reflected Rauschenberg’s middle-ground preferences: “Painting relates to both life and art. Neither can be made. I try to act in that gap between the two.” Miralda’s balanced performance – suspended between food culture and sculptural/contextual ambience – has always included a vast reservoir of interactive possibilities. His ideas take advantage of people’s ritual associations with the dining experience, their universal acceptance of culinary symbolism, and their acknowledgement of the urgency of nutritional enhancement in physical and mental sustainability. Miralda’s art also embraces those essential bonds between eating well and social harmony. And, finally, by intellectually and aesthetically exposing the heritage that links the age of hunter-gatherer frugality to the era of fast food profligacy, his art has contributed significantly to key issues in socio-political discourse of the new millennium.

Miralda’s most famous project in the USA – the 1984–86 *El Internacional* restaurant in Tribeca – was a kind of collective embodiment of many ideas he had introduced in less ambitious formats



during preceding years. Prior to this celebratory event, his work was moderately well known in the New York art world from such projects as his *Wheat & Steak* parade in Kansas City, his 1977 *Breadline* exhibit at the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston and a *Thanksgiving: The Animal's Banquet* for animals at the Bronx Zoo. But, *El Internacional* was his definitive masterpiece.

This triumphant structure emerged, like anti-quinity's mythical phoenix, from the ashes of a previous restaurant that had closed down and dematerialized to near ruin by the sixties. Teddy Bartle founded the original "Teddy's" – located at West Broadway and Varick Street – as a German eatery in the twenties. By 1945, the location was owned by Sal Cucinotta and transformed into a glittery Italian bistro. Reputedly frequented by Mafia dons, the interior maze of reflective surfaces offered an atmosphere of swanky sleaze (faintly tinged with gangster menace) that attracted such celebrities as Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Anthony Quinn, Groucho Marx, Sofia Loren, Paloma Picasso, Robert de Niro, and the later New York mayor Ed Koch. By the late sixties, Teddy's clientele had deserted Mafioso retro for disco chic and the legacy ended.

In 1984, Miralda collaborated with an exceptional Catalan chef, Montse Guillén, to found, design, cater, and operate *El Internacional*. Their vision called for a celebratory environment, which, by its seamless flow of culinary and site-specific art, would envelop customers in a cross-cultural embrace. While postmodern in spirit, the restaurant interior avoided po-mo architecture's familiar surfeit of haut décor, cloyingly tasteful color schemes, and labyrinthine theoretical justifications. In contrast, Miralda's restaurant exploded in the middle of Tribeca's sedate streetscape as the ultimate example of a rough and tumble urban collage.

One dominant tendency of postmodern designers of the seventies and eighties was their attraction to historical quotation and – after ninety years of modernist insistence on antiseptic surfaces – enthusiasm for encrusting buildings with classical columns, pediments, entablatures, and a kaleidoscope of popular imagery. Advocates defended the movement as liberation from functionalist austerity, in favor of readable iconography; but the reality became a mostly superficial pastiche of history. Further justified with claims of sardonic intent, a great deal of po-mo's aspiration to "cool irony" became, instead, a proliferation of decorous cuteness. Miralda's *El Internacional* transcended academic notions of "good design" by using architecture itself as the subject matter for art. Taking his cues from the turbulent "Visca

Catalunya" spirit, the restaurant triumphed as an embodiment of its Barcelona patrimony, perversely juxtaposed with its origins as Teddy's of the fifties. In this sense, the entire environment qualified as a "found object," animated with imaginative collisions among the artifacts of its disparate origins. By retaining the postwar elements of Mafioso kitsch and nightclub glitter – i.e. the maze of reflective surfaces, Formica tabletops, aluminum trim, polyester cushions – and by treating all other elements as a tapas-like display of archaeological relics, this surreal ensemble offered the ultimate festive scenario for culinary performance. As Miralda described his intentions, "*El Internacional* became a live laboratory of human and artistic cosmopolitanism."

The key to the restaurant's success, as a mecca for New York nightlife, was its capacity to orchestrate a grand opera-like a cast of hungry diners within a massive stage set of cross-cultural artifacts. The combination of Montse's talents in the kitchen and Miralda's visions in the front of house attracted a highly diverse clientele (a populist collage in its own right) that was heavily reinforced by the international art world. On any given night, the kinetic surge of patrons would usually include a phalanx of Warhol's Factory luminaries – Ultra Violet, Candy Darling, Joe Dallesandro, Penny Arcade and Holly Woodlawn – table hopping with a wide assortment of performance stars, like David Bowie, Pina Bausch, David Byrne, Debbie Harry, the Beastie Boys, Lou Reed, and the Talking Heads. But the real celebrity roster at *El Internacional* was Miralda's serendipitous cast of characters – signs, symbols, icons, music, tableware, furniture, and all manner of consumer society detritus – collectively treated as actors on a playlist. Under his direction, the *dramatis personae* offered what he called "an imaginary promenade, a real dialogue between food and art." Special staging features, as Miralda noted, were the restaurant's "*Dalmatian Façade, Liberty Crown, Sol y Sombra Terrace, Melting Pot Maître D'station, Columbus Trophy Bar, Archaeological Sandwich, Turquoise Dining Room, and Mermaid Aquarium.*"

By 1986, Montse and Miralda had moved on to an even more ambitious ceremonial endeavor – the *Honeymoon Project* – celebrating the hypothetical marriage of the Statue of Liberty and Christopher Columbus for the 1992 five-hundred-year centennial. As a tribute to the old and new worlds, this imaginary love affair between two monuments was planned for a 1992 installation on Liberty Island in New York and the central harbor of Barcelona. Additionally, the whole event was intended to culminate in a wedding parade on Fifth Avenue. Sadly, these projects were not

realized, due to their epic ambitions and a shortfall of financing. Still, as part of the *Honeymoon Project's* lofty preparations, Miralda created a full scale *Engagement Gown* – exhibited at Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in 1986 – plus Ms. Liberty's *Wedding Gown*, displayed in the Winter Garden during 1991.

In another ambitious mission, after the closing of *El Internacional*, there was a popular movement in New York to save Miralda's massive, one-and-a-quarter-ton *Liberty Crown* from the roof level of the restaurant and mount it in a park or plaza. A combination of Manhattan bureaucracy, real estate squabbles, exorbitant costs, and technical challenges associated with the sculpture's removal defeated this ambition. Following the departure of Miralda and Montse from their stewardship of the restaurant, it flourished for a few years as El Teddy's, serving Mexican fare to the Tribeca scene. Lacking *El Internacional's* inspired menu and design innovation, the successor soon failed and the doors were closed forever. The building was demolished 2004, to make way for an apartment complex.

Arguably, *El Internacional* was the greatest junction between edible and visual art ever conceived. The privileged diner never just "ate there"; but instead participated in a kind of pagan ritual, where the iconographic elements reinforced a universal celebration of art, life, nourishment, friendship, and good will... with lots of jubilant evidence of shared symbolism that was mercifully free of the weight of any kind of ecclesiastical trappings.

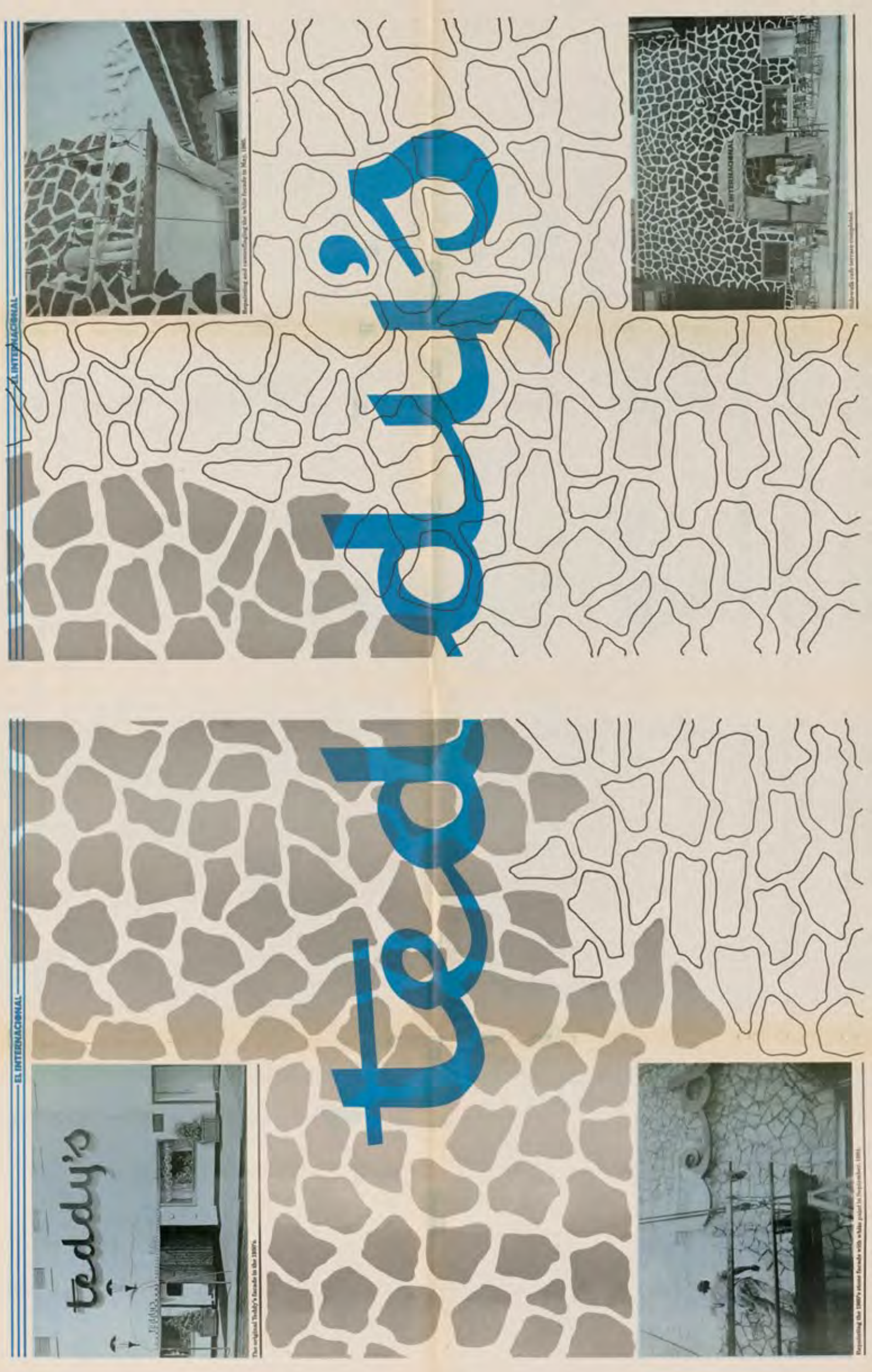
Miralda's highest achievement was – and still is – his unique contribution to environmental art. *El Internacional* consolidated his and Montse's vision at a particular time and place – 1984 to 1986 – but, to this day, the legacy lives on. No one who participated in that experience could see the combined need for sustenance in concert with aesthetics in the same way again. It proved that art works miracles.





The process of recovery of the restaurant's different original architectures.

Two-page spread of the *El Internacional* newspaper (issue 3, summer 1985), which was given to the customers.







Preparatory drawing of the façade.



Construction of the life-size replica of the crown of the Statue of Liberty on the restaurant's roof terrace.

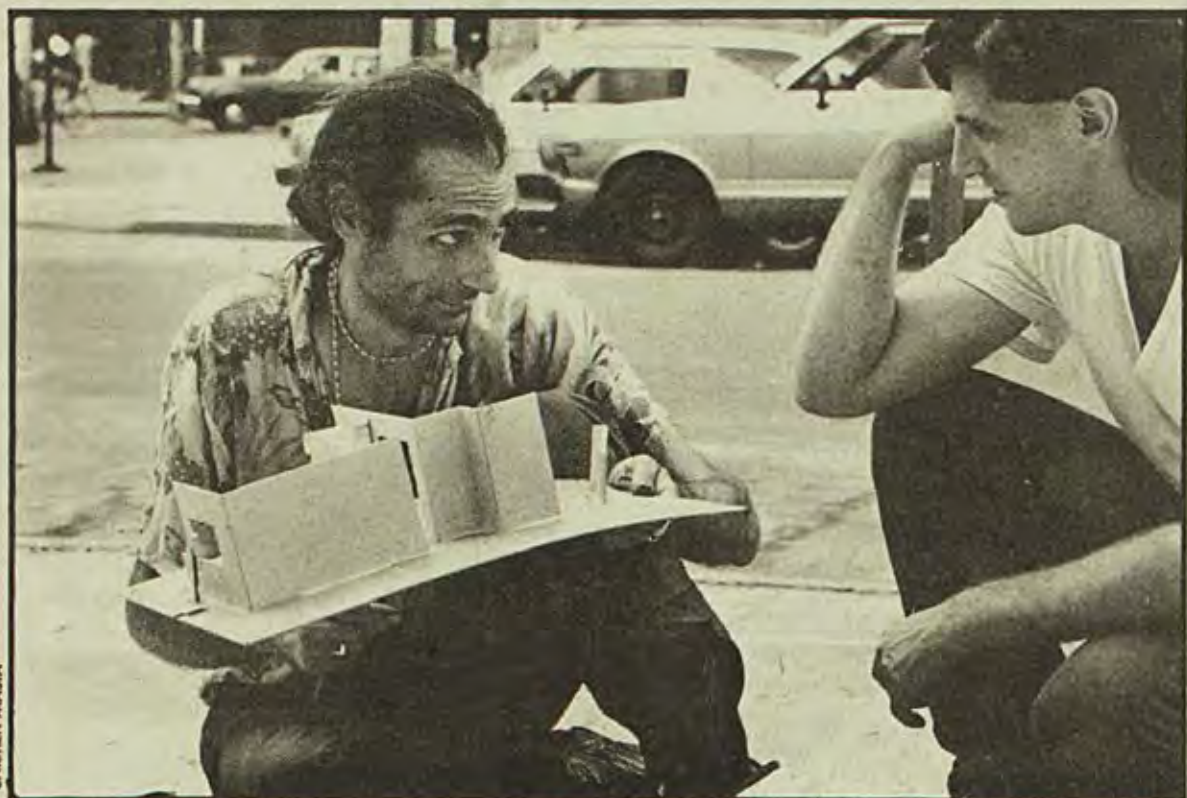




Construction and view of the *Sol y Sombra Terrace* with soft-drink cans embedded in the floor.  
Kidney-shaped table with collage of photographs of celebrities of the fifties.



PRIMER ANY



Miralda and Alan Hochman discuss the ingredients for an archaeological sandwich.

## The Archaeological Sandwich

*Changing, changed, and changeable*

by Ronald Christ

• Eating a sandwich while *inside* a sandwich isn't something you can do anywhere, anytime. But, then, the **El Internacional** isn't just anywhere, anytime. The restaurant mingles many times, many eras, just as it combines many places, many nations.

From the beginning, Montse, in charge of the food, and Antoni Miralda, in charge of redesigning the site, agreed on a multi-phase, meta-personal, constantly changing menu, which fit right in with Miralda's recent projects like the iconography of flags and the Statute of Liberty. But little did Miralda suspect that an inspection of the existing quarters would unearth an architecture equally changing, changed, and changeable, and so plunge him through layers of time and style too good to ignore or destroy.

At the end of July, Miralda and some helpers literally began to poke around the place. At that point, Teddy's (across from ...)

stratification of chronology transpierced by structural supports and modifications now showing the building not merely as a sandwich of tastes but a club sandwich of layers within layers, like the very first gold tile, which is itself a sandwich of glass and precious metal.

The **El Internacional** thus came to be, in Miralda's plan for it, not only a multi-ethnic restaurant, metamorphosing its menu, but a stationary time machine, whose design intermixes the layers of style, juxtaposes them adoringly but randomly. "Like cooking with all the ingredients and spices." After all, as Miralda says, "When you eat a BLT sandwich, it doesn't matter which comes first, the B, the L, of the T. They all add up, whatever the mix, to the one thing, which is many things, and that's what I wanted to do here. The sandwich of the building, the passage of different moments, different ambiances, confronting each other on three floors, corresponded to our original plan for the food, and it's made the restaurant and the food a perfect match."

Front page of *El Internacional* newspaper (issue 1, fall 1984).

The Archaeological Sandwich mural brought together materials that were found during the works to fit out the premises.



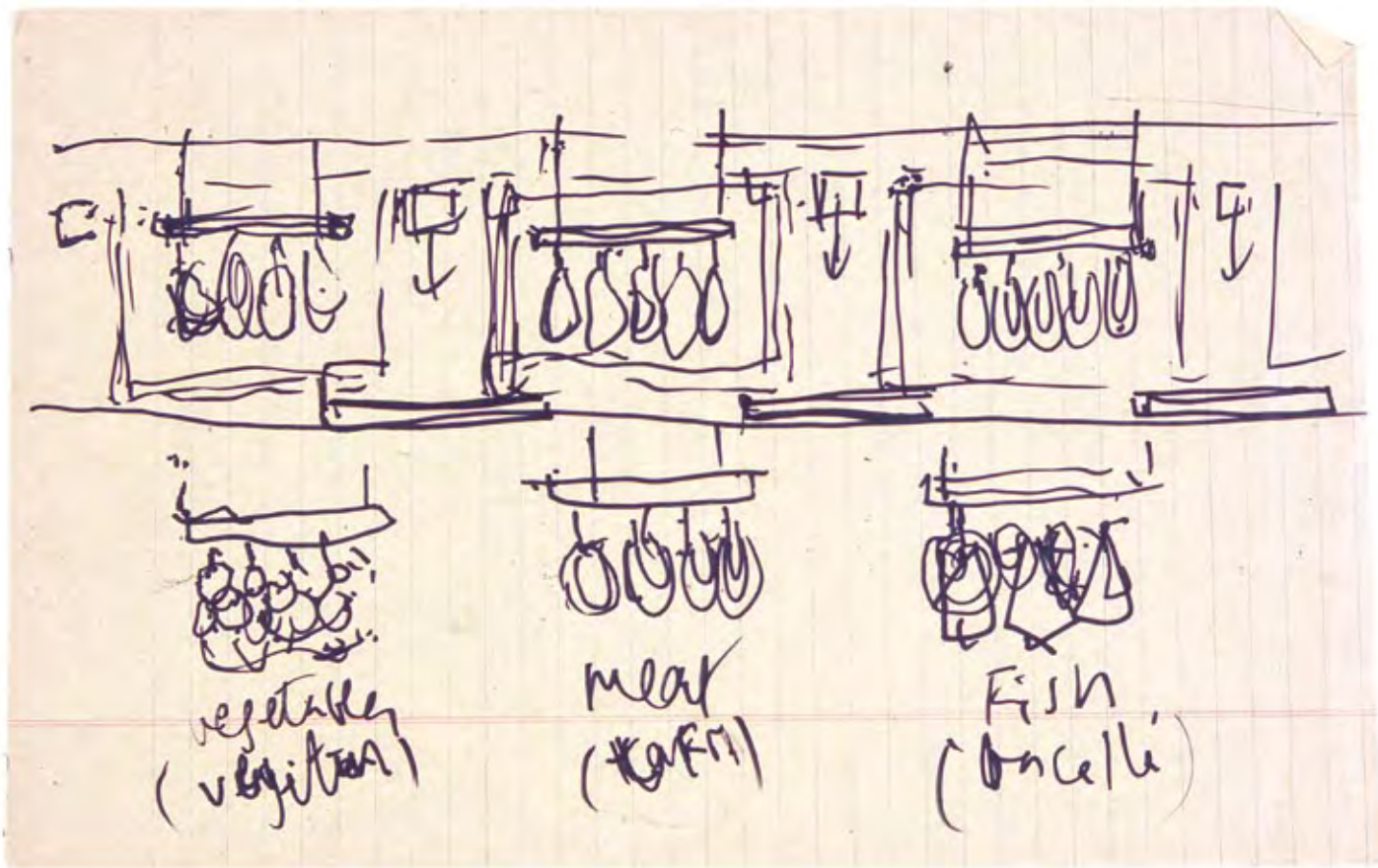
*Ingredients:* Archaeological  
Sandwich  
Ceramic dinner fragment  
Stone from bar wall  
Embroidered logo from uniform  
Tile from behind bar  
Synthetic leather wall covering  
Electrical conduit  
BROWN wall-to-wall carpet  
Acoustical ceiling tile  
Valance and molding fragment  
Sheetrock  
gold-veined mirror  
Pink and gold fiberglass laminate  
Asbestos  
gold curtain swatch  
Hand-painted wall paper  
Teddy's dinner plate





The entrance to the restaurant and the *Video Menu* (1984), which provided information on the dishes.  
*Flags Entrance*, a painted carpet featuring various national flags in the restaurant's reception area.





Columbus Trophy Bar.  
Turquoise Dining Room.







Dried cod was a highlight of the *Marina Room*.

*Crystal Dining Room*, the home of the *Teddy's Sentimental Museum*.





Detail of objects that made up part of the restaurant, such as the Lobster Dream and Matador Candelabra lamps, the Barcelona/New York Wedding Cake, and the Mermaid Aquarium, which separated the Turquoise Dining Room from the Dining Carnation Room.







# Montse's Kitchen

An invitation to dining

by Marshall Reese

• "A restaurant and its food, for me, are completely interconnected. The dish you make is as important as how you serve it. Everything has to be integrated. You can't separate the food from the dining room, and the waiter from the food. The have to know what they are holding in their hands, how the dish tastes, and understand the people they serve." Montse Guillén, the chef and proprietor of the *El Internacional*, uses her gestures and her expression to emphasize this. The *El Internacional*—from its place settings and the waiters, to the overall décor—is proof that her philosophy doesn't stop in the kitchen.

Montse began cooking at the age of two, when the Christmas "Kings" brought her a miniature electric kitchen set. By the age of seven, however, cooking began to be a major endeavor. At this age the same Kings bestowed her with a cookbook, and from this point on her interest in food grew. She remembers starting out with pastries. Thereafter she was always in the kitchen.

Her knowledge and experiences of food are like a tapestry threaded with her travels that finally culminate in her arrival here. Passing many years as a wife and mother, she was a provider of nourishment, and of love and care. This she transmitted to the table. In Spain, more so than here, this transmission is a history of tradition, of mothers and grandmothers that passes back generations. The food they prepare contains more than its elemental ingredients and compounds. It has an aura of ritual and sense of time that the people abide with.

So much transgressed during the passing of these years. Her love and need for the culinary arts became more of her life than ever. "Cooking is always my therapy. I go to the kitchen and create during my difficult times."

She went to Ibiza, one of the most beautiful islands in the Mediterranean. In the countryside, she discovered all the cooking secrets of grains and natural foods. It was a period of marmalades and jellies, of fruit and vegetable preserves. She sold everything she made in her food store. When she returned to her parents' home, which had become a restaurant in the Pyrennes, she relearned the cooking of her mother. She was driven to learn the traditional cooking she had learned with. Later she learned to cook from her mother's recipes.



Montse preparing her favorite dish, chicken and lobster.

all of the creative and artistic skills she had acquired as a chef. It meant taking the prime ingredients in her hands and laboring with them to develop and discover new tastes, and new recipes. Above all, it meant searching her own person and blending this quality with the traditional recipes. She turned to the memories of her mother, and grandmother, and then sought out the little old ladies in the neighborhood, and the women at the market to discover their secrets.

In Barcelona there had to be a difference, some quality to the dish to make it new. Over here it is hard to imagine this creative struggle. These foods in front of us are such an unusual excitement to the taste. "Here in the States I am dedicated to the authentic food that my grandmother cooked. I am a person that's always trying to learn something new even when I have already mastered it. I have a need to create, to always think up something new." That is the challenge that Montse continues to bring herself to.

Now at the *El Internacional* Montse is beginning another adventure which will bring many treasures. Again she has to create anew. This time she is confronted with new ingredients and has to learn how they will react in her recipes. "I have to have a lot of imagination here, because obviously there are new ingredients and these have to be tested to make sure they will work in the recipes. There's a lot of good food here that Americans aren't used to. I want to introduce them to it. I want to show them to the world. I want to show them to the world."

# Ambassador Says Holla!

La metropoliz chu nenca dorm, nenca snooze

by Warren Leight

• Chaque George is the Ambassador to the United Nations from the tiny island country of Esperanto. His government has proclaimed 1984 as "ano internacional" or year of the *El Internacional*, in honor of the great new Tribeca restaurant.

Here is his Esperantese message of welcome "to all citizens and eaters of the world."

Holla mes simpatecos freundi! New York es nostra metropoliz. New York es una metropoliz internacional, compozed de ports, akademos, musik, muzak, art, e much, much plus. El fact es, le plus important reasone por New York's famos es "le nosh." La Metropoliz d' la nosh.

Nosh une hot dog, nosh une egg roll. Nosh une gyro, nosh une pizza. Nosh dis, nosh dat. Nosh 24 horas a dag in la metropoliz chu nenca dorm, nenca snooze.

O.k., une metropoliz de swing e jazz e choses much class, desury une restoriant wit le nosh plus classe, plus internacional, plus total. New York desury le nosh d' Catalan: le nosh *tapa*.

La *tapa* arrives at *El Internacional* end New York, por final, est complete! Por dis reasone, me governmento Esperanto wilkomes *El Internacional* to New York, en proclame "El Ano Internacional."

Tanks, Chaque George

## EL INTERNACIONAL TAPAS BAR & RESTAURANT

# Ten Basic Ingredients

by Warren Leight & Marshall Reese

• *El Internacional*, literally, means "the international," but *so much* can be lost in translation, including:

- 1 The Food: It's *real*. You'll taste what we mean.
- 2 The Roof: People from all over the world will look to it.
- 3 The Atmosphere: An architectural and cultural wonder dedicated to yesterday's charm and tomorrow's convenience.
- 4 The Philosophy: Don't talk to us about "Nouvelle," don't talk to us about "Continental," we're talking about "International."
- 5 The Aquarium: It's in the Dining Room—an homage to lobster and chicken... one of Montse's favorite dishes.
- 6 The Staff: Polite, alert, clean, and pressed uniforms, ready to execute your orders.
- 7 The Bar: New York's first trophy bar. It harkens back to a past that never was.
- 8 The Ceiling: It's even better than the awning.
- 9 The Ghosts: There's at least one on the Third Floor. (Who you gonna call?)
- 10 The Weekly Menu: One week it's Lamb with Seven Sauces; next week it's Rabbit and Pears Stew. And always the *Tapas*.



Front page of *El Internacional* newspaper (issue 1, fall 1984), and the menu of the restaurant.

Montse Guillén coming out of the kitchen at peak.

A sample of the tapas that were served at the restaurant.

al

archaeological sandwich.

of chronology transpired by reports and modifications now building not merely as a sandwich but a club sandwich of layers like the very first gold tile, half a sandwich of glass and...

ational thus came to be, in for it, not only a multi-ethnic metamorphosing its menu, but some machine, whose design in-layers of style, juxtaposes them randomly. "Like cooking with vents and spices." After all, as "When you eat a B.I.T. sandwich matter which comes first, the T. They all add up, whatever the one thing, which is many that's what I wanted to do here, of the building, the passage of vents, different ambiances, con- other on three floors, con- original plan for the food, the restaurant and the food a

**FEATURED THIS WEEK**

A Taste of Las Ramblas	5.50
Sopa de pescadores (Fishermen's Soup)	5.50
Sopa de ternera con setas (Beef soup with mushrooms)	3.75
Ensalada mixta (Mixed salad)	6.00
Melón con jaeón (Melon with ham)	7.00
Butifarra amb songetes (all i oil) (Catalan sausage with beans and garlic and oil)	12.00
"Platillo" de atún (Fresh tuna stew)	4.00
Suggested dessert:	
"Pijana"—flan, nata, pifa y melocotón (Custard, whipped cream, pineapple, and peach)	12.00
Suggested wine:	
Sangria (four people)	12.00

Creative "Barrio Xeno"

structure, engineering of the interior only the crown presents that be outside. That memorable, completely abstract crown is projects. It means defense, liberty, *bien sur*, and I said to RTV. Back Page, Col 5.

After the Spanish Civil War, *tapas* grew in popularity, because people started to eat out, due to the scarcity and poor quality of food at home. Nibbling in bars, thus became a tradition in Andalucía, and later spread to the North of Spain. Today the variety of *tapas* is so diverse that many international diners compare it to the ritual of Chinese *Din Sam*.

*Tres cosas me tiene preso de amores el corazon la bella Ines, el jamon y las berenjenas con queso*

Three affairs ensnare my heart— Beautiful Ines, Ham, and Eggplant with Cheese.



# Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the Porrón\*

\*But didn't ask because you had no idea it existed

*Phallovitrolic vessels elongated and laid back*

by Bill Dyckes

### What is a porrón?

It is a glass vessel designed to deliver a stream of wine to the mouth of the imbibor without labial contact. Its basic shape is that of a blunt laboratory flask with a conical spout and an elongated, laid-back neck. It is related to the *botz*, or wineskin, which is carried by Basque shepherds and American college students, and to the ceramic *botijo*, which Spanish laborers use to carry their drinking water and cool it by evaporation.

### Where did the porrón come from?

No one has the slightest idea. The name may be derived from the Arabic word *burun*, meaning *pithecia*, which would suggest that it is simply a variation on a familiar object that was put to a different use one day when there were no clean cups around.

The few scholars who have shown any interest at all in the subject assume that the porrón is merely an elegant variation on the *botijo*, and that it was invented in Catalunya (where it is called a *porro*) during the early 1600s—a time when the glassmakers of Barcelona were among the best in Europe.

Others suggest that its history began centuries earlier. For example, Englishman Richard Ford observed in *A Handbook for Travelers in Spain* (1847) that the Catalans are given to wine, which they often drink after the fashion of Rhythm and the phallovitrolic vessels of antiquity; they do not touch the glass with their lips, but hold up the porrón, or round-bottomed bottle with a spout, at arm's length, pouring the cooled liquor into their mouths in a vicious parabola; they never miss the mark, while a stranger generally stimulates his nose or his neckcloth.

Popular legend insists that it was invented by Jordi Porro Pop, a seventeenth-century musician from Mostplasad, who intended to create a musical instrument that would combine characteristics of the trumpet with those of the glass harmonica. During the first trial, however, he accidentally inhaled and drowned. His heirs marketed the invention as a high-tooth *botijo*.

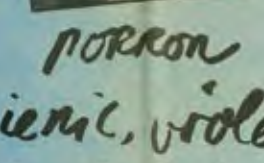
### With all the other things that exist for drinking, why would anyone bother to use a porrón?

The *baggy botz* is obviously unsuitable for table use (and also tends to pour on to the wine the taste of the pitch with which it is lined). The *botijo* had already been rendered in glass and adapted for the table, but was too bulky for easy (much less one-handed) manipulation. As for glasses, Jaume Galà believes that these were too expensive for everyday use, while Pere Samortal suggests that the popularity of the porrón is probably to reduce washing-up. But Antoni Miralda, the aesthetic arbiter of New York's El Internacional Restaurant, points out that the extremely fine stream of wine tickles the taste buds and greatly enhances the enjoyment of the wine in a way that a mouthful of even the finest vintage cannot. The trick is that you have to swallow as you pour.

### How do you drink with a porrón?

Three basic grips are used: the traditional (by the neck), the sporting (by the spout), and the interlocking (with the thumb and first finger around the spout while the back and base are supported with the remaining fingers).

Using a porrón obviously requires a great deal of hand-to-eye-to-mouth coordination,



and is best begun slowly and cautiously. Hold the spout about one inch from (and just above) the mouth—*not* inside. Tilt the porrón forward by twisting your wrist and move it away from your mouth in a graceful upward arc. (The inclination is needed to build up pressure that will enable the wine to shoot further out.) Your lips should never be more than one inch apart, and you must maintain a totally bored expression. (Though it is considered bad taste to carry on a conversation.)

### Quick! How do you stop?

Stopping without getting drenched is not as difficult as you might expect. Merely reverse the actions described above and finish with a short upward snap of the spout, catching any stray drops in the extended lower jaw. (One theory holds that the porrón was designed for the benefit of the Hapsburg kings, whose exaggerated underbite made it nearly impossible for them to drink with glasses.)

### Has the porrón always been popular?

Yes, except for the late 1800s when the Church Party, concerned by the decline of contemporary morality, opposed the porrón because of its anthropomorphic characteristics. Their campaign split the vote in the following elections, resulting in the victory of an obscure radical party that advocated the reduction of taxes. During the recession that followed, everyone forgot about the porrón issue.

### Do all porrónes look like that?

By and large, the porrón has changed very little over the years, being, if anything, more streamlined today. Novelty variations exist, such as the two-spout version (impossible to drink from without dribbling on your forehead) and the "anatomically correct" version that is popular at wedding parties (the Church Party wasn't just fuming at the mouth). Country inns in Catalunya often have extra-large porrónes that hold several gallons, from which anyone may drink for free if he can do it one-handed.

### Is this considered some form of popular art?

That and more. Since the turn of the century, an *Olimpiada del Porro* has been held irregularly at Quintacoanya, a village lost several centuries ago in the Puig mountains of northern Catalunya. The earliest contests consisted of only distance and quantity events, but new ones have been added and the original ones refined (most notably the conversion of the distance event into a two-man affair, which made the length of the arm irrelevant). In 1928, the year in which sizes and shapes were standardized, Xavier Camabuit set the volume record that still stands today: 6.32 liters in one unbroken stream. The distance event was revolutionized in the early 1960s by the introduction of fiberglass spouts, which greatly increased the muzzle velocity of the porrón. The present record is 5.14 meters, set by Joan Eleri and Miquel Xarrie in 1978.

### What if I'm too embarrassed to use a porrón?

If your reluctance is due to its anthropomorphic characteristics, there are two ways you might deal with it. One is to become very drunk before hoisting the porrón. The other is to close your eyes and think of Catalunya. Neither is especially recommended. If you are merely ashamed of your lack of skill, don't be—even a first-class porrónista gets an eyeful now and then. Just don't wear a white shirt. A *porron olimpiada* will be organized at El Internacional this summer by the Society of Porrónistas (SOP). Start practicing now so you can be part of this incredible event.



photos by Elena Guareta

*porron  
the only hygienic, violent, immediate  
way to imbibe wine*



We invite you for a celebration of twins. On Valentine's Day, twins will dine at El Internacional, the well-known tapes bar and restaurant in New York's Tribeca district. Brothers, sisters, or any combination thereof, identical and fraternal, young and old, will fill the restaurant. The event, called "Face to Face", will go beyond all the romantic myths surrounding Valentine's day to celebrate a very special relationship that exists between twins. It may also lead to new friendships, for no couple will be seated alone. The event is the creation of artist Antoni Miralda, in collaboration with chef Montse Guillen. A special "edible art" menu will be offering dishes including a "Double Soup", having two different tastes, a "nest" of twin quail eggs, and a "Mirror Cake". A series of events will be highlighting the evening. Artists will include Performance Magicians Rich and Patrick Martin of MAGX, Costume Comedians Terry and Linda Jamison of POP THEATRICALS, and Video Artists Lynda and Ellen Kahn of TWIN ART. Photos from the books "Parallels: A Look at Twins," by Harvey Stein, and "Twins on Twins," by Kathryn and Frances McLaughlin, will be displayed as well as a number of twin related artists pieces. Bring your own twin or a loved one just like you. Dress

## FACE TO FACE A CELEBRATION OF TWINS ON VALENTINE'S DAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1986

A Special Event Offering Original Cuisine in the El Internacional Atmosphere, Plus an Evening of Magic and Live Performance in This Unique Environ of Twins.

Price For Two is \$40. For reservations, call El Internacional--226-8131. Contact Telma Benvenuti or Glen O'Connor. The restaurant is located at 219 West Broadway, New York City. Seating for Dinner will be at 7:30 pm. Bring your twin or a loved one just like you. Dress alike for this Special Event.

This event is The Production of Miralda and Rich Martin.

design?richMartin.

Article on the Porrón Olympics, published in El Internacional newspaper (issue 3, summer 1985).

Face to Face, celebration of twins that took place at El Internacional on Valentine's Day, 1986.









Coronation Ceremony. The placing on *El Internacional's* roof terrace of a life-size replica of the Statue of Liberty's crown, New York, July 17, 1985.





## Honeymoon: Party as Geopolitics

Néstor García Canclini

When Antoni Miralda conceived the Columbus' statue and the Statue of Liberty falling in love in the eighties, he was reinterpreting the meaning of the monument to the Genoese conqueror that has been standing in the port of Barcelona since 1886 and that of the statue gifted to the United States by France that same year to commemorate the centenary of the US Declaration of Independence. The ceremonies, the vestments, the rituals of asking for the hand, and the marriage in 1992 involved the mayors of Barcelona and New York. In part following tradition, the request for the hand and the couple's engagement were formalized at her home, the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York. Religious and earthly legacies were also taken into account in the celebration of the groom's quinquennial with eight little girls dressed for their first communion walking in procession down Barcelona's Rambla to finally make an offering, to the eight lions that guard Columbus, of produce "discovered" in the New World: potatoes, chewing gum, pineapple, chocolate, tobacco, corn, turkey, and peppers.

Other elements, however, pointed to the aim of bringing the ritual up to date. The ring, presented by the city of Birmingham, was decorated with twelve perspex diamonds that emitted light and symbolized the number of nations which at that time formed the European Community. Los Angeles' contribution was the 25 foot by 17 foot necklace, made by Sheila Klein, the adornments of which were 26 traffic lights mounted on an iron structure. The "Mango" company gifted a T-shirt with a bulletproof heart on which the figures of the happy couple and a map of the world were reproduced. A fuchsia and gold-colored belt simulated the colors of a bullfighter's cape and carried the names of products of the Old and New Worlds. The garter was divided into nine sections and 54 spaces with the name Liberty written in the 46 languages of the residents of Las Vegas. For the presentation at the Venice Biennale, two parabolic monuments were built: great antennae, like those for television broadcast reception, contained two recordings of the bride and groom on optical fiber, making reference to intercontinental communication.

Traffic lights, bulletproof clothing, and the multilingualism of the capital of reproductions that is Las Vegas, relocated colonial memory and the ninetieth century's internationalism in the iconography of the end of the twentieth century. Satellite

television signals alluded to the exchange of voices and images at a time when people were beginning to talk about globalization.

The horizon of that moment was however delimited by European integration and the "meeting of two worlds" celebrated in 1992, the five-hundredth anniversary of America's "discovery" or "conquest," depending on from which side of the Atlantic one was looking. The incorporation of contemporary ingredients together with old products achieved a parodic meaning by monumentalizing, on the scale of Columbus and the Statue of Liberty, the clothes, shoes, rings, personal accessories, and gifts. It was, however, a sufficiently measured parody to allow the involvement of mayors, and designers such as Pierre Cardin, Chanel, and Givenchy, among others. The moderation of excess also stayed within a playful esthetic between what was said, what was ironized, and what was suggested, so that the kitsch would have credibility. The aesthetic effect as the way in which representation becomes playfully detached from reality while still maintaining verisimilitude.

Classical monuments tend to remove the distance between the battles of the past and the contradictions of the present, the space between heroes' merits and failings, through gestural grandiloquence. Miraldian monumentalism, on the other hand, stays away from this simulated resolution of history, while not going so far as to bring about the statues' collapse. It enters into the logic of exaltation, switching solemnity for partying. Not a complaisant party, as it weds two opposing emblems: American liberty and European conqueror.

It's not about reconciling opposites. This is a different operation. It is built out of almost ethnographic observation of the customs, clothing, and foodstuffs of each of the cultures involved. Sensory experience is the stage on which the intercultural meeting is imagined. Because it's about the celebration of what is lived through the senses, color, the pleasure of giving, and consuming what is received.

Monuments almost always proclaim victory, imposition, or just the heroic tale of the drama of liberation. The simultaneous control of public money, urban space, and the official interpretation of history turn states into the exclusive selectors of what is commemorated and the style in which it is registered. The citizens, invited maybe every four or six years to vote for those who govern, take no part in the choice of places, nor sub-

### HONEYMOON PROJECT, 1986-92

To celebrate the marriage of two monuments on either side of the Atlantic – New York's Statue of Liberty and the Columbus monument in Barcelona – Miralda created a series of objects and ceremonies that were presented over a period of six years in various cities. In this project, Miralda was playing with the confrontation-attraction of two opposite poles, one symbolizing conquest and the other symbolizing freedom.



jects, nor forms of dedication. You go past the monument as a pedestrian or driver and see it with more indifference than if it were an advertising billboard.

Miralda pays attention to how people behave and what they like, transforms this and sends an invitation to the party. When *Honeymoon* was presented in the Spanish Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, visitors were able to express their agreement or disagreement with the marriage by typing on computers or filling in cards. Competitions were held between fashion and design schools in Tokyo to select the groom's suit. The bridal bedspread, 60 feet by 50 feet, was carried down New York's Fifth Avenue by hundreds of students from the city's dramatic art and dance schools, manipulating it to replicate the waves of the sea. The Wedding Chapel in Las Vegas housed a Museum of Love with exhibitions of objects loaned by similar chapels in the city and a list of a million-and-a-half people who were married there. The marriage papers were made up as a ketubah – the formalizing document in the Jewish faith – from a model from Jerusalem written in Hebrew and Aramaic and another from the Jewish community in Buenos Aires in English, Hebrew, and Spanish. The marriage took place on February 14, 1992 at the foot of the Red Rock Canyon mountains before an altar made of two gigantic pelvises, the bride's made of papier mâché and rice in Marseille's Atelier d'art éphémère des Lieux publics and the groom's in bronze from the Mariani de Pietrasanta iron foundry. Surrounding this, a circle of white limousines formed a banqueting table with foods from the New and Old Worlds. The ceremony began with a recital of *sardanes*, the traditional Catalan dance, by the Cobla Blanes and ended with images of the couple being projected onto the sides of the mountains.

How should this intercultural work be expanded in 2016, when Paris, Brussels, and other cities in the West are – as a result of the terrorist attacks – full of soldiers, as if they were representations of the *Soldats Soldés*, the plastic miniatures that Miralda accumulated in sets, on cupboards, prie-dieux, cuckoo clocks, tables converted into firing ranges, or Parisian gardens, or those of Milan or Verona? The modification of ritual or urbane objects alluded then to the militarization of international relations in the era of the Vietnam War, which involved the United States and European countries, with its mass bombing, guerrilla resistance, and millions of dead. The 1992 marriage was framed in the festivities of the fifth centenary of Europe's arrival in America.

The transnational extent and intensity of recent confrontations provides another context. In a way,

the “obsessive” placement of soldiers in everyday spaces made these artistic acts into reminders of the military omnipresence that Western countries aspired to live at a distance. In the same way the coming together of Columbus and Liberty, their paradoxical alliance, and the emphasis on the gigantic, ironically deconstructed the conquest's prepotence. Miralda told me, in an interview on January 21, 2010: “Playfully, you forget about all the war and you enter into another story, and in the end you realize they are all aiming at you.”

The esthetic other story that *Honeymoon* takes us to, as with other gastronomic or intercultural rituals produced by their creator, offers a particular vision of geoculture, different from the one political propaganda or globalized advertising tells us about. Official monuments can make lasting versions of historical processes spectacular, with simplification of ambivalent conflict. In a similar way, the grandiloquent seduction of enormous urban advertisements hides the passions that run through unequal consumption and its arguments.

To better understand Miralda's intercontinental actions, one should bear in mind the *Food Culture Museum*, in which installations, photographic montages and objects from many countries, film projections, and sculptures/monuments lead to the *tasting* of information connected with food, in a different register. It's not a museum that collects and exhibits pieces. The Euroamerican marriage thus expanded in a series of multinational ceremonies, from 1986 to 1992, which monumentalized the rite in space and time; the works call for a look at the *process*, consideration of how we got where we are, and the creation of unforeseen continuations.

The not-obvious, that which transgresses normal programming, was sought in switching around the stages in the *Honeymoon* ritual. The “honeymoon” does not follow the wedding, the statues going off on holiday before the marriage, to cities that act as family members and friends offering gifts: the wedding cape in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the bride's bouquet and veil in Barcelona's Fundació Joan Miró, Columbus' wedding suit in Tokyo, the bedspread in New York. The gifts, exhibited in a dozen other cities, come to take on meaning in the interrelationships of cultures.

Objects migrate, rituals cross and combine, as they make their way down avenues with a different logic to that of artworks housed in galleries and museums. If we think about the museums that closed their doors and the deserted streets of Paris and Brussels in the wake of the attacks of November 13, 2015, and the hunt for the aggressors that brought anxiety to other towns and cities,

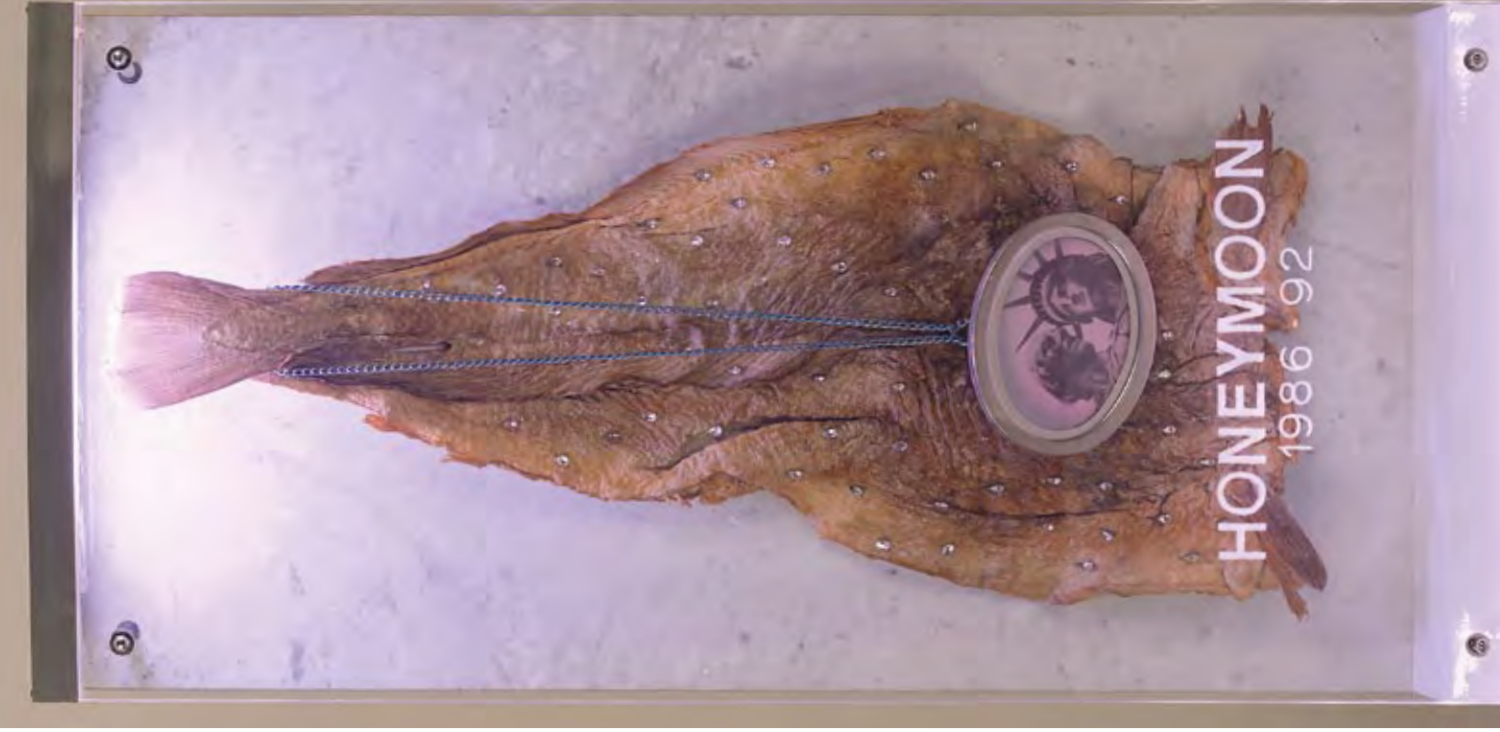
Miralda's work makes one think of how we might have been able to construct a different intercultural history. Would it be possible to imagine ourselves and different people brought together at tables of multicultural gastronomy? Can coexistence, based on food, move from the politically and economically powerful's monumentalization to a citizens' party?

He doesn't only seek to resignify gigantic operations of globalization to make space for everyday actors. In the same way as there is an internet of things, Miralda has been imagining for half a century how intercultural alliances would be between statues, foodstuffs, and rituals. Instead of filling the streets with the military, he invents parades of gastronomic liturgy: two monumental plastic Hereford heifers and a cow carried in convertible automobiles and huge pieces of polystyrene made to look like cuts of meat, in 1981, through the avenues of Kansas City. The representation of what is one's own and the image that those from other places have of it. Food and its emblems make up at one and the same time a space for local celebration and dialogue between cultures.

Which is more productive, war or party, in bringing about community cohesion? The party can also be a place for reflection on conquest, modernity and citizens' participation. Before gastronomy, crossed continents and hundreds of cultures' foods came together in one city, Miralda questioned how he could live around them.

Seen in this way, monuments are a way to solemnify the extraordinary without forgetting the everyday. Also a sensory means for intercultural working. Marrying statues and taking them around the world, sentimentalizing what is hieratical, reinventing rituals, ironizing aspirations to greatness together with the desires for social harmony and the participation of actors from many countries constitute another way of considering the political value of a poetics of globalization.





Ba-Ca-Lià, 1987. Three dried cod arranged like a parchment document as a symbol of the commitment of the groom's and bride's families, with the signatures of the mayors of Barcelona and New York, Pasqual Maragall and Ed Koch.

The asking for the hand and presentation of the bride's Engagement Gown at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York on October 11, 1986. The act coincided with the centenary of the Statue of Liberty.









HATPIN / AGUJA DE SOMBRERO



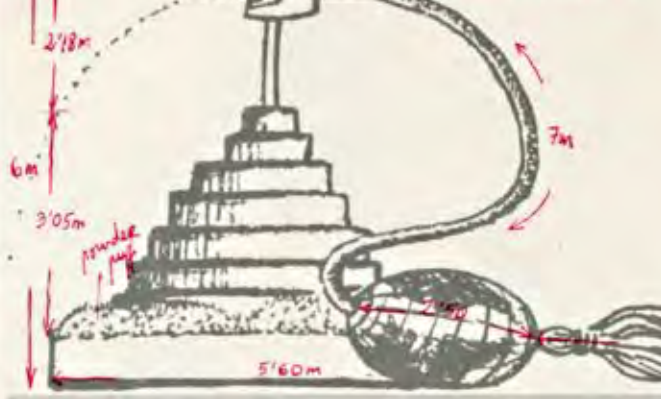
RINGS / ALIANZAS



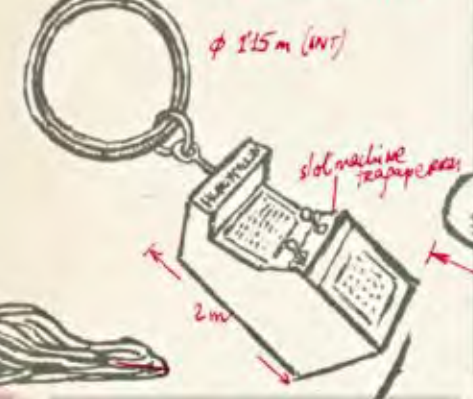
ENGAGEMENT RING ANILLO PROMETIDA



PERFUME / PERFUME



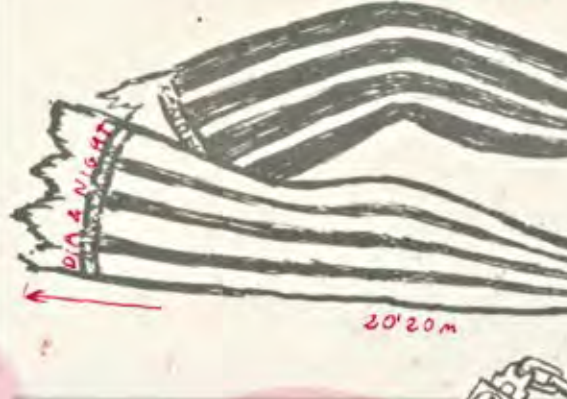
KEYRING / LLAVERO



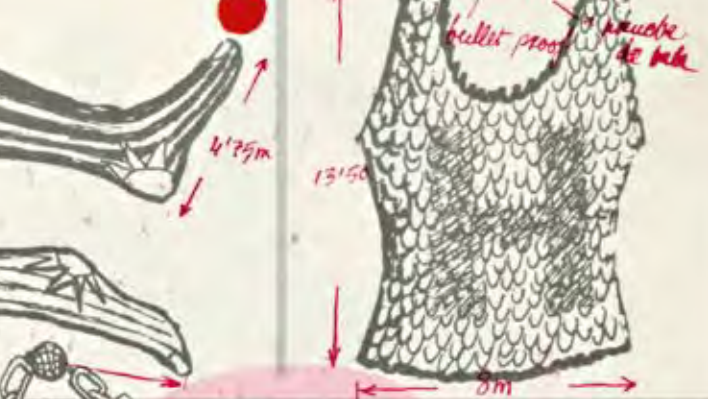
SLIPPERS / ZAPATILLAS



STOCKINGS / MEDIAS



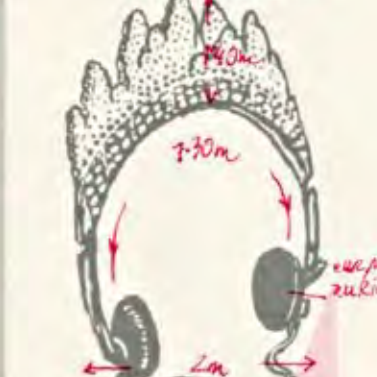
T-SHIRT / CAMISETA



NECKLACE / COLLAR



DIADÉM / DIADEMA



FINGER NAILS / UÑAS



SPUR / ESPUELA



TEDDY BEAR / OSITO



BRIDE'S SHOES / ZAPATOS DE NOVIA



PETTICOAT / COMBINACION



NECK CHAIN / CADENA COLLAR



WATCH / RELOJ DE PULSERA



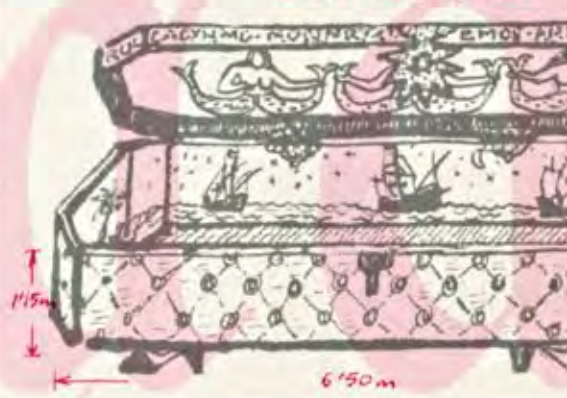
EARRING / PENDIENTE



BRACELET / BRAZALETE



BEAUTY CASE / NECESER



SUITECASE / MALETA



BRIDE'S SHOES / ZAPATOS DE NOVIA



PETTICOAT / COMBINACION



VEIL / VELO



VIDEO / ALBUM



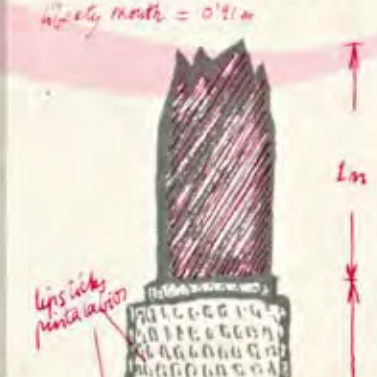
HOLSTER / PISTOLERA



NOSE-RING / ARGOLLA-NARIZ



LIPSTICK / PINTALABIOS



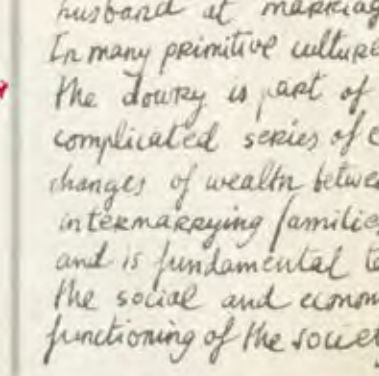
BROOCH / BROCHE



TRousseau

In the traditional Catalan marriage, the trousseau consists of various items of clothing made and offered to the bride by the groom's family.

COMB / PEINETA



CORSET / CORSE



NEGLIGEE / SALTO DE CAMA



PEACE PIPE / PIPA DE LA PAZ



BOUQUET / RAMO



EARTH-CAKE / PASTEL TERRAQUEO



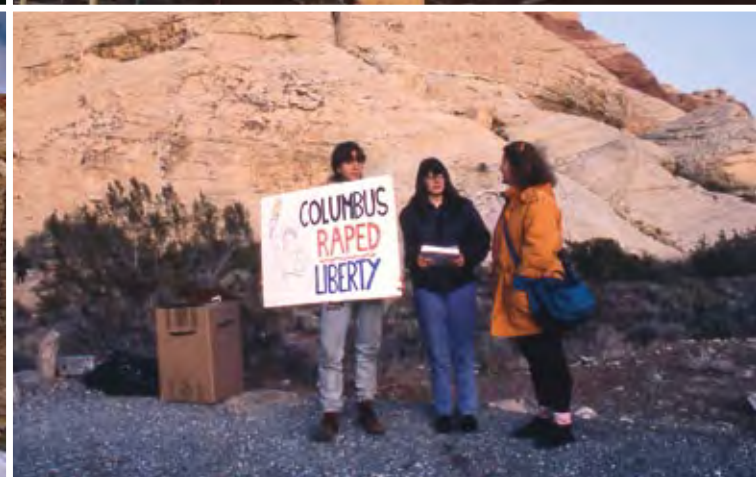
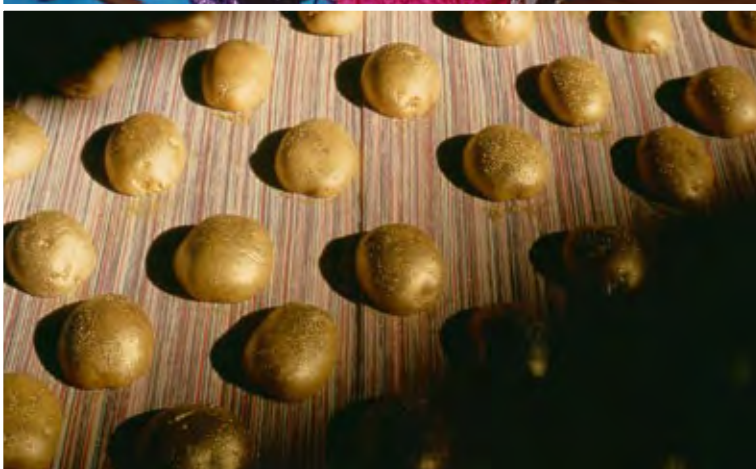




Colom 100, Columbus monument, Barcelona, June 1, 1988. Coinciding with the Columbus monument's centenary, eight young girls dressed for First Communion paraded down the Ramblas in Barcelona to the foot of the monument, where they offered products from the New World to the lions who guard the groom.







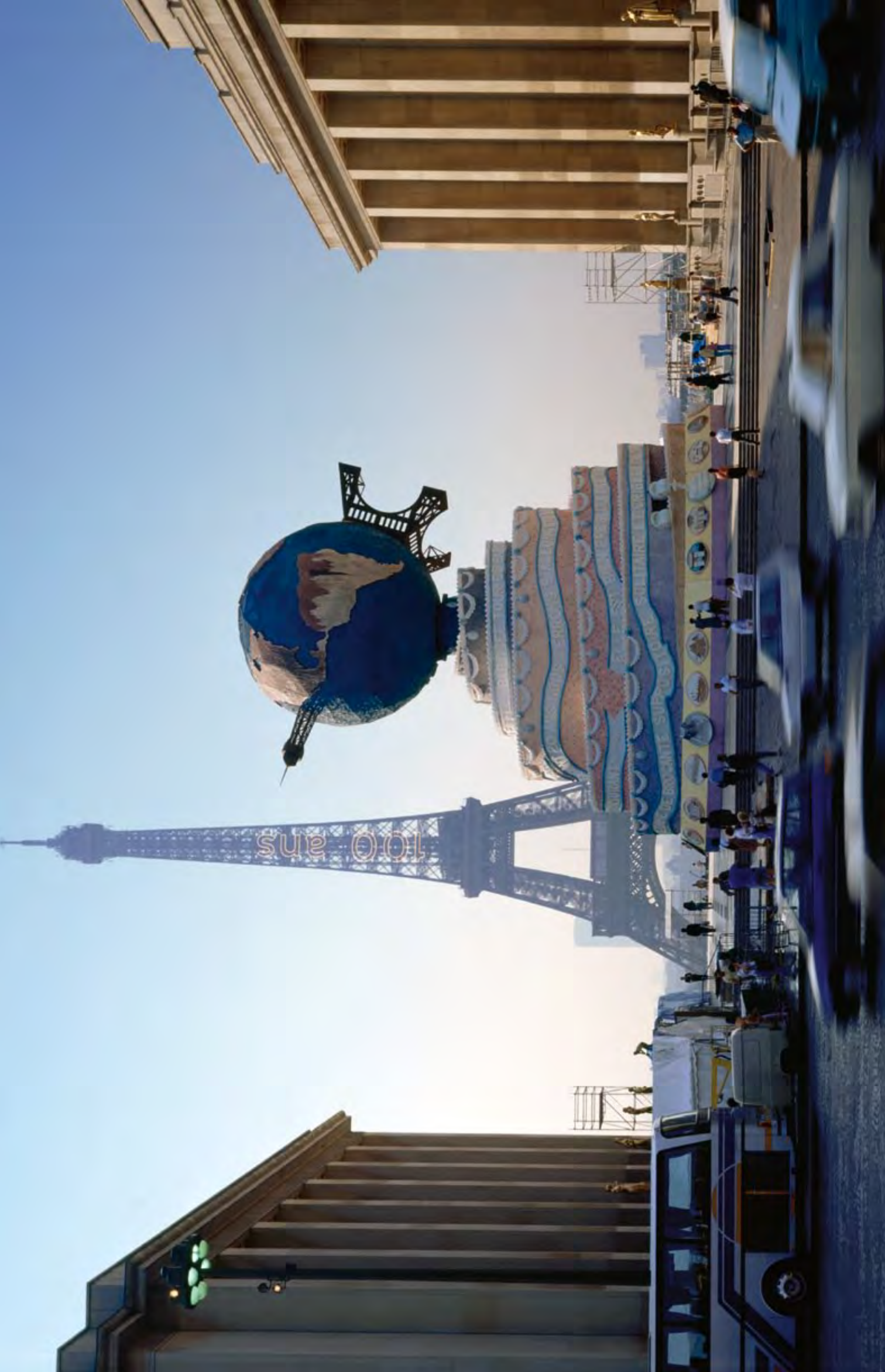




Prenúpcies, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, May 10 – June 5, 1988. Miralda turned the olive tree in the Fundació's courtyard into a giant bride's bouquet with silk flowers and white ribbons. Presentation of Liberty's *Santa Maria* combination petticoat at Dade Community College in Miami, 1988. All the bride's undergarments were made in Terrassa, a town with a long tradition of textile manufacturing.







Gâteau Monument, place du Trocadéro, Paris, June 1989. To celebrate the centenary of the Eiffel Tower, Miralda thought up a six-layered cake crowned by a chocolate-covered globe with an Eiffel Tower through it. The cake was decorated with statements critical of the tower's construction.

The Water Rings, created by Chus Burés, were presented at Fijova (the Valencia International Jewelry Fair), in 1989. These were two perspex rings with water inside: Columbus' contained a sample from the seas surrounding the continent of America and Liberty's a sample of the seas along the shores of the Iberian peninsula. The rings' sections are joined by bronze pieces with elements from the New and Old Worlds.







Liberty's *Día & Night* stockings, one white and the other black, were presented in 1987 at the *Aixovar / Ajuar / Trousseau* exhibition at the Sala Muncunill in Terrassa, where they had been made. *Apocalypse Lamb*, Columbus Day Parade / *Desfile de la Hispanidad*, New York, 1989. A wedding bedspread bearing the image of the apocalyptic lamb of Catalan Romance passes down New York's Fifth Avenue, carried and shaken by one hundred volunteers, and is blessed by the cardinal of the city.











The Liberty Belle Cape installation on the steps at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1990. The cape was made by the Mummers (traditional carnival groups, originally from Europe, who parade annually to celebrate New Year in Philadelphia), and was composed of seven pieces joined together that formed the Liberty Bell, the symbol of the city.

Gondola Shoe in the Spanish Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, 1990. A gift from the city of Venice, it is made of wood, is covered in mirrors, is removable so it can be sailed as a gondola.







*Sabata-Taula* (1990), decorated with golden potatoes, glass candelabrum and plates, was a gift from the Mallorca gallery owner Joan Guaita. The *Wedding Gown*, which was presented at the World Financial Center Winter Garden in New York in June 6, 1991, was the result of intense collaboration with the students of the Esmod school in Paris.







*Edible Belt*, presented at the Centre Cultural de la Fundació "la Caixa" in Barcelona, December 15, 1995 - January 28, 1996, was made by the leatherwork school of Ubrique in the province of Cádiz, and bears a list, alternating between Spanish and English, of products exchanged by the Old and the New Worlds.

The *Liberty Jeans*, for the Statue of Liberty, were baptized on the beach at Patacona in Valencia on the night of Sant Joan, June 23, 1991.







The *Collier Méditerranéen* (1991), a gift from the town of Sète, was presented at *TransEAT Miami/Art Basel* in 2003, and took its inspiration from slave chains; the iron necklace bears the name of the Statue of Liberty and is adorned by three lucky charms in the shape of lighthouses (those of Genoa, Cadaqués, and Sète).

The bachelorette party, *Bridal Teapot Shower*, took place at Las Vegas airport in February 1992. The city of Marseille presented the bride with a giant tea service designed by Titina Maselli and built by Marseille's Atelier d'art éphémère de Lieux publics.



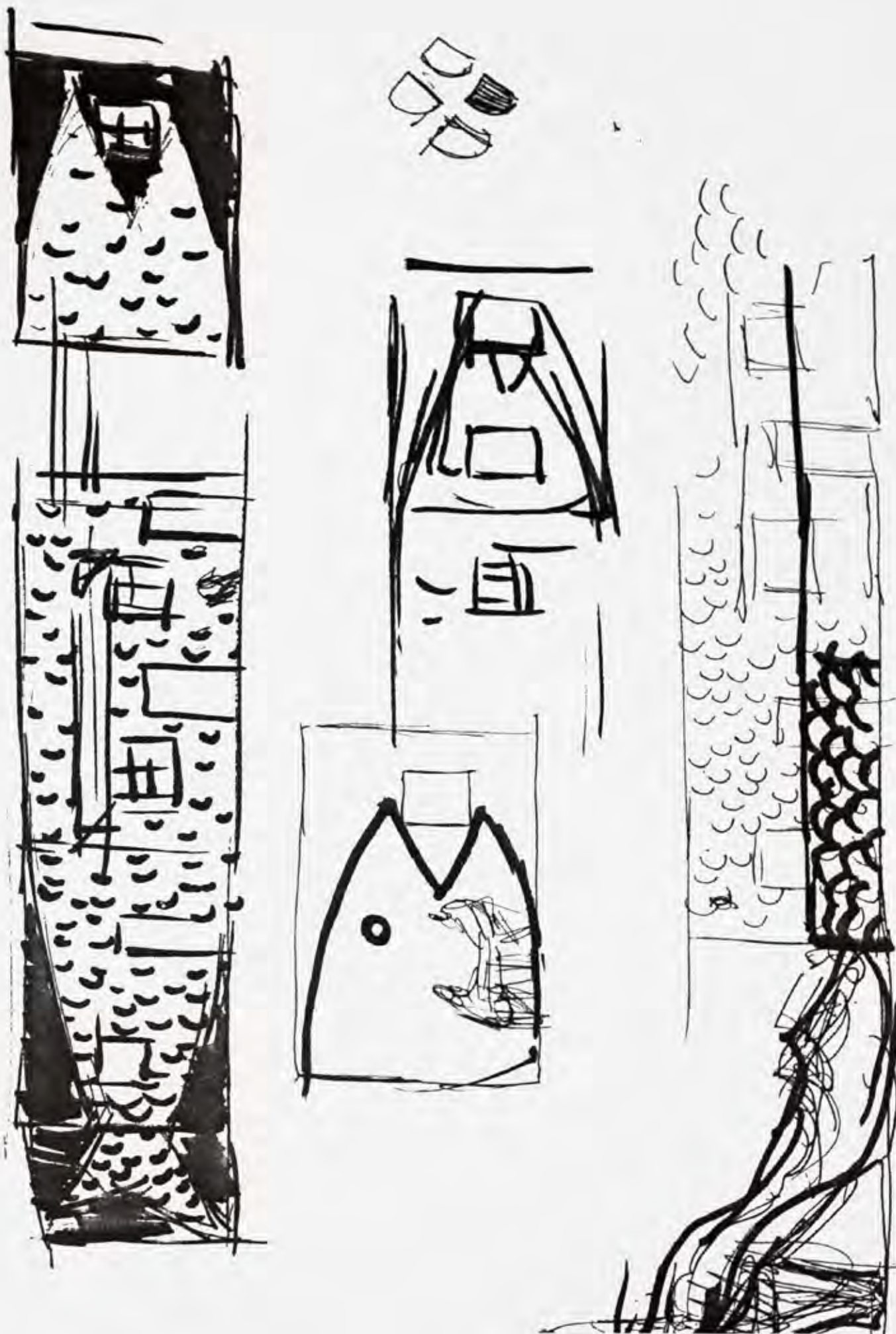




The Wedding Ceremony was held in Red Rock Canyon (Las Vegas) in February 1992. The ceremony included the presence of two pelvis-shaped sculptures symbolizing the couple. Limousines in a circle carried in their trunks food from the Old and the New World for the marriage feast. A lawyer read the wedding vows and the rings were placed in the center of the pelvises while the Cobla Blanes (traditional band from the town of Blanes) accompanied the activities with their music. At sundown, images of the couple were projected onto the mountain.







## BIGFISH MAYAIMI, Miami, 1996–99

Miralda and Montse Guillén turned an old fishermen's gambling den on the banks of the Miami River into the *Bigfish Mayaimi* (an indigenous word meaning "fresh water") restaurant. Although they kept the grouper sandwich that was so loved by the fishermen, they brought in other dishes from the Mediterranean and works and installations from Miralda's earlier projects.

## Bigfish Mayaimi

### Camping out on the Watery Shores of History and Memory

César Trasobares

In 1996 Miralda and Montse took over a popular spot on the southern edge of the Miami River, steps away from the downtown Miami Avenue Bridge. Sited on a parcel owned by a wealthy Miami matron, the remnants of a gas station stood on the edge of the river's concrete retaining wall close to the entrance to the Miami River from Biscayne Bay. The historic spot had initially housed Tequesta Indians and later some of Miami's pioneer families in the early stages of the settling of Miami at the end of the nineteenth century.

Before the formal establishment of the *Bigfish Mayaimi*, as the place came to be informally called, the small building had been turned into a makeshift eating spot by a retired gentleman who offered lunchtime fried-fish sandwiches to a faithful clientele on picnic tables with humorous names like the Connie Chung corner. With her knowledge of cooking and insatiable instinct to feed people, Montse knew she could take over the joint and serve up great food. Never mind the store-bought tartar sauce; enter the finger-licking homemade allioli!

The amazing views of downtown Miami and the Metrorail bridge were often eclipsed by the huge ships floating very close to the terrace along with recreational yachts, sailboats, and the navigation escorts, the powerful tow boats that managed the traffic of cargo ships in and out of the port. The constant spectacle provided entertainment to the restaurant's patrons, just like the stream of fishermen who stopped to sell their daily catch. Sailors, captains, and their guests waved as their vessels floated to and from the bay. Beyond the idyllic nautical spectacle, in a darker poetic choreography, much of the illegal contraband entering the city also floated past the restaurant. And, in this brave new tropical outpost, there would not be any urban neighbors complaining about the odors of garlicky fish stock boiling all the time.

Having signed the lease, as he had done at *El Internacional*, Miralda set to work, energizing and engaging every inch of the interior and exterior spaces. There was a pink room with an altar, a huge "tongue" made from soda cans typical of Miami's Pan-Caribbean tastes reflecting the flavors of the Latino diaspora. Inventive barstools and his signature aquamarine shelving livened up the space. Historical photographs joined a growing collection of bottles, candles, and numerous found objects. Fruits and vegetables, fresh and dried, were displayed everywhere. The menu, in

the shape of a tongue, was a coveted memento often stolen by customers. As the space took on its refreshed personality, the creative edibles evolved in response to the available freshly caught ingredients, most of which were literally delivered by fishermen in their boats a few feet from the kitchen side door.

Following the tradition of American roadside sculptures, Miralda's *Tri-Uni-Corn* (1981) and *Gondola Shoe* (1990) were turned into streetside features flanked by a wall of metal fish scales alongside two giant fishhooks. These sculptures had played leading roles in previous projects by Miralda in Kansas City and the Venice Biennale. The unforgettable *Collier Mediterraneus* (1991), a survivor of the *Honeymoon Project*, displayed like a giant trophy, continued to rust in the marine salty airs blowing from the bay. Recycled automobile tires served as an impromptu fence and also as material for comfortable chairs. A large "Big Boy" from a food chain restaurant joined the sculptures.

As fish were gutted and scaled, a bevy of pelicans stood ready to participate in their own voracious banquet. The aromas of saffron and fish broth could be sensed before visitors stepped into the place. And, fulfilling the expectations and requests of culinary tourists and faithful regulars, delicious *sopas*, *paellas*, *ceviche*, and *fideus* constantly flowed out of the kitchen. Ceramic dishes in many colors and from different sources accompanied the unmatched silverware. Colorful plastic tablecloths, bought in ethnic markets, were juxtaposed with textile prints and formal white tablecloths and napkins. Simpatico and handsome waiters and waitresses patiently catered to the requests of patrons. Montse supervised the kitchen staff, guiding the flavors with her long experience as a cook, and often stepped up to the stove as she ruled the cash register and multitasked, attending to all the details of the operation.

The space had the joyful atmosphere of a fair, the relaxed feel of a Mediterranean beachside bar, even the occasional disarray of a traveling circus. The iconography of water and fishing permeated everything in the place. The breezes cooled the spaces and occasionally torrential rainfall flooded the entrance. The bar under a giant tree was a favorite watering hole for many who stopped by for a beer at happy hour after a long day in their offices.

*Bigfish Mayaimi* was not an exercise of cooking inside a gallery, making sculptures with edible

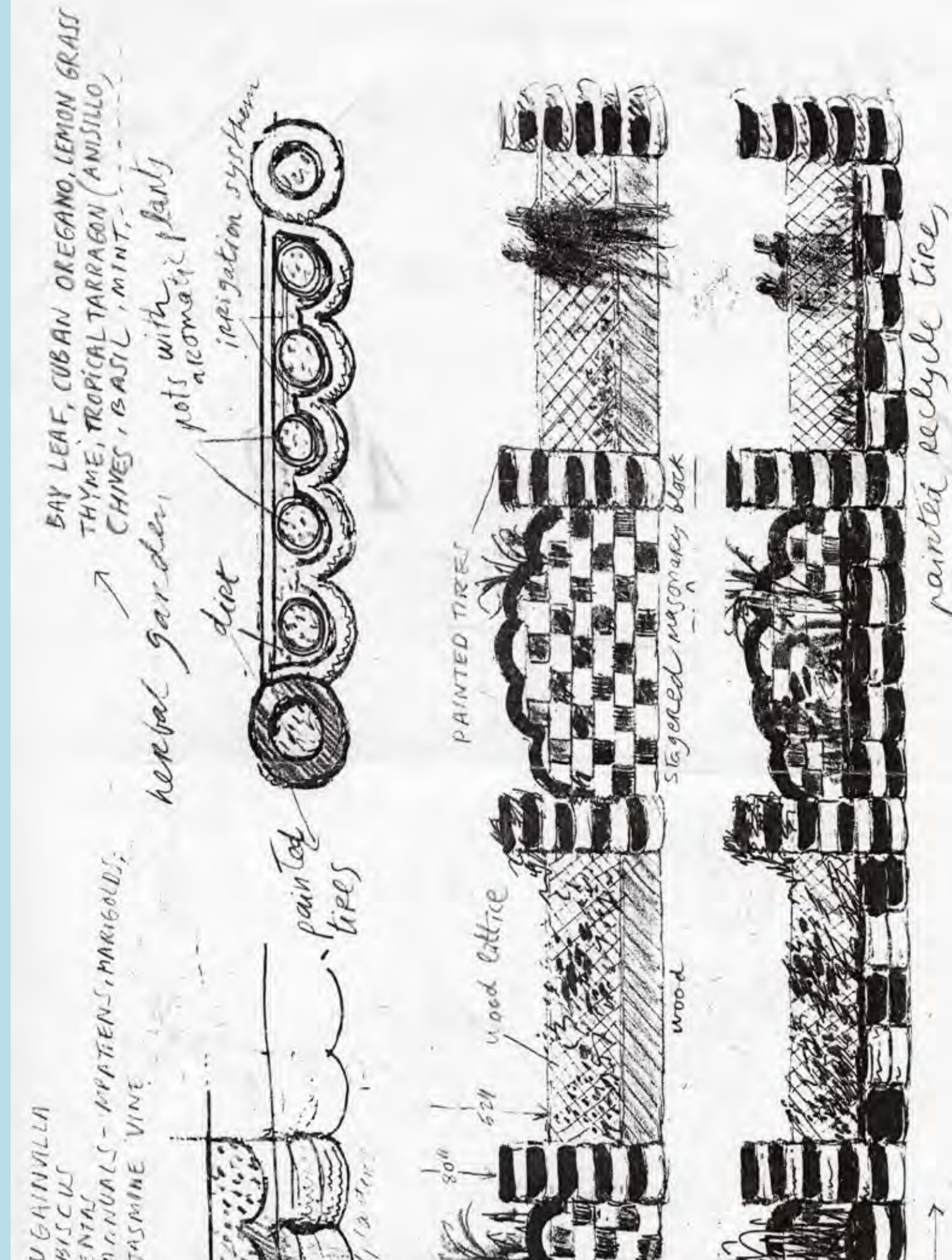


ingredients, or calling an impromptu barbecue an art happening. As a legitimate art project, the place brought together numerous threads from Miralda's esthetic trajectory, many of which involved participatory events with colored food, wearable components and ceremonial rites, harking back to his days in Paris in the late sixties, his move to New York in the early seventies, briefly traveling to Barcelona in 1975, and continuing to participate in the international art scene, beginning with Documenta in 1977. Throughout these and all the subsequent interventions, food and ritual remained inextricable components in his art. An amazing collection of books and catalogs were produced throughout the years. Distinguished historians and curators ranging from Pierre Restany to Maria Lluïsa Borràs wrote insightful texts about his works.

After operating her own restaurant in Barcelona for a couple of years, starting in the early eighties, Guillén's faithful companionship and creative contribution was stabilizing and energizing without missing a beat. In today's art world where numerous practitioners work with food, the *Bigfish Mayaimi* and *El Internacional* shared the pioneering spirit of artist-run restaurants like Food, documented by founder Gordon Matta-Clark in 1972, even the entrepreneurial drive of Claes Oldenburg's *The Store*. As artistic collaborations – existing on the edges of the institutional art world – Miralda and Guillén's restaurants shared the entrepreneurial spirit with the intricate, self-funded enterprises of Christo and Jeanne-Claude. Like few other independent artistic enterprises, Miralda's own brand of cultural production was solely focused on local and global social impact, beyond any "adjustments" for the taste of collectors, the art market, or institutional directives and agendas.

Still, beyond its import as a singular creative model, as an innovative urban component in a rapidly changing community, the restaurant by the river became a lively place to eat and socialize and enjoy the capricious weather and the events that took place there. Its aura included the booming noises of the airplanes, the screeching sounds of the Metrorail trains and the shining silvery moonlight reflected on the river waters.

As an active lunch and dinner destination numerous visiting artists and culturati joined the locals who came for the delicious food and the people-watching. More than just a culinary outpost, for those who visited and ate there *Bigfish Mayaimi* became a significant presence in Miami-Dade County, marking an outstanding moment in the history of the Miami River, turning into a memorable highlight of South Florida's past.



Preparatory drawings for the restaurant's exterior, with recycled tires.

















The spirit of *Bigfish Mayaimi* with its friends and regulars, gastronomic tourists, chefs and waiters, smells, dishes, decoration, objects, and iconography of the sea and fishing. Among others: Jos de Cock, Juan Lezcano, Nam June Paik, Pierre Restany, Amy Rosenblum, Ursula Schenone, and the Scull twins.



# LUNCH

Fish Soup \$5

House Salad \$4

Salmon Salad \$7

**Spinach** Salad w/ Shrimp \$7

Ceviche \$7

Big Fish Mayaimi Sandwich \$6

Big Chicken Mayaimi Sandwich \$6

**Pasta Paella w/Chicken \$7**

Grilled Chicken \$7

Grilled Fish of the day \$8

Grilled Salmon \$9

Calamar (Squid grilled or fried) \$8

Octopus (Galician style) \$8

## DESSERTS

Crema Catalana \$4

Key Lime Pie \$4

Brazo Gitano \$4



# MIRALDIAN CHRONOTOPOGRAPHY

## Accompanied by critical documentation and biographical accounts

José Luis Gallero

“Thus is an artist’s life, the true life, more real than life itself.”

Pierre Restany, 1991

If the Museum is the place par excellence for Memory (the legendary mother of the Muses), and if every retrospective exhibition sets out to “look back” in going through a career, any attempt at chronology should make a full inventory, as broad and precise as possible, of what the artist did and what the critics said. More so than ever, in the case of a creator like Miralda, tormented by the idea that his work “has never been explained sufficiently well, something not helped by my nomadic spirit nor, of course, by the temporary nature of much of my work.” Our “method” has been to organize documentation in such a way that, as far as has been feasible, it speaks for itself and illuminates Miralda’s activities through an intensive and extensive choral reflection, and at the same time being a readable story. The pages that follow do not only contain an implicit biography – “an artist’s life” – but also a virtual essay on Miralda’s art, where some key concepts – banquet, food, critical sense, ephemeral nature, party, humor, kitsch, monument, participation, poetic spirit, public space – are highlighted in **red**. **Blue**, meanwhile, marks the especially significant projects and exhibitions in the course of which we will barely find a straight line but no end of drifts that knot into an inescapable net. It only remains to wish that Gómez de la Serna’s malevolent definition – “Catalogue: souvenir of what will be forgotten” – is not confirmed once more.

### 1942

“He was born in an extremely kitsch city and there can be no question that this genetic kitsch virus will determine his destiny” PIERRE RESTANY, 1982. “Born October 2 in Terrassa, one of the country’s leading textile areas. He was destined to become a technical specialist in textiles. He spent five years studying for this qualification but, as he himself puts it ‘amid the smoke of the chimneys, I would dream of watercolors.’ Despite the intricate preparation which goes into Miralda’s works, the result perhaps of Gaudí’s influence and the artist’s own impressions of Barcelona, which, according to him, ‘is a city of caramel,’ his creations do not seem old” REGINA VATER, 1982. “My father worked in the technical aspects of textile design. But his really creative interest was in photography. My mother was from the Empordà, a place with a mix of cultures and one of the main Greek colonies. The food there is incredibly rich, a real mix” ANTONI MIRALDA, 2000. The German term **kitsch**, which appeared around 1860 and is defined as “an artistic object that is pretentious, out of fashion, or in bad taste,” denotes one of the keys to Miralda’s esthetic. From very early on, critics will associate his creations with this concept: “In Miralda, Catalan kitsch reaches the peak proportions of synthesis: Gaudí revisited by Dalí, the marriage of the baroque and delirium” RESTANY, 1971. “To judge from his first solo exhibition in the United States, Miralda has made the most of that special phenomenon of the last decade, which is the love of kitsch” FRANZ SCHULZE, 1971. “Miraldian constants: references to culture, to art, always seem reduced to a state of kitsch or childish imagination” VICTORIA COMBALÍA, 1976. The artist himself says: “Kitsch has always existed and always will, because it is the wonderful balance between bad taste and excessive taste” MIRALDA, 1988.

### 1957–61

He studies at the Escola de Pèrits Industrials de Terrassa [Terrassa Industrial Engineering School]. He takes a liking to watercolors and exhibits various times between 1959 and 1961. Under the guidance of his father, who had installed a darkroom under the stairs at the family home, he makes a start in photography. He visits Madrid, where he admires Goya’s murals in the church of San Antonio de la Florida.



## 1962–63

The Provincial Government of Barcelona awards him a scholarship. He breaks off his military service and his studies of textiles at l'Escola de Pèrits Industrials de Terrassa and moves to Paris, where he will take a course in comparative plastic art methods at the Centre International d'Études Pédagogiques de Sèvres. "In 1962, he fled to Paris to study at the École des Beaux Arts, a center to which he did not gain admission because, as he confesses, the attraction that the markets and stores held for him kept him in public spaces, where he will stay ever since" EVA FERNÁNDEZ DEL CAMPO, 2002. As well as London, he visits Amsterdam and Italy. His love of travel has only just begun. He experiments with frottage and also a combination of pictorial and photographic techniques. "We saw his work for the first time at the Granollers exhibition, in the summer of 1963. And, for the first time in a Catalan painting, we saw the photographic technique used, not as a collage, but as a pictorial technique. It was his *Paret opaca*" ALEXANDRE CIRICI, 1969. "I was drawn to going around the streets, to Le Bon Marché and La Samaritaine, the big department stores. What I was most interested in was direct contact with the city, running into all these mixed cultures. My first visit to London was even more powerful. At the beginning of the sixties, the situation in London was much more radical than in Paris in terms of chromaticity, the food or presence of the colonies" MIRALDA, 2002. "Little by little, the components of a group that the critic Alexandre Cirici called 'the Paris Catalans' started arriving. Together with the artist from Terrassa, there was Joan Rabascall, Jaume Xifra (1934–2014), and Benet Rosell (1937–2016), creators with whom he produced some of his first collective works. From the beginning, Miralda made use of cooperative work, a structure he was not to abandon. In the mid-sixties, he met Dorothée Selz, an artist with whom he carried out his edible art projects for seven years" ISABEL TEJEDA, 2010. "Miralda and I arrived separately in October 1962, with the same kind of scholarship from the Provincial Government of Barcelona. We met in university circles. Xifra, who'd already been through Marseille and Aix-en-Provence, would arrive later, at the beginning of 1963. The same year, Restany, who would go on to present my first exhibition in Paris (Galerie

Zunini, 1966), put me in touch with Xifra, who I introduced to Miralda. In 1966, I got a letter from Cirici in which he asked me for information about our respective activities. In 1967, Benet Rosell, a friend of Xifra's, arrived from India. From 1969 onwards he would act as the group's chronicler with his 16mm camera" JOAN RABASCALL, 2015.

## 1964–66

Living in rue Vavin (1964–68), he works as a fashion photographer for *Elle* magazine. "I arrived from Barcelona with my camera slung over my shoulder and just one lens. Against all logic, it was not long before my work was published every month in *Elle*, which opened doors, ways of life, and, above all, the opportunity to experiment with how I didn't want to live." MIRALDA, 1988. He shows drawings and frottages in London (New Art Centre), where he meets Joan Miró, and has his first solo exhibition (Mokum Gallery, Amsterdam, 1964). At the Los Castillejos camp in Tarragona, where he completes the second part of his military service – he did his service in three stages, completing the last one in Huesca – he erects a sculpture in the open air, titled *Monumento al Soldado* [Monument to the soldier]. Throughout his career, the noun **monument** ("public work of a commemorative nature") would accompany Miralda in multiple variants: funerals, weddings; historical, symbolical; mobile, immobile; sugared, floured... "If – he was to declare in 1988 – what I do is a monument to all excesses concerned with everyday activity, the accumulation of colors and images, call it kitsch, or not." At a Paris factory, he acquires thousands of plastic toy soldiers, which, not long afterwards, he will start to use as his raw materials. "Antoni Miralda's work could be said to be 'gargantuan.' It encompasses all the ingredients of Rabelais' novel: war, banquets, irony, and utopia. [...] It all started in Paris in the early sixties, when Miralda scattered toy plastic soldiers, bleached white by laundering, on objects, bodies, and places" MARIE BECHETOILLE, 2011. "In the mid-sixties, Miralda produces drawings that recreate the outlandish absurdity of the military world ('many, together, and equal'). The image is maintained through works in which the artist uses little plastic soldiers, presented in geometrical groupings, conflicting locations and domestic

objects" BARTOMEU MARÍ, 1994. He exhibits drawings, collages, canvases, and frottages in Paris (Musée d'Art Moderne and Galerie Zunini) and London (New Art Centre). Second solo exhibition (*Drawings, 65*, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, 1966). "The first work space in Paris was a typical building in rue Vavin, in Montparnasse. Selz, Rabascall, Xifra, and I got together there. Rabascall was working on the Black Power symbol, and Xifra, who'd just got back from Chile, with funerary iconography. The walls had words written on them with spray paint, such as 'Progress,' 'Success,' the aims of any major artist. We spent the weekends at the Marché aux Puces [flea market], as we shared the idea of keeping and collecting. It was Guy Selz, Dorothée's father, who told me that in my own city, at the Museu Frederic Marès in Barcelona, I'd find as many collections as I could imagine. We never formed a team, but each found their space and their way of interconnecting on different projects. Rather than reading art books, I spent the day at the markets. I did, however, spend thousands and thousands of hours joining soldiers together, which is probably why I have headaches, because I used trichloride for glue" MIRALDA, 2015.

## 1967

Third solo exhibition, *Soldats Soldés*, at the Galerie Zunini, which was founded by the marzipan maker of the same name. It includes the first *Tableaux-Tables*, sculptural arrangements in which he incorporates small white plastic soldiers: this is his first step towards installation (a washing machine in operation forms part of the display) and prefigures his first public pieces: the plastic toy soldiers step beyond the gallery's space and move into the street; the same motif is the inspiration behind a photographic series. "Little plastic soldiers have been washed of all military color. We sit peacefully in our parks and gardens, thinking that the invasion will be halted at the gates. But Miralda's soldiers penetrate all fronts. It's becoming ever clearer how full of nuance and how well formulated this protest art is, if you compare it to the noisy and aggressive type. The soldiers have an important war to fight and it will be a long time before it comes to an end" BEATE SYDHOFF, 1970. "It all seems impossible: the disproportionate amount of ideas

that he develops from such a tiny element, the astonishing amount of three-dimensional pieces that are neither paintings nor sculptures, nor even objects. In actual fact, he is flirting with the absurd, the same mechanism used by Beckett in the stage productions then being seen in Paris" MARIA LLUÏSA BORRÀS, 1995. "In his solo at the Galerie Zunini, he asked the public who came to the exhibition to open up the drawers of 'invaded' furniture, take soldiers out of them, and freely intervene, or put the still-green soldiers into a washing machine as a metaphor to get rid of their martial coating and leave them an unpolluted white: soldiers with no color, soldiers without a flag. It was his third solo exhibition, which demonstrates his early use of participation in his artistic career" TEJEDA, 2010. The first series of Edible Objects, in conjunction with Dorothée Selz: architectural scale models and cakes depicting different subjects, made from meringue and colored sugar, with tiny characters walking around (*Tourist Cake, Garage Cake, Garden Cake, Temptation Cake, Panic Cake, Suicide Cake*). As a Christmas greeting, he sends his friends small boxes with a figure of baby Jesus made of almond paste, framed between two sets of teeth (*Croque Jésus*). The pair collaborate with Roland Topor (*Jeu Topor, Jeu de Casse-gueule...*). He meets the essayist, art historian and critic Pierre Restany (1930–2003). Different collective exhibitions take him to the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Sweden (*Super Lund*, Lunds Konsthall; catalog with text by Restany), where he participates in a futuristic installation based on tables and plastic miniatures representing civilians. It wins a prize at the Paris Biennial.

## 1968

First *Essais d'amélioration*: objects and furniture invented or invaded, iconographic representations or improved versions of elements of everyday life. He rehearses an urban intervention (*Embouteillage*) with toy American police cars. In the famous month of May, he produces his *Projet de banque publique pour le Square des Invalides*. "Soldiers stick out all over the bench, covering the surface normally reserved for people to sit on. In the end, it becomes a bench for fakirs. Inside this uncomfortable space, where



Monumento al soldado, 1964



Elle magazine, 1964–68



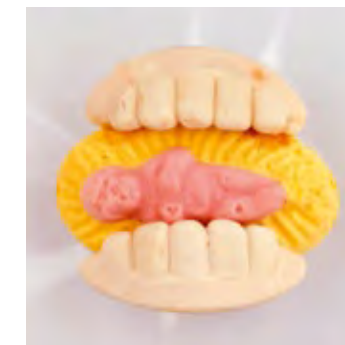
Super Lund, 1967



Soldats à la lessive, 1967



Soldats Soldés, 1967



Croque Jésus, 1967



rest is impossible, just enough room has been left for the back, legs, and arms of one person” CIRICI, 1969. Group exhibitions in London (*The Obsessive Image*, Institute of Contemporary Arts; Camden Arts Centre) and Paris (Musée d’art moderne, Musée des arts décoratifs, American Center). Daniel Spoerri opens his own restaurant in Düsseldorf, and two years later the Eat Art Gallery, where Miralda and Selz are to prepare a banquet in 1971.

## 1969

He moves to rue de l’Ouest. Solo exhibitions in Stockholm (Galerie Aronowitsch) and Brussels (Galerie Aspects); collective ones in Geneva, Paris, London, and Verona. First cenotaphs or funeral Monuments (*Cénotaphe des généraux du passé, du présent et du futur*, Salon de Mai, Musée d’art moderne, Paris). With reference to his *Essai d’amélioration de la façade du Palais Galliera*, RESTANY, 1970, writes: “Miralda has cross-dressed the three monumental muses that adorn the palace’s façade. The hieratical statues are disguised as hippies, and their ornamental plinths by a coded banner: p(einture), a(rchitecture), s(culpture).” He photographs the temporary installation *Réquiem pour un chat mort*. The *Gâteau de l’anniversaire de l’amour* (Salon de Mai, Musée d’art moderne, Paris) is made together with Selz, with whom he plans a series of aphrodisiac candies. *Noir, mauve plus barbe à papa* (American Center, Paris) marks the beginning of his collaboration with the group made up of Dorothée Selz, Joan Rabascall, and Jaume Xifra, as well as the transition towards a new artistic practice. *Mémorial*, the first of the Ceremonials or participatory projects in public spaces, has the surroundings of the Chateau de Verderonne, near Paris, as its setting, and coincides with All Souls’ Day; Éliane Radigue contributed music, and the action, in which 150 people took part, included a floral tribute, cake-tasting on sepulchral tables, procession, and a black and purple banquet. The concepts of **participation** and **public space** are inseparable from Miralda’s activity, and to a large degree are responsible for his aura of

unclassifiable artist with an anthropological vocation. “An analysis of the models of local culture, the basis for Miralda’s scripts, would probably explain the surprising active participation of the public in these bright, happy, and captivating parties” CARLA STELLWEG, 1980. “Miralda achieves a very close relationship between play as the oldest ludic activity developed by humans and taste for a party as an act of participation. For this very reason he breaks through the definitions and classifications of art history” DANIEL GIRALT-MIRACLE, 1987. “I’ll always remember Manfred Schneckeburger, the director of Documenta 6, asking me, ‘So you are a participatory artist?’ That was when I found out what I was” MIRALDA, 1988. “It’s the sense of true participation that lies at the heart of Miralda’s artistic expression” ROBERT C. MORGAN, 1991. “Inventor of projects in urban spaces, Miralda was a public artist before the practice became fashionable at the end of the seventies. But despite having crossed and defined the territory of public art in Europe and the United States, Miralda can also be an intensely private artist” CÉSAR TRASOBARES, 1994. “Miralda’s artistic practice is above all collective and makes up for the lack of social actions that allow a community to recognize itself. He reanimates urban space, which is too frequently degraded these days, giving it back its dimension as a place for life and relationship” FRANÇOIS BURKHARDT, 1995. “Over the past three decades, Miralda may have enlisted more people in the service of art than any other contemporary artist. Although his works have involved thousands, perhaps his projects are known better by seamstresses in Paris, bakers in Barcelona, or slaughterhouse workers in Kansas City than by typical art world patrons” JUDY CANTOR, 1998. “Wherever you are, there’s a moment of dialogue when it’s necessary to convince, fascinate, and illustrate in order to enable the understanding, agreement, and degree of communication that allow working together. From the first moment, I understood that involving people was part of the job, and I had to be as clear and creative in this aspect as in any other. Not everything is interesting and productive; there are headaches, problems, lawyers, aspects that get complicated” MIRALDA, 2002. “Although he doesn’t show how he convinced the Barcelona bakery trade, or the mayors of New York and Barcelona, and the Harvest Queen of Kansas to take part in the game, that is also part of

the artwork” TEJEDA, 2010. “In Miralda’s proposals, communication seems to recover its etymological essence, in other words it becomes a true circulation of what is ‘common,’ which demands, from everyone involved in each work – the artist, his collaborators, the audience, the participants, and museographical and public institutions – a different contribution, ‘an exchange of experience, knowledge and sensation,’ in Miralda’s own words” VALENTÍN ROMA, 2011.

## 1970

Solo exhibition in London (Hanover Gallery) and numerous collective ones: Paris, Nantes, Marseilles, Brussels, Amsterdam, Cologne, Yokohama. After offering a *Pink-Orange Meal* for Restany in their new workshop (123 rue de l’Ouest), the Miralda-Selz pairing present themselves as *traiteurs coloristes*, turning Paris’s Galerie Givaudin into a restaurant where they serve a *Dîner en quatre couleurs* for sixty covers. “Miralda and Selz have colored all the food and drink, the cheeses and the cakes. The entire menu may be ordered in red, blue, yellow, or green, all in very bright shades. Some dishes are quite astonishing, like the turquoise chicken, for instance. The color experience continues the following morning, when the guests realize that the color chosen the night before is still there when they go to the bathroom to relieve themselves” CIRICI, 1970. “The only person it tasted bad to was the gallery owner Iris Clert, who produced blue vomit. Disaster or blessing?” MIRALDA, 2015. “Above all, it will be in the installation at number 123, rue de l’Ouest workshop, on the edge of Montparnasse (the temple of AM-DS collaboration), where the concept of *improvement* is made flesh. The house, a place of life, work, and discovery, has been conceived as a work of art, with an evolutionary architectural structure. In these surroundings, each meal, each visit, is transformed into a party. I will never forget the happy times spent in the *traiteurs coloristes’* Ali-Baba kitsch-cannibalistic cave, and especially the first pink-orange meal which took place on January 19, 1970” RESTANY, 1982. He attends Spoerri’s preparations in Milan for the banquet at the Biffi restaurant to mark ten years of Nouveau Réalisme. The Miralda-Selz partnership are to travel successively to Düsseldorf (Eat Art

Gallery, 1971), Corsica (Corsicana, 1971), Cologne (Kürten Fästiwel, 1971), Munich (Kunstzone, 1971; XX Olympic Games, 1972), and New York (Arman’s Place, 1972, the pair’s last collaboration). “Through the concept of coloring food, Antoni Miralda and Dorothée Selz set out on their real career in the long history of edible art. In their case, the only motive is that of the perfect development of the liturgy of the banquet. No tricks are played on the participant. He is simply invited to assume awareness of the fiesta” RESTANY, 1982. Produced with Selz, Rabascall, and Xifra, *Fête en blanc* (Centre artistique de Verderonne) also featured music by Éliane Radigue, a film by Benet Rossell, architecture by Müller (an inflatable structure), costumes by Rabanne, and the participation of 300 people in the different stages: the floral offering at dawn, the release of balloons and doves, the procession with sheets-bedspreads, the white buffet served by twenty-two young people in wedding dresses, an all-white newspaper (*Le Journal Blanc*)... “Just think about *Fête en blanc*: the floral offerings, the mating and the release of the doves, and lastly the mystical eating of a white meal. In no way does it resemble any other contemporary performance, nor does it have any connection with the happening tradition; at Miralda’s fiestas, one invariably rediscovers a full series of traditional rites that are provocatively projected towards the future” UMBERTO ECO, 1988. “From 1969, his work switches radically from object to ephemera and environment, consisting mainly of the creation (production, organization, direction) of the *ceremonials* or work-events. The project (urban intervention, occupation, modification of spaces) becomes constant as a support for expression. The interconnection of spaces of varying and incongruous natures and the active participation of the viewer have been the defining features of the projects with which the artist has been concerned since *Fête en blanc*” MARI, 1994. **Fiesta** and **banquet**, fundamental elements of his repertoire, share a characteristic – the **ephemeral** –, that paradoxically forms the very root of European culture: the symposia of Ancient Greece, around which poetry and music developed. Since Abraham Moles (1977), the first to explicitly link the word “fiesta” to Miralda’s productions, references to their festive nature



210 Embouteillage, 1968



Cénotaphe des généraux du passé, du présent et du futur, 1969



Gâteau de l’anniversaire de l’amour, 1969



Mémorial, 1969



Hannover Gallery, 1970



Dîner en quatre couleurs, 1970



have continued. “The ceremonials of Death (*Mémorial*) and Marriage (*Fête en blanc*) can be considered as sequences of acts in duly and heavily ritualized places, where the behaviors have been predetermined. They can also, however, be conceived from the idea of fiesta, where the intensity of the Dionysian sparks off the ritual. From this analysis, two dimensions emerge: the opposition between the Apollonian and the Dionysian, and that of a programmed or unprogrammed system, in other words that of fortuitous play as essential criteria” ABRAHAM MOLES AND ELIZABETH ROHMER, 1977. “In Miralda’s projects, we were able to discover a common aim: creating a modern ritual which brings men of today together in a fiesta” BORRÀS, 1980. “Anthropologist-diver, he observes uses and customs and then organizes the esthetic-poetic transfer and its projection in the universe of fiesta... The schematic of Miralda’s fiesta is essentially processional and initiational. The same as the pilgrim, Miralda never questions the miracle. His whole method rests on enchantment’s apriority: his fiesta is enchanted as Merlin’s forest and the participants are bewitched... With his unstinting gentleness, Miralda will continue to demonstrate that play is the essence of the world, and the fiesta the permanent freedom fighter” RESTANY, 1982. “Miralda’s offering is heir to all failed utopias. Yes, utopias, as Miralda comes from outside to offer us a fiesta, and the community that it creates is fictitious and temporary” ECO, 1986. “It’s difficult not to feel a certain frustration, as the event is ephemeral. The huge fiesta we put forward perhaps will never be able to last, to create a new custom. Not to mention that the slightest cloud or the smallest authorization being turned down can pervert or cause everything to fail. The happening does, however, generate a plot that stays alive in the memory” MIRALDA, 1993. “Miralda offers us true Fiesta, in the face of the spectacle which life in post-industrial society has become” FERNÁNDEZ DEL CAMPO, 2002. “And what is the artist’s work? How can one differentiate between what’s temporary and artworks that can be turned into merchandise, when food and ritual are the essence of ephemerality?” JOSÉ M. MARTÍ FONT, 2009. “In the seventies, the concept of the party was taking over from that of the spectacle, and Miralda was undoubtedly one of those who pushed it to its limits” MARC DACHY, 2010. “There is no more temporary art than that of food. Gastronomic produce soon loses its aura, or is only preserved

in photographs or videos... It is useless imagining that erudite rationality will bring about universal conciliation. Will food in the sense of fiesta be able to achieve it?... His way of taking seriously many ways of eating and being together makes it possible for them to become compatible again in festive interculturality” NÉSTOR GARCÍA CANCLINI, 2010.

### 1971

*Rituel en quatre couleurs*, a banquet-itinerancy executed in red, blue, yellow, and green, produced with Selz and Xifra and, for the purposes of the itinerancy, with the collaboration of the Grand Magic Circus, is presented at the Kürten Fästiwel in Cologne and later at the Paris Biennial, with the participation of 300 and 400 people respectively. “Miralda’s creations are different, almost opposed, to those of most performance and happening artists – Vostell, Lebel, Kaprow, Nitsch. Miralda dismisses the psychodrama. His rituals are not dissonant or cathartic, but hedonistic, of a calm nature, formally rich, and visually complex. In them, food is usually the material element” VICENT TODOLÍ, 1984. So, why exactly is it **food**? The question might seem ingenuous but it is unavoidable, and neither critics nor the artist have avoided reflecting on it, that is to say the qualities of food as a vehicle for cultural transmission or, if you like, the tongue as taste organ and at the same time means of communication. “Since the mid-sixties, food has allowed me to incorporate into my work all kinds of people and spaces that have nothing to do with the context of art” MIRALDA, 2006. “The act of tasting builds into a metaphor for the experience of esthetic consumption” TODOLÍ, 1984. “Miralda has worked with food and the dynamic of symbolic nutrition to intensify the creative aspects of daily life” TRASOBARES, 1998. “For Miralda, culture isn’t isolated behind institutional walls but is to be found in the sphere of shared social rites. Principally, that of eating” WILLIAM JEFFETT, 2002 (1). “We construct ourselves culturally and intimately with food. What is there more intimate, in fact, than what we put in our bodies? Tell me what you eat and I’ll tell you who you are. All Miralda’s work consists of ‘sitting around the table’ and ‘loosening tongues’” RICHARD LEYDIER, 2009. “Making art resonate with the inexhaustible creativity of what has come to be called food cultures.

This project is named *FoodCultura*” DENIS CHEVALLIER, 2014. “In an era when two thirds of humanity go hungry and the other third develop obesity, Miralda – an extraordinary artist who has spent his entire life working outside the walls of museums – tackles food as a symptom” JOSÉ MARÍA PARRERO, 2015. For the public schools of Châtillon-sous-Bagneux in France, he carries out, with Selz and Xifra, an end-of-course ceremonial for 400 children: *Fête de l’école laïque*. In the *Ceremonials* documentary, Benet Rossell draws together the fiestas and rituals organized by Miralda, Selz, Rabascall, and Xifra. With the use of black toy soldiers, he produces the *Cendriers-tombeaux* series, an extension of his *Cenotaphs*. Collective exhibitions follow (in France, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, and USA) and solo ones: Galerie Germain, Paris, where his toile works turn the space into an installation; Galleria del Naviglio, Milan; and Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, a prelude to his imminent move to the United States. “Miralda fills a showy, Italianizing bathroom cupboard with unpleasant, stupid toy soldiers, insulting both cupboard and soldiers (the muse of art and the muse of war) and, in actual fact, everything, except the skill of the viewer in capturing and understanding the message. In his frozen kindness and supreme delicateness, he stands before us as a characteristically Mediterranean figure; also in his irony and decadence” SCHULZE, 1971. “In 1971, at the age of thirty, Miralda flies for the first time to the United States. On the plane, there is a circus troupe who have a fleet of limousines waiting for them at the airport. Our artist is confused for them and is put into a lavish car and carried away on his American adventure. ‘I thought that was what the United States was like; what I found fitted perfectly with the image I had of America: the excess and opulence, a kind of live show. I didn’t really know if they’d end up hiring me or what kind of business we’d do together; it was like walking into a movie, like living the experience of the unreal.’ Among Miralda’s very many anecdotes, perhaps this is one of those that best portray him. That’s what he is like, like circus people, a nomad who lets himself be taken around the world, always surprised and always ready to embark on any adventure” FERNÁNDEZ DEL CAMPO, 2002. Gordon Matta-Clark opens the restaurant Food (1971–73) in New York.

### 1972

Second edition of *Fête de l’école laïque*. With Benet Rossell, he finishes the short film *Paris. La Cumparsita* (1969–71), in which he goes around Paris with a large plastic soldier on his back. “In *Paris. La Cumparsita*, Miralda was presenting himself as the artwork and went round Paris carrying a life-size sculpture of a toy soldier. A portable monument in search of a plinth, which was situated in locations symbolic of *grandeur*, but also wound its way through neighborhood markets and transformed urban wandering with its presence. A migratory sculpture which was disguised as play to facilitate participation” TEJEDA, 2010. Shortly after arriving in New York, he carries out *Sangría 228 West B’Way* (250 kilograms of differently colored and flavored rice, two sangría containers, film and slide projections, scattering the remains on the West Broadway roadway; in conjunction with Antoni Muntadas), and *Edible Landscape*, a temporary installation (90 minutes) in which 200 guests eat a Christmas scene (Museum of Contemporary Crafts, New York). Forty-four years later, when trying to recall the names of some of the people who were present at *Sangría*, its creators say: “It’s difficult to remember who was there. Some were close, like Micheline Gingras, Bruce Gilden, Willoughby Sharp, Dennis Oppenheim, Jeanne-Claude and Christo, Lawrence Alloway, Barbara and Peter Moore, Bill Dyckes, Robert Stern, Martim Avillez, Peter Downsbrough, Martha Wilson, Stefan Eins, Mireia Sentís, Papo Colo, Carles Fontserè, Bill Creston, Dimitri Devyatkin, Paco Reves, Paco de Lucía after his concert at Carnegie Hall...” He begins a series of experiments with wallpaper, which crystallize the following year in a series of collages with soldiers. Group exhibitions in France, Germany, Britain, and USA. His *Catastrophic Banquet (Ices Music Train, Edinburgh Festival)*, in which a dining-car on the London–Edinburgh railroad was to smash into a buffet laid across the tracks, is rejected. “Of the AM/AM duo, I knew Muntadas. When I went to the loft they shared on West Broadway, I was soaked in all that heterogeneous world I discovered there: avant-garde artists, all kinds and nationality of characters, the latest cultural and countercultural movements, and much more.



*Fête en blanc*, 1970



*Eat Art Banquet*, 1971



*Galerie Saint Germain*, 1971



*Fête de l’école laïque*, 1972



*Paris La Cumparsita*, 1972



*Sangría 228 West B’Way*, 1972



Miralda's wing in this huge loft, which was L-shaped, was by then already a mixture of everything there was to be found at the stores on Canal Street, an Arab souk, the Santa Llúcia fair, and any market in a Third World country. The accumulation, and the contrast between the objects brought about a surprising effect. Out of its context, that everyday junk, ephemeral and cheap, would acquire a value that would then, on encountering them in their places of origin, make us see them in a new light" JAUME OLLÉ, 2002.

### 1973

*Fête de l'école laïque* goes into its third edition. Group exhibitions in Brussels, Paris, Mallorca, and in New York at the Avant Garde Festival, directed by Charlotte Moorman, where he offers up a buffet inside a railroad car (*Hot & Cold*, Grand Central Station). He runs a workshop "with a lot of action" in the Educational Program at the Metropolitan Museum. Solo shows in France (Galerie Lilliane François, Paris) and, for the first time, in Spain (Sala Pelaires, Palma de Mallorca), accompanied by the *Album* publication. "Who is Antoni Miralda? He wears a pirate-style ponytail, a little longer than those of the bullfighters of old. Miralda produces a type of painting ('painting' is a manner of speaking), which some also call conceptual. He paints with a massive agglomeration of little lead, or plastic, soldiers. I think that humor, in short, is Miralda's most powerful strength. The post-exhibition dinner belongs to this type of humor. It would help to explain it. For example the *cocas* – the pizza of the islands – were blue. The *ensaimadas* were green, yellow, or blue. The red wines were yellow, and the whites blue. There was a general movement of astonishment. I, who am quite conservative in some ways, was a little consternated, because at that time of the night we were all hungry. As a result I threw all conviction to the floor, sold my soul to the devil and ate... I then bumped into Joan Brossa. 'Have you eaten yet?' I asked him. 'No,' – he said proudly – "If the bread isn't bread-colored and the wine the color of wine, I'm not eating! 'Aren't you hungry?' 'I'm dying of hunger,' he replied. Then he went on to ask: 'Look, are there any lentils anywhere, the old color ones?'" JOSÉ MARÍA MORENO GALVÁN, 1973. Backed by the well-known patron and textile manufacturer,

*John Kaldor Project* (John Kaldor Society and Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney) combines a colored buffet for 300 and a multicolored bread installation. "Miralda discussed his vision with the journalist Sandra McGrath: 'You can touch, see, eat, smell, and feel my work.' Kaldor defined Miralda's fiesta as a stimulating celebratory experience. Leslie Walford wrote in the *Sun-Herald*: 'The strange thing was that the diners chose their food not by the taste they expected, but by its color.' Those present were invited to keep the leftovers. Daniel Thomas recalled: 'The more permanent and sculptural elements, less susceptible to being eaten and therefore more likely to last all the way through the party, were made up of large areas of colored rice, piles of bread, and corn towers. The plan with the loaves was for them to become souvenirs, and Miralda was delighted to sign them.' Sandra McGrath described it in *The Australian* as a 'splendid spectacle, which really is a feast of shapes, color and texture.' Miralda explained: 'Only color can get across the idea that art is life, that life is art, that eating and drinking can also be art, a celebration of life.'" SOPHIE FORBAT, 2009. *The Seattle Banquet* (Henry Art Gallery, Seattle) is centered on the process of preparing and tasting a banquet, captured in the video *Edible Art Seattle*. The final act at the International Design Conference (Aspen, Colorado), *Performance* consists of the collective putting together of a feast and its processional transportation, before being eaten at an octagonal table placed on a bandstand. *The Black Banquet* (New York Cultural Center) and *Food Situation for a Patriotic Banquet* (Documenta, Kassel, 1972; Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1973), in which trays of rice that gradually decomposed during the exhibition reproduced the flags of the eight great powers, are titles of two failed projects. After that, "Miralda stays away from the gallery circuit. From then on he will have to undertake a hugely complicated role, as his projects are to require ever-larger amounts of human resources and materials. As well as designing every project in great detail, he takes on the enormous task of leaving the workshop and spending his time winning people over" BORRÁS, 1995. Despite the complexity of his proposals and the endless travel demands, *humor*, as Moreno Galván observes,

constitutes one of the artist's essential resources. "Miralda makes contact with people through his own sense of play, and so they end up accepting his expansive esthetic. His sense of art extends from a masterwork to its twee copy, from a plastic gherkin to a real tomato... He has this special humor, to be found somewhere between irony and pie-in-the-face slapstick. That helps" HELEN L. KOHEN, 1982. "Miralda finds beauty, humor, and emotion in what we do to help ourselves understand the passage of time and matters of spirit" RONALD CHRIST, 2010. "Playful, festive, and humorous aspects are ever-present in Miralda's works" TEJEDA, 2010. "The experiment of working as a team is like a game. You give and you take. Sometimes it ends in drama, but that isn't bad. There's nothing wrong with drama" MIRALDA, 2000.

### 1974

*Rosca de Reyes* (Galería Pecanins, Mexico) is his first Latin American project. In *Movable Feast* (Ninth Avenue International Festival, New York), a monumental carriage, full of foods brought by the neighborhood's residents and storekeepers, goes down Ninth Avenue. Group exhibitions in São Paulo, New York (*Crumbs*, Avant Garde Festival), Barcelona, and Montreal. He gives the *Celebration of the Senses* workshop (Talahasse, Florida, in collaboration with Muntadas) and does a *Food Demonstration* in a Brooklyn department store (Abraham & Strauss). With Benet Rossell, he shoots a film based on the life of Marshal Foch, in which Jaume Xifra plays the commander-in-chief of the allied armies in World War One and Restany, in drag, the part of the wife of Clemenceau, the head of government. "The atmosphere pervading the film sinks into a mild delirium, identical to the one that we have been used to seeing in Miralda's works" RESTANY, 1982. He prepares a banquet on Sixth Avenue for the premiere at the Ziegfeld Theater of the movie *Ladies & Gentlemen, The Rolling Stones*. Canceled on public order grounds, the food was distributed through a Salvation Army center, where the destitute fed themselves for days on colored delicacies.

### 1975

Group exhibitions in Philadelphia, Liechtenstein, and New York. He sells colored eggs in Spanish Harlem (New York). He offers a *Banquet tricolore* at the Residence Hervé Fischer (Paris). Together with Xifra, he presents *La Dernière Poutre* (Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris). He brings together his *Cénotaphes, 1969-1975* (Galerie Noire, Paris and Centre Culturel Villeparisis). "The taste for death, impregnated with a non-depressive anguish, floats in the space of Galerie Noire. Is the gallery exhibiting the artist or is the artist exhibiting the gallery and its visitors? One thing is certain: for Miralda, the object is a key pretext for changing and upsetting the balance of the context chosen, appropriating the space and introducing his refined prankishness, the seed of subversion and criticism of the established order. The artist's intention is visible: to merge art and life so as to achieve a whole. To put it another way, his idea is that art dissolves into life and that the difference between the two disappear. All Miralda's work is an epic, baroque, and utopian adventure, aimed at doing away with feelings of guilt, at escaping from reality as we know it, an effort to attain nirvana" GILBERTO CAVALCANTI, 1975. Using texts by Gilbert Lascault, he prepares a folder of his sketches and collages for the *Cendriers-tombeaux*. "The *Cendriers-tombeaux* contain two types of ash: the ash resulting from the incineration of dead human beings and the ash produced by cigars and cigarettes. A separate space is reserved for each and they are never mixed. The ash deriving from the incineration of corpses may in turn be classified into two groups: the ashes of generals and the ashes of generals' mistresses. Some people seem to attach commercial value to the ashes of generals. They go to great pains to remove the ashes from the tomb-cum-ashtray-cum-distributor of ashes and gamble small amounts of money by playing with this bizarre centime-ash machine" GILBERT LASCAULT, 1975. Various writers, in addition to Cavalcanti, have underlined "the **critical sense**, although always festive, of Miralda's work" FERNÁNDEZ DEL CAMPO, 2002. "In breaking down the barriers between art and its function, Miralda shows the existing disassociation between the promises of cultural production and its real conditions, exploring the possibility of a means for criticizing from within consumer society itself" MANUEL J. BORJA-VILLEL, 2010. "The originality of the



John Kaldor Project, 1973



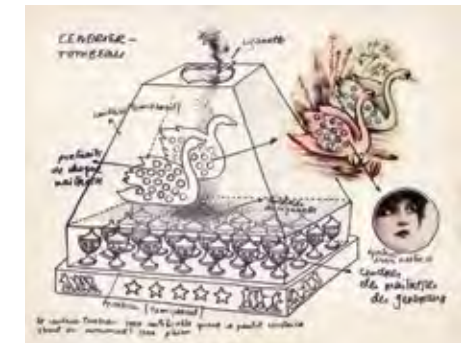
The Seattle Banquet, 1973



Movable Feast, 1974



Food Demonstration, 1974



Cendrier-tombeau, 1975



artist's messages of criticism is rooted in their being present, but when they can still pass by unnoticed" BERTA SICHEL, 2015.

## 1976

Group exhibitions in Nuremberg, Madrid, Paris, Barcelona, Houston, New York (*Elephant Deathday Cake Relic*, Museum of Contemporary Crafts; *The Last Supper*, opening session of PS1). His first solo show in Barcelona (Galeria G), the poster for which features – for the first time – the tongues that are to become the symbol of many of his projects from the nineties onwards, takes place alongside the release of a puzzle made up of ten postcards. "Here, the Leonardoesque Last Supper, a decisive landmark in Western psychological painting, is nothing other than its vulgarization in little pictures of middle-class dining rooms. And it takes as its basis the heterodox question 'What the devil did they eat at such an important dinner?'" COMBALÍA, 1976. The *Red Die #2* (Fine Arts Building, New York) performance evokes the prohibition of artificial coloring in food (the word play of *dye* and *die*); three cooks, Miralda himself among them, make in public red rice salads with colorings numbered 2, 3, and 4, the first of which is prohibited in the USA but not in Europe, and the last banned in Europe but not the USA. In *Situació Color* (Residencia Josep Suñol, Barcelona), Miralda and Xifra stage a fiesta-banquet for 110 guests in a three-storey building (purple, orange, and green), from sundown to midnight; a Muntadas video, music by Sisa, and a publication with text by Borràs: "For three hours, the fiesta had turned the new house into a succession of poetic spaces." "The businessman and collector Josep Suñol wanted a house-warming for a new home designed by Josep Lluís Sert, and he commissioned Miralda and Xifra to organize a 'visit,' in other words to turn the event into a work... Together with the host, he received Jaume Sisa singing *Qualsevol nit pot sortir el sol* [Any night, the sun can come out], the house was displayed in an ascending initiation rite in which those present were camouflaged by the setting as living sculptures, with capes of different colors that on each floor matched the delicacies presented... Going up the three levels – mauve, orange, and green – you came

upon the ironing lady, the waiter, the cook, and the mattress-maker all hard at work. In Miralda's works, everyone is invited. As in this 1976 party, the words of Sisa's song, which greeted the guests, are echoed in every one of his exhibitions and projects: 'Oh, benvinguts, passeu passeu, / de les tristoris en farem fum, / a casa meva és casa vostra / si és que hi ha cases d'algú. [Welcome. Come in, come in, / We will make smoke of sadnesses. / My house is your house / If houses are anyone's]" TEJEDA, 2010. *Alles, was Flügel hat, fliegt* [Everything with wings flies] (Kunst Kontakte, Vienna) is articulated as a procession that culminates in a buffet in the form of a parrot, where the food is covered in feathers, which also act as cutlery. *Merenga Hotel Orient* (Rambla, Barcelona) consisted of a party for 500 people, during the course of which the striptease artist Christa Leem slid down from the top of a six-meter-tall cake, made of 700 kilos of blue, pink, and mauve meringue; a feminist group protested in the area around the hotel, which had previously been a convent; the act was repeated at the Hilton Hotel in Madrid. "As Mintz says (1996), 'it is commonly asserted that the sweet delicacies of Spain are each linked to particular religious order centers.' With this cake, erected in the former monastery, the artist first restores tradition to history, and also displaces both tradition and history. In Miralda's action, a stripper strips away the history" CECILIA NOVERO, 2010.

## 1977

Collective exhibitions in Brazil, France, Spain, USA, Australia ("Ode for Dionysus"). The *Fest für Leda* ritual (Documenta 6, Kassel) sets out a procession from the shopping district to the Temple of Swans in the Karlsaue gardens; the 33 performers, symbolically converted into black swans and carrying radio-cassette machines that play birdsongs, Tchaikovsky's music from *Swan Lake* slowed down, and alarm sirens, carry tray-nests with blood-colored food wrapped in turquoise eggshells. The event, which was supposed to go on from dawn to dusk, was seriously compromised by torrential rain. "Rain can be a stupendous catastrophe" MIRALDA, 1982. "More than the action itself, which, it must be said, was a semi-flop, what really impressed me was

Miralda's focus and the subject matter chosen. At last, an image of the avant-garde that saw the past as a friend, as a heritage to be interpreted, where the public would have a good time, bolstered in its desire for a ritualization of behavior patterns by a synthesis of local and universal aspects" BURKHARDT, 1995. Planned for 300 people, *Labor Day Festa* (Artpark, Lewiston, New York State) includes the distribution of capes, confetti, little figures representing various trades rolled up in dollar bills, and a sandwich wrapped in greaseproof paper on which there was a *New York Times* article about unemployment: "It is true that *Labor Day* is not the most extraordinary or sumptuous production in Miralda's work but it is a highly representative demonstration of his method. Miralda is a mimetic sponge that halts before a given situation so as to analyze its finer points, its sociological structures and its semantic correspondence... His obsession with musical accompaniment and videos are yet further proof of Miralda's allegiance to Cage's *Theory of Inclusion*. The participation of masters of ceremony is also part of the happening tradition. Miralda's intuition transcends all these formal references by means of alchemical transfer" RESTANY, 1982. *Breadline* (Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston) starts with a performance by the virtuoso Kilgore College Rangerettes, whose members construct a wall of colored bread (60 meters), topped by pyramidal powdered sugar stars and neon signs in blue and red. Built into it, the *Texas TV Dinner* installation is based on a set of seven monitor-trays and headphone-glasses that play the sound and vision of a video recorded together with Rita Gardner and David Ross, which reproduces the making (kitchen) and tasting (dining room) of other menus. He shoots, in black and white, his contribution to the collective film *En la ciudad* [In the city]: "The film-maker takes as leitmotiv the smoke and steam so characteristic of New York's heating, subway, and drainage systems. Miralda portrays the gusts of cloud that invade everything, covering roads and sidewalks in a mist that also sticks to the walls of buildings, giving them a phantasmagoric appearance and giving the work a timelessness typical of American film noir" NEKANE ARAMBURU, 2011. *Monumento de pan para una playa-parking* (Galveston, Texas) is the title

of a readymade of a Jaume Ollé photograph. He travels to Bali and Tehran, where he is to prepare a celebration – which never went ahead – of the first anniversary of the Contemporary Art Museum. He celebrates Day of the Dead in Mexico, tasting sugar skulls. In Barcelona, he prepares a golden meal for two (*Tête à tête*, Suñol residence). The *Multiplificación de panes y peces* (Cadaqués) project does not come to fruition. Evoked by Maria Lluïsa Borràs regarding *Situació Color* (1976), the **poetic spirit** of Miralda's creations – linked to his interest in language, plays on words, printed publications – is underlined by Restany with reference to such diverse proposals as *Labor Day Festa*, *El Internacional* (1984–86) – "a center of fresh poetry, delivered in the form of tapas" – and his first retrospective (1995). From 1996, the *Food Culture Museum* itself is set up with the declared aim of tracing "a poetic memory of contemporary food." "His works very often pose plays on words that can remind one of those of Duchamp. Plays that show two sides of a single reality, ambiguous, but at the same time transparent" FERNÁNDEZ DEL CAMPO, 2002. "In his work, the words *saber* [to know] and *sabor* [taste], as well as the different senses of the word 'tongue' seem to become intertwined, resulting in a kind of anthropological and poetic research into the incidence of food in different cultures" JULIETA GONZÁLEZ, 2006. "He presents the subject of nutrition in the frame of the everyday, inviting poetic reflection on popular culture at the same time." TRASOBARES, 2009. "Miralda reveals the poetry of ordinary images and objects" HERVÉ DI ROSA, 2009. "The act of revealing poetry is the very nucleus of the majority of his actions" DACHY, 2010.

## 1978

Through a grant from Fundació March, he is able to produce the documentary series *Sacro-Pagan*. In the competition *Les Arts a Terrassa*, he presents a proposal to turn the Monument to the Fallen, known as "Les Serrilleres" [the cruet] into a coffee house, in collaboration with Eulàlia Grau and Francesc Abad. He takes part in the exhibition *Private Icon* (Bronx Museum, New York). *A la taula i al llit, al primer crit* (Internationaal Cultureel



*Elephant-Deathday-Cake Relic*, 1976



Galeria G, 1976



*Situació Color*, 1976



*Alles, was Flügel I hat, fliegt*, 1976



*Merenga Hotel Orient*, 1976



*Fest für Leda*, 1977



Centrum, Antwerp; catalog with text by Restany) alludes to a Catalan saying and addresses the coexistence of two situations and two scopes: the dining room and the bedroom; for the musical background, Miralda chose the carillon of Antwerp Cathedral and the Funeral March of Beethoven's Third 'Eroica' Symphony. *Macaroni Landscape* presents pieces from *Breadline* in the MoMA café. The main components of *Coca-Cola Polenta* (Palazzo Grassi, Venice) were 300 kg of polenta colored with sepia ink, four black ventilators, and a transparent container in which two Coca-Cola cans found in the Grand Canal were set afloat; after a few days, the installation started to give off a nauseous stink. The project *Flower Rite* (Adelaide, Australia), an open-air buffet for 3,000 people wearing masks and dominoes, was carried out without Miralda, who left because of a disagreement with the organizers. *The Venus Bolero* (Antwerp), inspired by Rubens' and Velázquez's portraits of Venus was canceled.

### 1979

On New Year's Day he documents the Rose Parade in Pasadena. He travels to Haiti to attend the carnival at Port-au-Prince. "Rituals form part of his quotidian essence. He is constantly planning how to be in Mexico on Day of the Dead, in Switzerland for the Basel carnival, in Morocco for the Date Festival, in Sri Lanka for the *Full Moon Celebrations*, in India for the Pury Ceremony, in Barcelona to see, yet again, 'L'ou com balla,' or in New York for the marathon" MIREIA SENTÍS, 1992. "We went to the carnival in Port-au-Prince in Haiti together. In the middle of the Champs des Mars, a group of *tonton macoutes*, in dark blue uniforms, with the obligatory black glasses, watched us curiously (I kept the photo I took); they can hardly have thought Miralda wasn't going to celebrate Mardi Gras in fancy dress; he celebrates it all the time! At night, in the Carrefour neighborhood, we went to the numerous places, combinations of discotheque and bordello, on the sea front. My frustration increasingly grew during the night, which smelled of saltpeter and trash: when we went in, we were surrounded by girls, but after a few minutes they unfailingly forgot me and only had eyes for him. It was obvious that they had, without even trying,

tuned in to the Miraldian esthetic" OLLÉ, 2002. He spends some time at the Center for Advanced Visual Studies (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts). He tours Poland on a high-powered motorbike. *Piedesthalles* (Forum des Halles, Paris) entailed covering a column in the new shopping center – built on the site of Paris's old central market – with eggplant, courgettes, and radishes, forming the inscription "In Memoriam Les Halles, 1153–1971"; the work was destroyed because of complaints about the vegetables' gradual decomposition. "I had the chance to visit the installation he produced, with eggplant and other vegetables, in the lower floor of the newly-opened Les Halles shopping mall. The visual and olfactory impression was intense and as fresh as its ingredients, and I realized that the artist's intervention over realities can feed off the most unsuspected fruits to extend between them completely new relationships" SIMÓN MARCHÁN, 2002. "This attitude recalls that of Gordon Matta-Clark in his film *Conical Intersect* (1975), also made around Les Halles. In that work, he filmed not only his team's intervention in the seventeenth-century building that the Paris Biennale let him use, but also the perplexed look on people's faces and the building's demolition. Miralda and Matta-Clark met in New York. There is a parallel in their visions (for both, the work is a process) and their particular ways of understanding participation and public space" TEJEDA, 2010. A Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) grant provides him with the opportunity to live in Berlin. The double installation *Charlie Taste Point* (Galerie in der Friedrichstrasse 31 and Hotel Steiner, Berlin) combines an ordinary dish of rabbit prepared to Catalan recipes, a projection of slides of acclimatized rabbits in the no man's land between East and West Berlin, and a pink room with two beds; a monitor had been placed on each pillow, showing the video by Miralda and Rossell, *Miserere*. "Unlike Joseph Beuys, who, in the same period, upset the Berliners with an act of provocation – 'I suggest that the height of the Berlin wall be increased so as to improve its proportions' – Miralda decided to enter the drama of daily reality by means of a work aimed at stirring and gaining public consensus" BURKHARDT, 1995. He does not manage to produce an action for the city of

Stuttgart, in which some black horses were to pull various Mercedes Benz cars up to a statue of Schiller covered in earth and planted with vegetables. He meets the chef Montse Guillén at MG, her newly-opened restaurant in Barcelona.

### 1980

At the Galeria Joan Prats, whose walls were covered in pink chocolate for the occasion, he presents *Mona a Barcelona* – *mona*: a chocolate cake decorated with figures, but also a burlesque monument –, an installation in which twenty-one pastry chefs make a Barcelona building of their own choice. The offering is completed by the book *Mona a Barcelona* (Polígrafa), with text by Maria Lluïsa Borràs, and the record *Barcelona Postal* – with a fold-out insert with photos by Antoni Miralda and Jaume Ollé – on which Jaume Sisa performs the songs Miralda compiled for the opening, all inspired by the Catalan capital. Group exhibitions in Madrid, Berlin, Frankfurt, Munich, Karlsruhe. One canceled project, *Talisman* (*Zeichen und Mythen*, Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn), and several rejected *Coke Ramp* (Guggenheim Museum, New York), *Charlemagne Meets Montezuma* (New Gallery, Aachen), *Xmas Key* (Nationalgalerie, Berlin); this last, which combined a key-shaped table, a wall of *butifarra* sausages, two Christmas trees made out of other sausages, and two monitors that showed a video in which Miralda summed up his stay in Germany, was canceled with the posters already printed.

### 1981

Experimental collaborations with the food department of retailers Marks & Spencer (London). Miralda travels to the Shrine of Shrivaniabelagola (India) to document the ceremony of the consecration of the saint. *Thanksgiving: The Animals' Banquet* (Bronx Zoo, New York), in which he was assisted by Karin Bacon, was a competition between 12 well-established chefs and culinary critics, each of whom prepared a dish for any one of the animals in the zoo, using the ingredients included in the animal's diet. "Miralda's social concerns, and

his desire that everyone participate, extends to animals. For a Thanksgiving Day project at the Bronx Zoo, he prepared special foods, in the shape of mythical animals, for the real animals. While they feasted on a centaur made out of instant mashed potatoes, they watched a video of people feasting on a traditional Thanksgiving dinner" KOHEN, 1982. *Wheat & Steak* (Crown Center, Nelson Art Gallery, Board of Trade, and American Royal, Kansas City), a project taking three years' preliminary work and involving 500 people, covered a wide range of representations within the context of the Harvest Festival. "I suspect his attire has turned many a head on Main Street but everyone I spoke to in Kansas City seemed to have enjoyed his being there. About Miralda, Bill Harsh, a director of American Royal who always has some caustic remark to make, said: 'He's a great artist and a great guy'" CALVIN TRILLIN, 1983. In *Flauta i trampolí* (X Festival de Música, Cadaqués), a 50-meter-long table, placed in the street and covered in a blue tablecloth, offered products from the sea and the mountains to 500 participants dressed in silver capes. "What has been and what is Miralda's current contribution to the panorama of contemporary art? A combination of the sacred and the profane, of action and meditation, transforming officiant into participant and participant into officiant" GIRALT-MIRACLE, 1982. "On Greenwich Street, at the beginning of the eighties, Miralda revealed to me what it was like to live in a New York loft, completely open, separated by colored curtains. I never imagined I could live and work without walls, in a space full of images and objects" MONTSE GUILLÉN, 2015.

### 1982

In *Miami Miralda*, a newspaper-style publication, he brings together a series of proposals for the *New World Festival of the Arts* (Miami), where he presents the edible sculptures *Mermaid Table*, the first collaboration with Montse Guillén and César Trasobares. As a gesture of thanks, the city dedicates a day in the year to him (June 24). "Miralda has been cruising in a private helicopter to gain perspective. He's been piloted above the Miami Beach strip and from the sky soaks up the character of the hotels, tastes the shape and the flavor of their pools, and



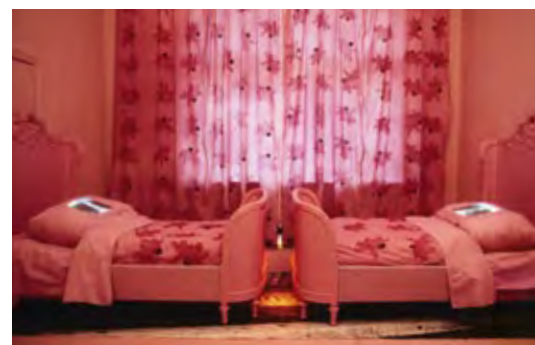
A la taula i al llit, al primer crit, 1978



Coca-Cola Polenta, 1978



Piedesthalles, 1979



Charlie Taste Point, 1979



Mona a Barcelona, 1980



Flauta i trampolí, 1981



calculates the geometry of their asphalt parking spaces. 'The reflections of the hotels in the pools take on the form of miniature sharks,' he observes. Helicopter art [...] According to his proposal to the New World Festival, he wishes to create a life-size reproduction of Picasso's *Guernica*, made from different foods prepared by chefs from the Hispanic community, to be consumed by the populace. There will also be a series of Art Deco landmark-hotel cakes [...] His art is communicative, a fever worth catching. His talent stems from sensitivity, from an ability to stagger naively into a strange place, a city like Miami, and show it to its people as they've never seen it before" M.A. NEFF, 1982. "Going with Miralda round the different districts of Miami was always a fascinating exercise in discovery. He was interested in everything: restaurants, shops, the river, the markets, the *botanica* stores, the people, the Spanish customs still followed in the Cuban community, the street meetings in Liberty City. As the inauguration of the festival approached, Miralda came up with a collection of ideas instead of a single, major project. But only one of them materialized" TRASOBARES, 1988. This proposal, *Domestic Coral Castle*, a celebration of the summer solstice, had as its setting a coral palace that the Lithuanian immigrant Edward Leedskainin had built in Florida as an homage to an impossible love. The twice-canceled *Drive-in Feast* (Galería Vijande, Madrid, and the second time at his 2010 retrospective in the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid) installation commemorated a happening that ten years previously had shaken Spanish society. "Miralda was in Madrid on the day of the bomb attack on Admiral Carrero Blanco in 1973, and thought up a piece that would take place in the Fernando Vijande gallery, a space that had formerly been a parking lot. An upside-down car covered with a tablecloth would serve as a table for a meal whose dishes would be three-pointed" TEJEDA, 2010. The *S & V* (J. Suñol Collection, Barcelona) intervention includes the edible relief *Gaudí Brochette*, a ceremonial drink (*cremat*), and a buffet where the waiters were dressed in Civil Guard uniforms. He produces the *Totem Colom* video installation with Benet Rossell, and plans a "breaded souvenir" in the shape of the Columbus statue. He receives a grant from the Comité

Conjunto para Asuntos Culturales [Joint Committee for Cultural Affairs] (Madrid). The *Miralda! Une vie d'artiste* (Àmbit, Barcelona) monograph comes out, with extensive graphic material and text in which Pierre Restany goes through his career. In 1991, the critic will go on to prepare a second volume, which will not see the light of day until 2002 (Fundación ICO, Madrid). "This is the most complete compilation of the artist's work to date, and his work-fiesta association sets the general tone for the reception of Miralda's work in our country" MARÍ, 1995.

### 1983

*Dressing Tables* (Williwear Men's Showroom, New York), whose title plays on the double meaning of "dress," as in clothing and seasoning, has a pants table, a shirt table, and an overalls table, covered in ketchup, mustard, and mayonnaise respectively. The unrealized *Tea Cod Party* project planned to congregate replicas, made of edible materials, of Boston monuments around a tea table. Collective participations in France, Spain, and Brazil (*Leda, the Rangerettes, and the Tri-Uni-Corn Visiting the No-Man's-Land*, São Paulo Biennial). He produces the *Ketchup Via Crucis* set of photographs.

### 1984

The piece *The Seven of Tables* (*Collision*, Lawndale Alternative, University of Houston, Texas) includes the video *Salomé*, a compilation of images of St. John's head on a plate. "Miralda recontextualizes the commonplace of the act of eating, in such a way that it becomes a disturbing activity" JOHN YAU, 1985. "Miralda is a metaphysicist, as was his compatriot Góngora, the sixteenth-century poet, here, the forced metaphors of Góngora find their equivalent in violent, visual, plays on words" EDWARD LUCIE-SMITH, 1985. The work that never materialized, *San SebasTVián* (International Film Festival, San Sebastian) consisted of an installation with video screens and arrows made of sugar, to which would be added traditional dishes prepared by Basque chefs. With Benet Rossell, he edits the video *Barcelona gran menú*, a tour of the city's restaurants, bars, kitchens,

markets, and museums. He receives a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts. In *Santa Comida / Holy Food* (El Museo del Barrio, New York), six altars, on each of which images of a Yoruba deity and its syncretic variants are superimposed, fill the museum's windows; the work, with the addition of a seventh altar, is later exhibited in Miami (Miami Dade Community College, South Campus Art Gallery, 1985), Barcelona (Palau Robert, 1985), and Paris (*Magiciens de la terre*, Centre Pompidou – La Grande Halle de la Villette, 1989). Since 2011, they have been part of the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) collection. "The idea of framing the images with foodstuff acts as an incentive forcing these powers to materialize. In response, the gods have touched the artist and whispered words into his ear. They have revealed themselves to him and become his guide" JOHN MASON, 1984. "The protagonists of the installation-in-progress are the Afro-Caribbean nature forces or Yoruba gods, metamorphosed into saints. Their story can only be told through the feast, the food ritual that their cult has generated over time" TUDOLÍ, 1984. "Santeria is a new world religion invented by the African slaves, who were forbidden to worship their Yoruban gods. Thus, they disguised them as if they were the saints of their masters. The evolution of this subterfuge, often called syncretism, is even more interesting. Instead of being subsumed into it, the Yoruban divinities were mixed with those of the Christian pantheon, creating an animistic cosmology with celestial equivalents. In Santeria, the firmament is inhabited by ambisexual beings of a profoundly metaphysical nature, though not averse to having a hearty meal of rice with beans" GUY TREBAY, 1985. "Santa Comida is the most secret and intimate of all Miralda's works, the most characteristic of how he sees the world and shows his sensitivity from the affective and esthetic point of view [...] *Santa Comida's* presentation coupled entirely naturally with the specifics of each place where it was exhibited. it took on a very special meaning at El Museo del Barrio, a symbolic site of Hispano-American culture, steps away from Spanish Harlem and the *botanica* stores there, and in Miami's Dade Community College, where he would take on a clearly Afro-Cuban hue, while in Barcelona he indirectly reflected the profound Catalan vocation for crossbreeding. But where *Santa*

*Comida* acquired all its organic and structural value was in Paris, in *Magiciens de la terre*" RESTANY, 1991. "I relate more to the idea of the magician than to the idea of the priest. The magician has a special way of repeating certain formulas, of working with signs, of transforming elements so that others may understand the nature of reality. I was posed the challenge of thinking like this when I arrived from Europe and had to reconstruct my own space in America." MIRALDA, 2000. "Corn, rice, quails, bananas, pineapple, yams, cakes, sugar cane [...] The menu of the seven divinities that make up the installation is truly varied. In the background, as the visitor moves between the altars, is the sound of Machín's bolero *Angelitos negros*, which came to be a real hymn against racial discrimination." JULIA MORANDEIRA AND MARÍA ARRANZ, 2013. Created in collaboration with Montse Guillén, *El Internacional* (219 West Broadway, New York, 1984–86) transformed "Teddy's," a famous mid-century restaurant – in a building where Edgar Allan Poe fleetingly lived – into an establishment-installation of Catalan–Spanish cuisine; videos, produced in collaboration with Jordi Torrent, explained the dishes and produce of the restaurant (*Video Menu*) and the history of the premises (*Sentimental Room*); the *Archaeological Sandwich* mural brought together samples of materials discovered set into the walls during the building works; also, four issues of a newspaper were published under the title of the restaurant's name. "One of the most delicious traditions in Spanish cuisine, which for some reason has never taken root in this country, is the tapas bar. Food dictionaries define tapas as a type of starter, which is like describing the Prado as one of Madrid's many museums. In a nation like the Spanish, which is forever nibbling, tapas represent a true way of life. And, fortunately for New Yorkers, a genuine Spanish restaurant with this kind of bar has just opened in Tribeca. It's called *El Internacional*" BRYAN MILLER, 1984. "Tapas? Generally, small hot snacks of very tasty food, to be accompanied by wine or beer. According to chef Montse Guillén, they originate from Andalusia in the eighteenth century, but became popular after the Spanish Civil War. 'People started eating out because of shortages that made it difficult to prepare quality food at home.' Today there are other reasons to eat out, of course. The eighties



Drive-in Feast, 1981



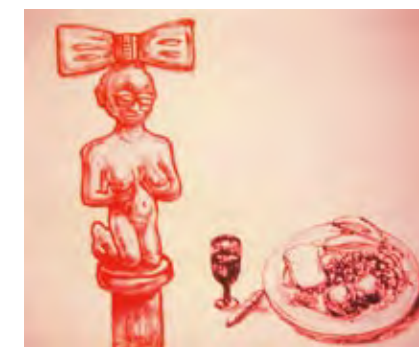
Mermaid Table, 1982



Dressing Tables, 1983



Barcelona gran menú, 1984



Santa Comida, 1984



El Internacional's menu, 1984–86



seems to be a particularly apt time to have small snacks over a long period” JEFF WEINSTEIN, 1984. “‘I think it’s an exercise in bad taste,’ said Kathryn Freed. ‘I think it’s great,’ said Jeanette Ingberman. ‘It’s like having a screamer on your corner,’ said Scott Davis. ‘It’s just wonderful,’ said Martha Wilson. This is a restaurant called *El Internacional*, or, as neighbors now call it, ‘the weird building with the Statue of Liberty crown on top’ [...] Not all of its neighbors in this community of working artists and loft-dwellers agree. ‘This whole thing is just an extension of an ego that is not commensurate with the surroundings,’ stated painter Scott Davis [...] Kathryn Freed, lawyer and co-chairman of the Community Council, says: ‘Every time I come up from the subway and see it, I scream in horror’ [...] The community members voted against the restaurant’s application for an outdoor café license, citing overcrowding and noise. ‘It’s a carnival around here every night until 2:30 in the morning,’ complained the painter David Craven [...] A subsequent meeting brought together several supporters of *El Internacional*, including the artist Christo, who argued in favor of Miralda’s public art. ‘We are in an esthetic dogfight — declared Martha Wilson —. This is not about smells or regulations, what’s really going on is freedom of artists!’ She finds it ironic that such a dispute could occur in a neighborhood of artists, where freedom of expression is taken for granted [...] Some residents indicated they did not mind what they called the bizarre appearance of *El Internacional* as much as they did the powerful odors of garlic and fried fish and other kinds of Spanish cuisine that made its way into windows of nearby apartments” MILLER, 1985. “It is better to leave notions of what is or is not acceptable at the entrance of *El Internacional* because, inside, as a quick glance will show, conventional rules do not apply. Miralda has forged a visual *fiesta* in which colors, shapes, textures, and symbols swim in such ostentatious overabundance that there is no alternative but to lower one’s esthetic guard, which is knocked off balance by the sensorial assault” CHARLES K. GANDEE, 1985. “It is not just a multi-ethnic restaurant but also a motionless time machine, whose design mixes layers of different styles and juxtaposes them devotedly but at random” CHRIST, 1985. “One of the most popular restaurants in Tribeca is *El Internacional*, a Spanish tapas bar, whose decoration can only be described as beyond kitsch. Above the giraffe-marking façade, there is a full-size replica of the

Statue of Liberty’s crown. The dining room’s wall lights are made out of purple cups and saucers and lipstick imprints cover the wallpaper with carmine” ANDREW L. YARROW, 1985. “*El Internacional*’s success was instantaneous, almost miraculous. 400 people came on the first day. And the second, and the third, and the fourth [...] Now, there are 800 coming every day” GUILLÉN, 1985. “*El Internacional* is one of Miralda’s most difficult, complex, and utopian works. It is the culmination of the idea of the banquet as a ceremonial act and the ambient and participative nature of his work. The reconstruction and design of the interior, the proposal for certain performances, and the culinary contribution of Montse Guillén make the experience of this restaurant into the most charismatic project about the union between art and life championed by this artist” PILAR PARCERISAS, 1990. “*El Internacional* is a sort of total artwork. In the period from 1984 to 1986, the restaurant-cum-laboratory enabled the artist to try out ideas of all kinds. The image of the sandwich of memory (*Archaeological Sandwich*) might synthesize that deployment of things, ideas and works, superposed, mixed, and blended into an accumulation at once visual and edible” MARÍ, 1995. “At *El Internacional* I once had the opportunity to drink a concoction of cava and a love potion from a *porrón*. I also had a blue tequila, blue thanks to curaçao, and I accompanied it with Vic-style sausage made in Chicago by Italian butchers” MANUEL VÁZQUEZ MONTALBÁN, 2002 (1). “The difference with previous projects was that instead of having available a museum infrastructure and collectors for a public, there were people who came to eat for real” MIRALDA, 2013 (1). “‘Montse Guillén opened her first restaurant in Barcelona in the seventies, where she was already surrounded by artists and had worked on the idea of a newspaper. And so we created a newspaper for *El Internacional*. The customer got it together with the bill, like a part of the menu [...] The best restaurants in New York had too much good taste, but didn’t take enough risks. We loved bad taste, and loved it when we were criticized for it [...] The bar had a copy of the columns of the Columbus monument in Barcelona, full of Margarita Blue’ [...] The year when the crown was destroyed, 2004, marked the end of an era in the neighborhood that had been home to artists, and which is now populated by financiers or, even worse, as second homes by millionaires from all over the world” CRISTINA GUADALUPE, 2013.

“*El Internacional* was the laboratory for *Honeymoon*, in the same way as the Hannover Expo was for *FoodCultura*. *Honeymoon* started in 1986, and it wasn’t possible to keep both things going. But if it hadn’t been successful at the till, it wouldn’t even have lasted three months. In two intense years, all the ingredients, all the ‘input,’ was burned up. *El Internacional* couldn’t last, just as Gordon Matta-Clark’s restaurant didn’t” MIRALDA, 2015. On the project, see also *El Internacional by...* (*Matador*, vol. J, 2007), a mosaic page with telegraphic texts by Francis Bernfeld, Birgit Bofarull, Ana Busto, Antonio Buendía, Bill Dyckes, Kerry Fulton, Elena García Gureta, Isabel García Lorca, Arturo González, Helena Guardans, Carme Guillén, Montse Guillén, Marta Fernández-Iriondo, Koosil-ja, Alfredo Mañas, Federico Mañas, Lorraine Mathieu, Patrick O’Shea, Matías Peluffo, Marshall Reese, Sindria Segura, Marco A. Souza, Vicent Todolí, Jordi Torrent, Teresa Velázquez, and Maribel Vidal-Quadras.

### 1985

He produces *NewMia-YorkMi. The Arrival of the Hampton Roads* (Pennsylvania Station, New York, with Montse Guillén). “The fabled luxury trains of twentieth century are not entirely a thing of the past [...] One such is The Hampton Roads [1926], the private Pullman car of Mr. Mitchell Wolfson, a noted art collector [...] His arrival was the occasion for a splendid subterranean spectacle staged by artist Antoni Miralda and *El Internacional* at Pennsylvania Station. In the event, dubbed *NewMia-YorkMi*, the passengers were treated to the sight of a long table draped with a red cloth that continued off the table and onto the platform to become the traditional red carpet, flowing right up to the door of the private car. Twelve symbolic suitcases set out on the table contained tapas from *El Internacional*, apples and oranges (references to the cities of New York and Miami), copies of the *New York Times*, and souvenirs of the city. A drink called Bullshot at 11:03 was created specially for the occasion and served to Mr. Wolfson and his guests” DICK BELSEY, 1985. With *Santa Comida*, he takes part in the *Barcelona, Paris, New York: El camí de dotze artistes catalans, 1960–1980* (Palau Robert, Barcelona) exhibition, in the catalog of which UMBERTO ECO writes: “The fiesta cannot instigate a new social habit, a new rite

that follows the cycle of the seasons. Miralda’s fiesta is no more than a promise, an invitation to a society that could exist. Looking to the future with nostalgic skepticism, he revolves around the lost image of an impossible past.”

### 1986

*Barcelona, Filipinas* (Centre régional d’art contemporain, Toulouse) is inspired by Philippine religious mysticism and includes the video *Milk, Coca-Cola, and Balut*. “Miralda puts himself in no man’s and every man’s land at the same time. He places himself on the porous frontier that separates popular culture from culture of the masses, highlighting the existence of a circulation of imaginaries, as the documentary-like and anthropological video made in Easter week in the Philippines demonstrates: *Milk, Coca-Cola, and Balut*. In fact, that commitment to the happy coexistence of different cultural offerings turns him into a cultural nomad, pushing him on to travel around the world producing projects and stick various ways of understanding communication and rite onto his rucksack” TEJEDA, 2010. “Miralda creates food for thought. He has exhibited at museums but don’t waste your time looking for his works in permanent collections. Forget any ideas about strolling round the smart galleries of downtown Manhattan in the hope of finding a quaint little work by Miralda to hang above the settee, and it seems unlikely that any of his creations will ever be put up for auction at Sotheby’s. James Harithas, former director of the Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston, says: ‘In the art world, we tend to appreciate the bizarre and public, to the benefit of all! When he is under pressure to answer about the meaning of some of his works, the artist with the ponytail becomes elusive. The closest thing to an explanation offered by Miralda is that he always chooses the hardest and liveliest path” HARRIET SHAPIRO, 1986. On Valentine’s Day, *El Internacional* offers a commemorative banquet for 53 pairs of twins (*Face to Face*). *Engagement Ceremony* (Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, New York), which includes *TV Ring*, a video made in conjunction with Torrent and which was played through a monitor-diamond, begins the sequence of collective works christened *Honeymoon Project* (1986–92). Over six years, the project will go on to garner the most fulsome



*El Internacional*, 1984–86



Montse Guillén, *El Internacional*, 1984–86



*Sol y Sombra Terrace*, *El Internacional*, 1984–86



*Columbus Trophy Bar*, *El Internacional*, 1984–86



*NewMia-YorkMi*, 1985



*Barcelona, Filipinas*, 1986



elegies (Restany, Borràs, Combalía) and the most damning criticisms (Luján, Olivares, Lumpkin). “The project began with the engagement party and will culminate in 1992, the year of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of America. Afterwards, Liberty and Columbus will sail away on their honeymoon, with the sunset of history in the background. As usual in Miralda’s work, *Honeymoon Project* is deeply concerned with the rituals of eating. A gigantic engagement ring, with a blinking video screen for a stone, lies on a background of corn. A historically doubtful and imaginatively brilliant parade of the foodstuffs he discovered in the Americas” EDWARD FOX, 1986. “*Honeymoon* operation, as it is so pretentiously called, is a poor, ill-fated idea: it consists simply of marrying New York’s Statue of Liberty to Barcelona’s monument to Christopher Columbus. Sometimes, I’m horrified by the childishness of my contemporaries. Their total lack of creative spirit and, above all, their submissiveness towards the things that come hand-in-hand with the most outrageous publicity. Esthetically speaking, this great betrothal and the subsequent melancholic honeymoon can amount to little. It is true that, for lack of greater inspiration, artist Antoni Miralda is perfectly entitled to marry his own works of art to whoever he wants. What seems to me to be incorrect is that he marry the works of others” NÉSTOR LUJÁN, 1986. “Looking out of the corner of one’s eye, it is almost impossible to appreciate that high level of the absurd that goes beyond certain rules and conditions concerning a work of art. While recovering history, *Honeymoon* provides the public with hallucinatory tablets, distributed via an unquestionable popular taste: kitsch” SICHEL, 1986. “This story bothers me because, beyond or beneath the ancient ritual, which is what interests the artist, lies the official history, the real history, the complaints, the unfulfilled expectations, the end which will perhaps not be a happy one” COMBALÍA, 1987.

### 1987

The proposed *Banquet Import-Export* (Barcelona Airport), in which a range of foodstuffs exchanged between the Old and New Worlds was to be served on the wings of a Jumbo 747, would never materialize; nor did the feast to be held near the monument to Columbus, where the idea was to cover the pedestal with potatoes. On the *Aixovar /*

*Ajuar / Trousseau* (Sala Muncunill, Terrassa; catalog with text by Giralt-Miracle) exhibition, COMBALÍA, 1987, writes: “Beneath the vaults of a recently recovered, enormous industrial space, a number of young, modern working-class women busily cut out patterns and start working away at the sewing-machine. They are making the trousseau of New York’s Statue of Liberty. In its sketches, photomontage, and countless suggestions, the project oozes with ingenuity, sensitivity, and humor. Thinking about it, the inclusion of these working-class women in a work of art is like a prolongation of Velázquez’s famous tapestry weavers.” The underskirt (6,500 m<sup>2</sup> of cloth, weighing 350 kg) and the stockings (6,200 m of yarn; 20 m long) will later be presented respectively at the Dade Community College (Miami, 1988) and at the Seibu Gallery (Tokyo, 1989), and will go down in the *Guinness Book of Records*. *Coke & Miss Information* is the title of Miralda’s piece for Exit Art (New York); *Ba-Ca-Llá* (Sala Anar y Tornar, Barcelona), consists of three artifacts made of marble and dried cod, airplane and caravel symbols, and the signatures of the mayors of New York and Barcelona.

### 1988

Two virtually simultaneous episodes of the *Honeymoon* project take place in Barcelona. The *Prenúpcies* exhibition (Fundació Joan Miró) includes the video installation *VenTVlador* – based on the ritual *L’ou com balla*, the egg that “dances” on the jet of the font in Barcelona cathedral – the bride’s bouquet (an olive tree from the foundation’s patio, specially prepared for the occasion) and her veil (95 m long, 60 m wide, designed in the shape of a codfish and made in tulle at Barcelona’s IDEP school, entered in the *Guinness Book of Records* and later presented in Sète and New York). *Colom 100* (Les Rambles) combined a parade and an offering of American products with a cocktail competition – *Honeymoon Blues*: 1/5 lime, 4/5 lemonade, 2 shots of blue curaçao (variant 1); 2/3 white rum, 1/3 blue curaçao, 1 glass of Bourbon, 1 glass of Aromes de Montserrat (variant 2) – and a love letter contest, whose greatest achievement was

undoubtedly the people chosen to form the judging panel: Fernando Amat, Joan Brossa, Josep Maria Carreras, Romà Gubern, Terenci Moix, Pierre Restany, Xavier-Rubert de Ventós, Enric Satué, Joan Manuel Serrat, Corín Tellado, and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán. “On the pavement, glittering mats with red hearts on a silver background had been laid. At the back, a squad of city policemen on horseback, with their lances-cum-flags, their feathers and gala uniforms, kept to their star-shaped formation pointing in all directions [...] All at once, there appeared eight nubile virgins in immaculate first communion dresses [...] To close, the melodious Ricardo Solfa [Jaume Sisa] sang his ‘Honeymoon,’ romantically accompanied by an accordionist” PAU RIBA, 1988. “At the time, we had a pied-à-tierre on Paradís, at number five, behind the Catalan parliament and by the cathedral. It was so minute I had to swap my suitcase for a smaller one. That’s where the love letters arrived. The mailman knew us so well that he only delivered once a week, to avoid going up and down the stairs” MIRALDA, 2015. The book *Honeymoon Miralda Project, 1986-1992* (Barcelona: Àmbit, 1988) is presented in Barcelona. The students at Paris’ Esmod School design the bride’s dress (30 m long, 2,286 m and 453 kg of polyester, another entry in the *Guinness Book of Records*). “He was always fascinated by statues, which he covered in eccentric clothing in the Paris of the late sixties and, for years, he has found inspiration in Liberty and Columbus [...] Antoni Miralda believes that nothing is unattainable and would appreciate it if his critics stopped putting him in the eternal dilemma of art or business” MERCHE YOYIBA, 1988. In New York, issue number 1 of *Honeymoon News* appears, where PHILIP YENAWINE notes: “The installation of the bouquet designed for the bride, Lady Liberty, at Barcelona’s Fundació Joan Miró proves that the impossible can be achieved. Two years ago, many people, though intrigued by Miralda’s art and his commitment to the examination of certain realities of our cultural weft, feared that the *Honeymoon* project would not go beyond Conceptual art: a great idea, but outside the scope of our resources. Obviously, we underestimated Miralda and it is a pleasure to have made this mistake.”

### 1989

Also entered in the *Guinness Book of Records*, *Gâteau Monument* (place du Trocadéro, Paris), a wedding cake 22 m high, made with 50,000 eggs and 18,000 kg of sugar, flour, toffees, chocolate and butter, takes the shape of a globe pierced by the Eiffel Tower. In *Apocalypse Lamb* (Columbus Day Parade, New York), a mattress weighing 250 kg was carried down Fifth Avenue by 100 extras and then blessed by the Cardinal of New York. *Alianzas* (Wedding Rings), designed jointly with Chus Burés, was presented in Valencia (Fijova, International Jewelry Fair). “The very esthetic tone of the project combines two apparently contradictory notes: the most outrageous kitsch, representing a mockery (not sarcastic, but a mockery nonetheless) of the institution of marriage and all the paraphernalia surrounding it; and, at the same time, an unquestionable impassioned love for that very institution. Miralda knows that we have lost all contact with the sacred and that this is the worst of our ailments. He also knows that the recovery of the rite is an impossible endeavor because we lack the necessary innocence” ENRIQUE MURILLO, 1990. The project’s trail can be followed through France, the United States, and Japan, where the second issue of *Honeymoon News* is published in Tokyo. “What interests me about the projects is the crescendo of progress in the parts based on spectacle and choreography, conceived on the basis of a closed or public space, whether mental or physical” MIRALDA, 1988. “What I’m interested in is communication. Theatricality is just a means, like a paint brush or a spatula could be, with which to make clear what you want to get across” MIRALDA, 1990.

### 1990

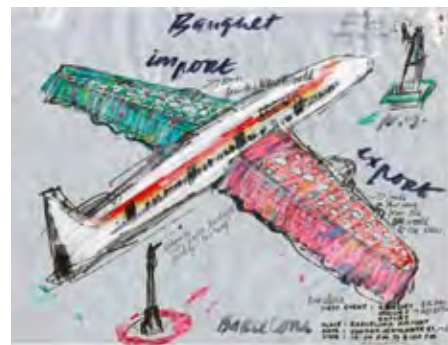
“Miralda has undertaken the difficult task of arousing the receptiveness of our memory of the past at a time when, more than ever, our wish is to look to the future, dominated as we are by the speed of technological change. In so doing, he has become at once explorer and seducer” ANNEMIEKE VAN DE PAS, 1990. *Liberty Belle Cape* (Philadelphia Museum of Art), executed by the Mummies Club members whom Miralda had seen parading through Philadelphia on New Year’s Day 1973, intermingles emblems, symbols, and icons



Engagement Ceremony, 1986



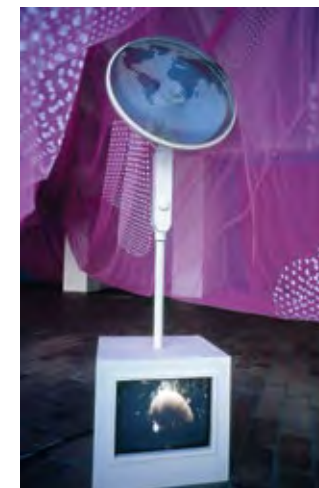
TV Ring, 1986



Banquet Export-Import, 1986



Coke & Miss Information, 1987



Prenúpcies, 1988



Gâteau Monument, 1989



on a bell-shaped cape weighing 275 kg. “Thanks to this work, the museum learnt more about its community. We had to bring together an extraordinary range of craftsmen: a tailor from the Philadelphia Opera Company, seamstresses, electronic technicians, and choreography experts, in addition to the documentation provided by local film-makers and photographers” THORA JACOBSON, 1995. Under the title **Amonestaciones** (Spanish Pavilion, Venice Biennale), Miralda groups together various pieces from the *Honeymoon Project* trousseau, made in Barcelona, New York, Valencia, and Philadelphia, to which a number of new additions are made, such as the *Gondola Shoe* and the effigies erected on satellite dishes. “For an artist like Miralda, who has worked for more than twenty years in fiesta and popular ceremony, and is not in the market, to propose a *Honeymoon* in Venice – with a shoe-shaped gondola, an orgy of fabrics, and objects out of the trash – is a sign of a certain desire to escape from passing whim, and also the dictates of some tenors of critics, commerce, and museum institutions” GENEVIÈVE BREERETTE, 1990. “A great rite of extravagance, symbolic, useless, perfect, and whimsical” MANUEL CALDERÓN, 1990. “Perhaps now is the time to make a general criticism public, in the sense that an idea of a marked conservative and vulgar tendency has become institutionalized, a proposal in which institutions such as marriage form part of the essential idea, within the regressive wave that is affecting the morality not only of America but also of the Western world in general. The consecration of all the anachronistic and commercial steps involved in the process of a wedding reaches its climax in this project, for which Miralda is constantly asking for funds [...] We are going to convert our pavilion into a kind of prolongation of the *fallas*, while failing to present the national creative moment. Instead, we have the proposal of a marginal artist who has always opted for gastronomy and art and who has now turned into a promoter of weddings and banquets” ROSA OLIVARES, 1990. “For 20 years, Miralda has been working on the recovery of kitsch as an artistic material; so, in a way, he is the father of the creature [...] Ideas like the diamond-television, the gondola shoe, the parade combining Mae West, the Virgin of Montserrat and Carmen Miranda, are all beautiful ideas, the heirs of Surrealism and Pop art, treated with a touch of ironic humor. Perhaps what is wrong is that there are too

many small ideas in the Miralda project; subtle ideas, whereas, in the work of certain present-day artists, there is only one, dropped onto the viewer like a visual bomb” COMBALÍA, 1990. “It has been a real pity that the negligence of our official authorities should have done so much to hinder the task of our official representative at this biennial: Catalan Antoni Miralda, resident in New York, has been abandoned to his fate as a result of utter meanness and, amongst other things, has been forced to go out himself in search of financial backing to sponsor his work” FRANCISCO CALVO SERRALLER, 1990. “Miralda has always produced works that exploit a form of *camp*, as understood by Susan Sontag: ‘A sense of eccentricity is the salient feature of camp [...] Gaudí’s fantastic buildings in Barcelona are also camp.’ In English, the term camp is suggestive of something artificial and exaggerated, where the serious becomes frivolous, albeit without necessarily losing the qualities of charm or innocence. From the outset, Miralda has shown a liking for exaggeration and dramatization loaded with political undercurrents. *Honeymoon* includes many ingredients from Miralda’s early works – artificial effects, ambiguity, a liking for decoration – but a good part of his radicalism seems to have vanished. As it is essentially a wedding celebration, it would not seem likely that *Honeymoon* will trigger the same social reaction as some of his previous works, such as the highly erotic *Merenga Hotel Orient* (1976). Although Miralda is an artist very much in his element in grandiose performances and live shows, when devising *Honeymoon*, he may well have been carried away by pomposity and exhibitionism for the sake of it” JUAN VICENTE ALIAGA, 1990. *Sabata-Taula* (La Granja de Esporles, Mallorca) denotes the gallery owner Joan Guaita’s contribution to *Honeymoon*’s wedding list. Armando Blanquer creates the *Noces de Llibertat* wedding march for the project. In Paris, issue number three of *Honeymoon News* comes out, which includes the news that a textbook in the United States for learning Spanish tells the story, through a set of grammar exercises, of the *Honeymoon* project. “Miralda conceives everything with the enthusiasm of an attentive mother and the seriousness of a suddenly enlightened head of protocol [...] This universal surveyor is familiar with the mood of different places and knows that the infinite city has its limits and its values, its colors and its words; that it

is there with its movables and immovables and its mine of stories as yet unexplored” FRANÇOIS BARRÉ, 1990.

### 1991

“One fine day, while strolling through the jewelers’ district of the busy city of Birmingham [England], Miralda came upon a curious type of ring, the Eternity Ring, exchanged by lovers in the Black Country at a private, secret ceremony constituting a declaration of undying love” LLUÍS PERMANYER, 1991. **Eternity Ring** (Ikon Gallery and Centenary Square, Birmingham) is an allusion to the ceremony, recorded by Anne Parouty on a video showing the exchange of a gigantic ring (weighing 50 kg) for *Honeymoon Project*. “A sculpture in the form of a ring with a diameter of over one meter (the size of Miss Liberty’s finger) was installed in the middle of Birmingham’s Centenary Square. Made from materials used in both monuments – copper and brass – and conceived by designer Chus Burés, the ring has a cavity in the form of a window in which the inhabitants of the English city left their rings. This kind of participation plays a key role in Miralda’s projects: the mobilization of different social sectors and the use of participation as a raw material” JOANA BONET, 1991. In Brussels (Centre Culturel Botanique) on December 12, a total of 12 diplomatic representatives of the then 12 member countries of the European Community deposited their own wedding rings inside Miss Liberty’s ring as an expression of the desire for European Union. Built by students and teachers at the Vocational Training Institute of Ubrique (Cádiz), **Edible Belt** (Holly Solomon Gallery, New York) with a length of 70 m and a weight of 200 kg (entered in the *Guinness Book of Records*), consists of a list, in Spanish and in English, of products traded between Europe and America. “*Edible Belt* is a link of union, a document that binds one continent to another in such a way that it reveals the tracks of an intercultural history” MORGAN, 1991. Various chapters of *Honeymoon* take place on both sides of the Atlantic: **Wedding Gown** (World Financial Center, New York), **Liberty’s Maids of Honor** (French Cultural Services, New York), **Collier Mediterraneus** (Le Pointe Courte, Sète), an iron necklace of 600 kg, left to rust in the sea and decorated with three talismans representing

the lighthouses at Genoa, Cadaqués, and Sète. In Valencia, the denim trousers to be worn by the Statue of Liberty (27 m long, 9 m wide and weighing 500 kg, entered in the *Guinness Book of Records*). “But why do they have to get married? It’s an old custom. Over 2,000 years ago, the Greeks held marriages of their statues. The goddess of one village would marry the god of another. Thus, the villages were like one big family” MIRALDA, 1991. “Honeymoon manifests itself in a series of ceremonies created by Miralda to celebrate the imaginary marriage of two monuments that have looked across at each other from either side of the Atlantic for a hundred years: the monument to Christopher Columbus in the port of Barcelona, inaugurated on October 12, 1888, and the Statue of Liberty in the bay of New York, inaugurated on October 8, 1886. Columbus is two years younger than *Lib*. He’s also shorter. Miralda has weighed it up. But he also thinks that even so they’ll make a happy couple. Reflect on this a little: can you imagine yourselves holding up a torch to illuminate the world, like *Lib*, or pointing with your index finger to the West Indies, like Columbus, for a whole century? Keeping one arm outstretched is at least one thing they have in common before they meet. Together, they symbolize the enormous amount of traffic of products, ideas, and traditions that connect the New World to the Old: the entire history of modern times. When Antoni Miralda decided to unite two legends and recycle them into postindustrial modernity, he knew he was taking on a double challenge: producing his life’s great work and the most outstanding testimony of the emerging postmodernism” RESTANY, 1991. “In Spain, public space was never mentioned with regard to *Honeymoon*, when it’s about a series of connections in the same spatial and temporal parallel. Forget about weddings and gifts, that’s the least interesting part of the project, except for *Hola!*” MIRALDA, 2002.

### 1992–93

“In an era marked by the rush of consumerism, a seven-year work seems endless to many. Its duration, however, is not only on the same level as many engagements in the not distant past but also seems risible when compared to the twenty-three years it took to produce the Statue of Liberty and the thirty-six that was spent on Columbus” MIREIA SENTÍS, 1992. After the hen night (**Bridal Teapot**



Honeymoon News, 1990



Banns of Marriage, 1990



Gondola Shoe, 1990



Eternity Ring, 1991



Collier Mediterraneus, 1991



Honeymoon Jeans, 1991



**Showers**, International Airport, Las Vegas), **Wedding Ceremony** (Red Rock Canyon, Las Vegas) replaces the presence of the two parties to the contract with that of their respective pelvises, while a fleet of limousines carry the ingredients for the banquet in their trunks. In synchrony with the statues' symbolic marriage, several couples were legally wed. "The arrival at Las Vegas airport, with the hall filled by the huge tea set sent from France, put us in a situation. The city, full of massive shoes, necklaces, *piñatas* [gift-sacks], and presents for Liberty, was captivating. On February 14, Valentine's Day, Teresa Reyes and I, with a hired wedding dress and tuxedo, went to the chapel Miralda had set up, an art installation in the style of Las Vegas' wedding chapels. The walls were lined with pages from the registry with the names of people who were married in the city over its history. Liberty's big ring awaited us on the stage, together with Columbus's 'small' one. We stood inside the ring, flanked by our bridesmaid and best man, Nuria Ribó and Xavier Agulló, in front of the cameras of TV1, TV3, and the BBC, with the reverend in the middle, liturgy in English, and champagne celebration. Dressed as newlyweds, we went out to the desert to attend the great marriage of our hosts, Liberty and Columbus" XEFO GUASCH, 2016. "New York's Statue of Liberty and Barcelona's monument to Columbus are now husband and wife. At 5:30 pm on Friday, in the midst of the Nevada desert – Red Rock Canyon – the marriage ceremony, performed by Antoni Miralda, united the two monuments forever. On the express wishes of the mayoress of Las Vegas, the marriage was recorded as a real event in the city's files" XAVIER AGULLÓ, 1992. "Miralda has always taken the view that spectacles are celebrations inspired by love. For him, the romantic does not stand in contradiction to concepts. To think about the spectacle is an alternative to the involuntary seduction of the image that entirely encapsulates our time" MORGAN, 1991. "Miralda succeeded in reaching the shoreline of this desert post standing at the end of the modern adventure, backed and authorized by modern institutions, with the same colonizing attitude as Columbus himself. It would seem that Las Vegas might have something to learn from *Honeymoon Project*. At least, this is what is implied when an artistic work asks you to form part of it, when it tries to reach schools and the population in general, and when it claims donations of goods and services [...]"

Miralda is the last gasp in what has proved erroneous in the modern past" LIBBY LUMPKIN, 1992. "*The Honeymoon Project* played with the confrontation/attraction of two opposite poles, one of which symbolized conquest and the other, liberty. From 1986 to 1992, artists, craftsmen, and ordinary people transformed the symbols into the characters of a love story at once monumental and banal. The question now is whether our proposal has a defined meaning or whether, in actual fact, it will hang over us like a question mark that we shall be forced to write over and over again" MIRALDA, 1993. "*Honeymoon Project* is unquestionably Miralda's most ambitious and complete work, but, in addition and above all, it is his essential work, the one that culminates and crystallizes a process of development of ideas and forms rooted in the very origins of his artistic activity" BORRÀS, 1995. Jordi Torrent summarizes the project's main events in his report *Monuments in Love*. A number of places in the western Mediterranean (Barcelona, Palma, and Ibiza) and the Atlantic coast of North America (Atlanta and New York) felt the presence of his works. **Falla aquàtica** (XXV Olympic Games, Barcelona), produced in collaboration with master *fallero* Manolo Martín and documented in a video of the same name, has a column of 25 gigantic plates, one for each of the Games' hosting cities, floating in the port of Barcelona; the structure, crowned with a huge cake, burned when the Olympic flame arrived in the city. *Llumener parabòlic*, an intervention planned for the lighthouse at Botafoc (Ibiza), does not come to fruition. Miralda and Guillén set themselves up in Miami (Española Way), shortly after Hurricane Andrew levels Florida.

#### 1994

*Me-nus* traveling exhibition (Centre Cultural Sa Nostra, Palma de Mallorca). Interventions in Washington and Miami, where on Lincoln Road – the first pedestrian street in the United States and redesigned by Morris Lapidus – he installs a version of the *Have a Good Year* piece of confidante furniture as a public piece. He works as ideas director for property company Dacra in Miami Beach, where he redesigns the façade

of an old fifties' bank building (Financial Federal Bank Building). "We lived on Española Way (Miami Beach), in a space that Miralda turned into a work of art through the use of shape and color. He set up his studio on a mezzanine. There was a big eye on the front door, a swimming pool simulated on the linoleum floor, a huge column of plates in the kitchen, a bathtub in the bedroom [...]" The space was inviting the organization of dinners for friends and having them take part in a kind of game" GUILLÉN, 2015.

#### 1995

**Procés, 1965-1995** (Palau de la Virreina, Barcelona) brings together more than 250 drawings, and also the installation *Las patatas del Virrey Amat*. "From a historical point of view, these drawings reveal the artist's mental models, the emergence and evolution of ideas and concepts and, in the case of the unfulfilled projects, their fleeting existence, occurring but once; others include annotations on choreography, descriptions of unusual materials, all kinds of recipes, menus, preparatory work, and discoveries made regarding color" TRASOBARES, 1994. "In *Las patatas del Virrey Amat*, Miralda covers the floor in a large amount of gold-painted tubers that he allows to ferment and in a few days they give off an unbearable smell. Here is one of the clearest examples of the critical, although always festive, sense in Miralda's work. The artist shows us both sides of the coin; the potato as basic foodstuff, a symbol of meeting, synchronism, and embrace, and the potato as symbol of a civilization's ruin, decomposition, and division. Working with foodstuffs implies working with garbage, swallowing forces one to defecate, and talking about food is inevitably also talking about hunger" FERNÁNDEZ CAMPO, 2002. "The fact that Miralda is very steady, that he is tenacious, takes us directly to the point. This is not something to get a laugh or to shock you. This really points at how we can think or rethink something that we always assumed to be so. [...] That's important: all art must make you do this," states JOHN MASON in the catalog for the retrospective exhibition **Obres. 1965-1995** (Centre Cultural Fundació "la Caixa", Barcelona, 1995; IVAM, Valencia, 1996). This exhibition is also referred to by RESTANY, 1996: "In his perception of the surrounding atmosphere, Miralda takes account of the infinite virtuality of expressive messages.

The industrial, folkloric, artisanal, and religious object constitutes the basis of a generalized semantic release and the substructure of a chain of poetic associations. [...] François Burkhardt has stressed the synchronism of this interactive alchemical and multimedia work that aims to establish a common language, a lingua franca to unify different levels of visual culture." He builds a wooden hut for beach-lifeguard use (*Home Sweet Home*, Miami Beach). *From Mateu to Franco* (Monument, Caserna de Sant Agustí, Barcelona) plays on the name of the first mayor of Barcelona appointed by Franco after the Civil War. "As a semantic and ideological paradox, the project's title itself recycles the phrase the mayor used in his letters to Madrid, with the formal salutation in Spanish "Mateu a Franco," which in Catalan means "Kill Franco." The work revolved around a piece in the shape of the dollar sign, covered in tar. In the upper part, there was a mosaic-collage made up of 25,000 1 peseta coins, which had been withdrawn from circulation. Surrounded by the penetrating smell of the tar, visitors were invited to take part in the work by adding their own coins" (ROMA, 2010). It wins the Premi Ciutat de Barcelona de Artes Plàstiques [City of Barcelona Plastic Arts Prize], shared with Antoni Muntadas.

#### 1996

In **La torre dels plats**, Miralda covers the interior of MACBA in a scheme of 680 ceramic plates, printed with the first texts alluding to the *Food Culture Museum* project. At the Círculo de Bellas Artes in Madrid, he runs a plastic arts workshop entitled "Museo de la Comida como Cultura" [Museum of Food as Culture]: "The workshop aims to develop an esthetic beyond traditional limits, integrating artistic experience into daily life. It is based on the conceptualization and definition of an imaginary museum of food and its connection with human behavior, politics, architecture, and religion." *Lectures* (Studio Meyetta, Barcelona) shows a collection of *caganers* [traditional Catalan small figures defecating] that are reading. In Miami, jointly with Montse Guillén, he opens the restaurant-installation, **Bigfish Mayaimi** (1996–99). "Guillén and Miralda reinvent the Big Fish. Although grouper sandwiches are still served,



Falla aquàtica, 1992



Wedding Chapel, Honeymoon, 1992



Les patates del Virrei Amat, 1995



Obres. 1965-1995, 1995



Home Sweet Home, 1995



From Mateu to Franco, 1995



there is also Mediterranean cuisine, all in the setting of Miralda's wild installations. They call it *Bigfish Mayaimi*, the indigenous word for 'fresh water.' It is a place where people go to eat, to enjoy a totally different aquatic milieu, with tugs and cargo boats. A place to reflect or to contemplate the city's skyline" MARISA BARTOLUCCI, 1997. "Montse Guillén met Miralda in 1979 at a restaurant she owned at the time. On that occasion, she had undertaken to bake 1,000 French rolls with flutes inside for one of his projects. They have been together ever since. At the end of 1992, the twosome began to tire of New York and decided to move to Miami with the idea of making frequent trips to the Caribbean. 'People enjoy working with Miralda so much because he never tells anybody what to do,' she says. 'Miralda hands you a problem and leaves you to find the solution. He encourages you to learn new things while learning about your own self. With him, you always discover something that was there all the time without you having realized'" CANTOR, 1998.

### 1997

Miralda's participation in the Istanbul Biennial, along with the publication of a newspaper distributed with the Sunday edition of the city's top-selling daily newspaper *Gazetepazar*, marks the commencement of the *City Plates* series, included in the *Food Culture Museum* project. Under the title *Miralda* (Galerie de France, Paris), a set of photographs and objects, among which are the lamp skulls (*Last Supper*) and "Lenguas," made with cans of soda sold in Miami for the different Latinamerican communities' tastes. "Since 1997, Miralda has been working around the world, on different phases of his *Food Culture Museum* project [...] This is, in numerous senses, an anthropological project [...] This is about a collective company, in which large teams of people frequently participate, not a position taken in isolation by the artist. Instead of that, he puts into motion mechanisms that allow us to strike up a relationship with what he calls 'the state of taste.' The project is global, without being globalized, and aspires to include the widest category of object under the epigraph of World Food Culture [...] *Food Culture Museum's* database first saw the light of day at the Miami Art Museum in *Grandma's Recipes*, 1998–99." JEFFETT, 2002 (2).



La torre dels plats, 1996



Bigfish Mayaimi, 1996–99

### 1998–99

On the *Grandma's Recipes* (Miami Art Museum and Montreal Biennale), at the entrance to which a camera allowed visitors to photograph themselves with their tongue hanging out, MARICEL PRESILLA, 1998, writes: "Our grandmothers are the men and women, old and young, who fuel the kitchen fire and feed our souls. Their recipes are coded messages, keys that open the door to the inner life of that magical space which is known to us as the kitchen. The purpose of the *Grandma's Recipes* project is not just to retrieve a moment in time but to capture the taste of that moment. A *Grandma's Recipes* are chronicles of the kitchen, documents treasured like works of art." "For the texts of the recipes, he uses special publications (tablecloths, posters, and newspapers) in which the project is described. Local networks distribute the information and act as liaison for the participation of various sectors from each community. A team works with the artist in the selection of documents in a number of cities and in electronic space, the Internet." TRASOBARES, 1998. "I've always been interested in popular culture. I'm fascinated by things that link people to their homes and their milieu. I'm interested in the souvenirs and icons of celebrations: an Easter bunny, a chocolate cathedral, a hand-painted egg [...] Food is a language that we all understand. Foodstuffs are common symbols, which, at the same time, show the difference between us. This intersection of cultures is what saves us all, it is what paves the way for things to happen" MIRALDA, 1998. With Enric Miralles, he conceives a project to create a Museu del Menjar [Museum of Food] at the Santa Caterina market. The architect's death stops the proposal from prospering.

### 2000

The result of four years' work with Canadian team Arra, *Food Pavilion* (Expo 2000, Hannover), where the *Food Culture Museum* concept starts to be defined, includes pieces such as *Tongue of Tongues*, *Infinity Table*, *Laptop Altar*, *Garden of Edible Delights*, and the *African Projects* (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Malawi, Mauritania, and Benin), as well as twenty-five city dishes from the *Sabores y Lenguas* [Tastes & Tongues] series (Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Barcelona, Beijing, Budapest, Buenos Aires, Cape



Grandma's Recipes, 1998–99

Town, Delhi, Istanbul, Havana, Hannover, Helsinki, Jerusalem, Madrid, Marrakech, Mexico City, Miami, Montreal, Paris, Port-au-Prince, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, Seoul, Sidney, Tokyo). "The project is artistic, the space does not belong to the world of art. Once more, Miralda has addressed the contradiction of working in a non-artistic place, event, and context. It is not a question of going beyond the limits, of invading borderlands, of occupying interstitial spaces; it is a systematic work methodology peculiar to this artist who, practically since 1965, has been moving in a strange land, with ideas that are foreign to us, in unprotected spaces, in unspecific places" ANTONI MERCADER, 2000. "His aim is not the creation of static, definitive works of art. Like a chef, what most concerns him is the creation, with his team, of a unique experience that will never be forgotten by the participants. Although *joie de vivre* and enjoyment come first and foremost, Miralda always takes his research work very seriously. He puts in place sensual and corporal processes conducive to understanding and the acquisition of knowledge. Far from wanting to prove something, his objective is to convey 'knowledge via a minor collision in which experience becomes rooted in the depths of one's inner essence,' as Walter Benjamin put it in 1928, at the time of the Berlin Food Fair" ANNEMARIE HÜRLIMANN, 2000. "On crossing the threshold of the Food Pavilion, I felt immersed in a space that had little to do with the other interiors I visited. It was one of the few that was not ruled by institutional propaganda or the sensationalism of technological media, but by the parameters of an artistic installation. I left there hugely gratified, as I had been affected by an enveloping space that had rung with the echoes of a work of total art, although without Wagnerian exaltation. Human, too human, inspired as it was by an artistic sensibility that is very closely related to environmental and ecological sustainability. Even its gestation, and the vicissitudes that surrounded it, was marked by a novelistic coloration" MARCHÁN, 2002. "Miralda laid out his *Infinity Table*, an unusual journey through the infinite table of collections. Contemplating its 45 display cases, we were able to travel in body and soul: from *The Poetical Gut*, with its outrageous collection of urinals and *caganers*, all the way to the remarkable collection of *Egg Dream Museum* – comprising the eggs and nests of countless birds sumptuously decorated by artisans from all over the world, or made specially



Infinity Table, Food Pavilion, 2000



Fecundity Ceiling, Food Pavilion, 2000

by artists such as Rebecca Horn, Jana Sterbak, Eulàlia Valldosera, and Louise Bourgeois from ostrich eggs sent by Miralda – via *Food Design*, a collection of menus for TV addicts, devout Catholics, and astronauts, and *Gluttony and Survival*, with World War Two soldiers' survival kits, ration stamps with Third Reich printed at the top, Cuban provisions books, and a very long etcetera. Again, and more than ever, our collective palate had the chance to sample an unprecedented universal mixture of glamor, suffering, memory, ritual, technology, excess, and tradition" ROSA PERA, 2002. "The Food Pavilion's slogan was food as communication: sharing ideas around a table. That was the meaning of Infinity Table: going around a physical and at the same time mental structure, in which it was possible to soak up and be fed by a series of messages and objects, at the same time as tasting and smelling what the cook was preparing" MIRALDA, 2002.

### 2001

*Meeting Point* (Palau de la Virreina, Barcelona) turns the exhibition space into a mix of farm, office, and shop for three months. "The project's central element was a seven-meter-high hen coop, which housed hens, roosters, and chicks in an environment equipped with a sofa and a TV showing a video that included Antonio Machín's song 'Tengo una debilidad' [I have a weakness]. Around it, fifteen vending machines dispensed products such as cava and fresh eggs. As well as calling for a rethink on our relationship with food production and distribution, *Meeting Point* was asking: To what extent are we the chickens in the coop?" JEFFETT, 2002 (2). *Egg Dream Museum* (*Hieronymus Bosch*, Boijmans Museum, Rotterdam) establishes a parallel with Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights*. In *Sign of Good Taste: Collections / Selections Food Culture Museum* (*Active Ingredients*, COPIA, Napa, California), the incorporation of a collection of *caganers* depicting the Pope among other personalities unleashed protests and provoked controversy in American media. "This display is offensive, gratuitous, and unnecessary," said Patrick Scully, spokesman of the Catholic League of Religions and Civil Rights. The league's leaders sent a letter to the museum's officials, who replied via e-mail, declaring their support of the display: 'These figures



symbolize the cycle of eating and fertilizing the soil, a requirement for future survival,' wrote the director Peggy Loar. To this, the president of the Catholic League, William Donohue, replied sarcastically: 'Now I understand: to show his appreciation of Mother Earth, Miralda has to depict the Pope and the nuns defecating.' The thirty-five tiny figures, about the size of chess pieces, have their roots in Spanish Catholicism. 'They are called *caganers* and form part of a Catalan Catholic tradition dating back to the nineteenth century,' said Loar. 'They are used in nativity scenes to bring peasants good luck the following year.' [...] The display consists of works specially commissioned for the occasion, produced by seven contemporary artists involved in the food theme. Miralda filled eleven soft drink refrigerated display units with *objets trouvés*, an integral part of his ongoing project, *Food Culture Museum*" JOHN M. GLIONNA, 2002. "The Napa *caganers* are an example of a project where controversy is useful to give it a new shape. If we maintain balance, it's because of adding up irreverences. The Napa piece was part of a series of displays with hundreds of objects. There was no reason to concentrate only on the little figure of the Pope carrying out his needs" MIRALDA, 2002. "The exhibition consisted of glass inside-lit cold-storage units set out in a darkened room. In the *Poetic Entrails* category, a shelf was dedicated to the popular *caganer* figures that appear around the Holy Family in Catalan nativity scenes. Among the new variations on the traditional countryman having a bowel movement, figures included Fidel Castro, Santa Claus, the Pope, and Uncle Sam, and, after the exhibition had opened, Bin Laden" JEFFETT, 2002 (2). *Happy Hour Moveable Mixer (Local Time, St. Johann Quartier, Basel)* transforms a builders' hut into a roving multicultural cocktail bar. In Barcelona, he designs the poster for La Mercè, later published as a serigraphy tablecloth. "In 2001, we set up in the space that would later become TransEAT, until the neighborhood (Wynwood) turned fashionable with the gallery and Miami Art Basel boom. Neighborhoods keep changing, and you have to leave in search of wilder spaces. In 2009, we moved to a little house with a vegetable garden in Little Haiti. Underground vocation or lack of resources?" MIRALDA, 2015. "The space we call TransEAT was a huge industrial building on two floors that had been a refrigerator factory. In the center, we made a big open kitchen, a kind of island that allowed

us to organize dinners for very many guests and show Miralda's large-format works. Everything fitted in there, anything was possible" GUILLÉN, 2015.

## 2002

In the installation *Home Tender Home* (The Wolfsonian Florida International University, Miami Beach), Miralda uses 8,000 empty aluminum cans to transform an old bridge warden's hut into a fully-fitted home, including furniture, television, and so on. *What will we eat tomorrow?* (Berlin Messe, Berlin) is the question posed in the title of a complex installation built for Berlin's domestic technology fair. Among other things, Miralda uses a wall of apple vending machines and a grain of rice, where the inscription, "What will we eat tomorrow?" is engraved. In the catalog for *Tastes & Tongues. 13 Cities* (Centro Cultural Español, Miami), WILLIAM JEFFETT, 2002 (1), makes the following comment: "Beginning in Miami, Miralda presents 13 major Latin American cities with their local tastes. *Tastes & Tongues* consists of a collection of dishes, each one of which reproduces a huge tongue and the street guide of the city in question. Arranged around all this are hand-written texts containing the local recipes, ingredients, expressions, and sayings peculiar to each place. In this way, the dishes constitute a synopsis of a huge culinary memory database." "Five hundred people attended the opening of Miralda's *Tastes & Tongues. 13 Cities* project. All the cities were represented by one or more of their citizens: Barcelona, Bogota, Buenos Aires, Caracas, Havana, Lima, Madrid, Managua, Mexico City, Miami, Montevideo, San Juan, and Santo Domingo. Those who came enjoyed the brilliant installation conceived by Miralda, devoured the exquisite tongue a la vinaigrette prepared by the Argentinian restaurateur Paolo Protti, and contemplated the sausages and other delicacies on the delightful street-selling cart of the Cuban, Ahmed. [...] Some people expressed their distaste because one part of the exhibition included a dish with the image of Che Guevara. Other dishes in the collection depict Elvis Presley, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the White House, *Honeymoon*, and the first man on the moon" GUILLERMO BASSO, 2002. He exhibits in the Barcelona galleries Camilla Hamm and Senda, and has his first solo show in Madrid: *Sabores*

*y Lenguas: 15 platos capitales* (Fundación ICO). "The dish constitutes a concentric element, which contains the summary of information gathered from team research, carried out *in situ* and time-limited, which guarantees it is something that is fresh, but at the same time incomplete. Each dish is the topographic representation of a taste and a language. [...] The plate itself is receptive. Its concave and concentric shape allows it to gather information and memory. It is a bearer of messages and offerings, it moves around and enriches – it enriches as it moves. And at the same time it can be interpreted as the medium, the parchment, the page or document" MIRALDA, 2002. "Miralda's tongues are territories pointing the way, like dietetic kits containing a plan of the city, the likeliest ones on the left and on the right are the authorities' quotes. If the receiver's eyes take a close look at the two flanks of the tongue-territory, they are met with the chaotic enumeration of a knowledge that belongs to reason, sentiment, and irony, the three filters of knowledge, all at the same time" VÁZQUEZ MONTALBÁN, 2002 (1). "In Madrid, on occasion of the Spanish presidency of the European Union, Miralda presents fifteen dishes from its fifteen capitals [Amsterdam, Athens, Berlin, Brussels, Copenhagen, Dublin, Helsinki, Lisbon, London, Luxembourg, Madrid, Paris, Rome, Stockholm, and Vienna]; he seats European citizens around the table and suggests reflection on the 'union' and 'difference' of their distinct cultures through what their peoples eat. With a playful look, the artist reminds us that it is there, in the most intimate part of each home, in the tastes of infancy, in the smells and colors of our kitchens and market stalls, that the really important things are cooked" FERNÁNDEZ DEL CAMPO, 2002. "I've come to believe that the only positive thing to come out of the Spanish presidency of the European Union is this exhibition of Miralda's. In view of the almost total failure of Europe as a political entity, it may be that a few years from now that a stubbornness like Miralda's to find what really unites us will be properly valued" VÁZQUEZ MONTALBÁN, 2002 (2).

## 2003

*Santa Comida*'s presence at MACBA serves as a frame for the Ceremonia del Tambor de Fundamento [drum of foundation ceremony]. "Miralda's piece, a kind of multiple altar where the main divinities from the Afro-Cuban pantheon have their favorite foods, which

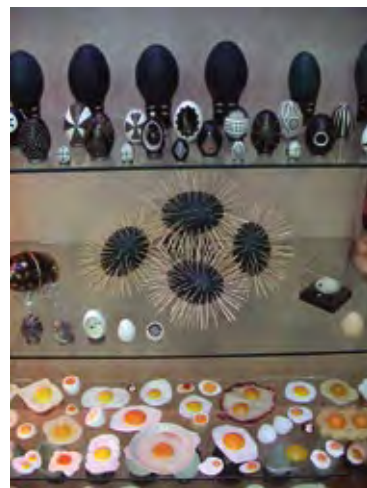
not only delights the public but also supplies the needs of a battalion of mites and maggots, thus turning itself, to the museum's desperation, into a palpable and smelly demonstration of the fact that artworks are alive" MERCEDES ABAD, 2003. *PANlingua (Banquete, metabolismo y comunicación, Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid)* consists of the installation of two wood-fired ovens in the former Conde Duque military barracks, in which were cooked bread rolls containing pieces of paper with messages written by people. The *Vaixella Imaginària / Vajilla Imaginaria* (Casa de la Premsa, Barcelona, 2003) exhibition is complemented by Benet Rossell's *Casa de la Premsa* video. "The *Vajilla Imaginaria* project started in 2003, where more than 200 people were invited to express themselves and communicate through a dish. The result was an auction-exhibition, the money from which went to finance the future Centro Internacional de la Cultura de la Comida. In 2005, a book that documented each dish was published. Unforeseen political and financing circumstances meant that the Centro Internacional de la Comida did not come into being. As a farewell, the *Entierro de la Sardina [Burial of the Sardine]* was held at MACBA in 2007" ROMA, 2010. "For a time, Miralda tried everything he could to get an institutional home for his FCM. He was about to achieve this, on Montjuïc, in a semi-abandoned building dating from the 1929 Exposition. But it wasn't possible to find the funds for the restoration. Now, he's glad about that failure. 'We've decided that the formula of a museum without walls is better,' he explains. 'If they'd given us a museum, we'd now be suffocated by authorities and sponsors'" MARTÍ FONT, 2009. The book reproduces 208 dishes, together with texts by Llorenç Torrado, Mercedes Abad, and Mayra Bosada. The pieces from *Collection in Context (Menu, TransEAT, Miami, curated by Julieta González)* are presented in the usual refrigeration units, converted by the artist into a "metaphor of the spirit of 'preservation' in which museums work." He creates the set for Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, in an operatic version by Carles Santos (Puerto de Sagunto; Valencia Biennial). The name *FoodCultura* gradually shifts toward that of *Food Culture Museum*, while Miralda's identity is diluted ever more in a collective work.



Meeting Point, 2001



Happy Hour, 2001



Egg Dream Museum, 2001



Sabores y Lenguas: 15 platos capitales, 2002



PANlingua, 2003



Vajilla Imaginaria, 2003



## 2004

*Sabores y Lenguas: Caracas* (Museo de Bellas Artes). “Miralda bases his works on the rigorous observation of interculturality. Nothing better attests to this than his *Sabores y Lenguas* series. He has not only studied food and its rituals in societies on a number of continents. He examines their transcultural meaning, as representations of an era in which globalization has made us all interdependent” GARCÍA CANCLINI, 2010. “*X-Mas in Guantanamo*” (*Sale*, TransEAT, Art Basel Miami) revolves around a text – which in the installation appears hand-written on an egg – written by the British citizen Jamal I-Harith after he was released from the prison at Guantanamo.

“Antoni Miralda takes aim at the Bush administration with *X-Mas in Guantanamo*, a piece that includes a pink plastic flamingo with a white sports sock over its head. The flamingo finds itself at the bottom of a refrigerator on whose upper shelf is displayed a prisoner’s food, a loaf of bread studded with little United States flags, and a tiny plastic figure of Santa Claus taking a shit” MEGAN VOELLER, 2006. In collaboration with Llorenç Torrado, he prepares the “comidartecultura.abc” chapter, for the book *Alimentos: la conquista humana* (Lunwerk, Barcelona).

## 2005

With Alicia Ríos, he runs a series of workshops in Castelló. He presents the *Food Culture Museum* project in Tokyo (Franco-Japanese Institute). *Sabores y Lenguas: Lima* (Centro Cultural de España, Lima). *Sabores y Lenguas: Bogotá* (Museo de Bogotá). “*Sabores y Lenguas: 13 ciudades* disembarked in Caracas at the end of 2004, later visiting Lima, Bogota, and continuing on to Mexico City. The word ‘itinerant’ can give rise to confusion, as what this Catalan artist has done is not construct a group of closed works and then taken them from one place to the next. What Miralda and *Food Culture Museum* have done is design a conceptual device that permits the questioning of, as well as interaction with, the culinary culture of each city in which the project is presented. *Sabores y Lenguas* tells us that culinary experience’s place is in culture, not just on the dining room or restaurant table. In fact, the chosen visual logo is the silhouette of a human tongue. The tongue as organ of taste and at the same time speech, of talking, and thus the

sociality without which the symposium comes down to a ‘sad, lonely, and final’ consumption of foods” CARLOS JIMÉNEZ, 2005. He exhibits in towns in the province of Barcelona, Vilafranca del Penedés (*La núvia dels ous*, Palma XII Galeria d’Art) and Mollet del Vallés (*FoodCultura Collections*, L’Aparador del Museo Municipal Joan Abelló), where he invites residents to bring domestic objects and secret recipes. In *Picantó a la Moritz*, Guillén and Miralda put together a recipe whose main ingredients are a spiced chicken (free-range) and a can of beer (Salón Degusta, Barcelona).

## 2006

*Sabores y Lenguas: Ciudad de México* (Centro Cultural de España en México). *Sabores y Lenguas: La Habana* (Havana Biennial). *Sabores y Lenguas: Miami* (Centro Cultural de España; Collins Building; TransEAT). *Sabores y Lenguas: São Paulo* (São Paulo Biennial).

## 2007

*Sabores y Lenguas: Montevideo* (Centro Cultural de España en Montevideo). *Sabores y Lenguas: Buenos Aires* (Museo de Arte Moderno). “The *Sabores y Lenguas* project explores the relationships between culture, food, and society in a number of Latin American cities. In each of them, Miralda opens a workshop, involves artists, cooks, restaurateurs, anthropologists, and all sorts of cultural activists, makes contact with universities, and ends up organizing a huge local fiesta, where it is the autochthonous that shines. In Montevideo, for example, he organizes a *maté* tasting, something that had never been done before” MARTÍ FONT, 2009. *Gambes on Wheels* (Fòrum Gastronòmic, Girona; Salón Degusta, Barcelona) realizes a “starter in motion” proposal, where a procession of twenty-one Seat 600s belonging to the Moritz collection travel from Barcelona to Girona; on the journey, recorded on video, the gambas are cooked by the heat of the engines. He takes part in a workshop run by Frederic Amat in the Modelo prison in Barcelona, where he tells the inmates about the concept, genesis, and production of *Honeymoon*. One of the prisoners says: “I really

loved that thing with Columbus and Liberty. Shame she’s called a statue: she should be the Lady of Liberty, because she’s the greatest woman there is.” At the Antiga Fàbrica Moritz, which will go on to be the home of the *FoodCultura* Foundation and Archive for seven years, Guillén and Miralda create an Altar in posthumous homage to the journalist and gastronome Llorenç Torrado.

## 2008

On the occasion of World Potato Day, he produces *Oda a la Papa* (Noche en Blanco, Barrio de Miraflores, Lima), a procession that goes down three avenues in the city with balloons, mobile tables, enlarged pictures of the tuber in gold frames from the International Potato Institute, moving platforms, limousines, street cleaning trucks, and a competition for music groups from all over the country. The *Power Food* (ARTIUM, Vitoria, 2008; Es Baluard Museu d’Art Modern i Contemporani, Palma de Mallorca, 2009) exhibition is rounded off by the publication of the *POWER FOOD LEXIcom* (Edicions de l’Eixample) dictionary, in whose entry for *FoodCultura* CÉSAR TRASOBARES, 2008, writes: “Created by Antoni Miralda at the end of the sixties, nourished and strengthened with the collaboration of Montse Guillén since the beginning of the eighties, the corpus of *FoodCultura*’s actions and collections, as well as restaurants, publications, exhibitions, and projects, were consolidated in the *Food Culture Museum* at the end of the nineties.” “Taking the shape of missiles, the can montages bore labels providing the *Nutrition Power Facts*, but instead of the usual information – calories, carbohydrates, etc. – had categories such as Agro-business, Biofuels, Light vs. Fat, Hunger, Import-Export, Foodlandia, Food Insecurity, and Genetically Modified Food, conceived to accentuate our consciousness of factors that configure the production of food and its consumption” JEFFETT, 2009. “All of this, the taste of touch, the flavor of text, the texture of aroma, the color of food, the attraction of the senses, grandma’s recipes, aphrodisiac delicacies, the taboo of cannibalism, the danger of foodstuffs, and many more things, are covered in *POWER FOOD LEXIcom*, the book just published by this unclassifiable artist with the instinct of an anthropologist who sails,

together with the essential Montse Guillén, on board the great ocean liner the *Food Culture Museum*, a museum without walls, almost imaginary but definitely very real [...] The device in question weighs almost a kilo, and revolves around a lexicographical inventory of fifty key words or semantic fields that allow reflection on the infinite relationships that exist between food, culture, energy, and power. The work can be read in the orthodox way, starting with *abstinencia* [fasting] and ending at ‘vegetarianism.’ It can also be tackled through the illustrations that accompany the text. This way, a transverse, visionary reading can be obtained” MARTÍ FONT, 2009.

## 2009

*Dolçura d’en-saïm-ada* (Iglesia dels Sagrats Cors and Can Weyler, Palma de Mallorca). “Configured around two elements – a ceremonial and a video installation –, this work continues the Mallorca tradition of the visit and offering to the more than one hundred sleeping Mothers of God, who only show themselves during the week of the Assumption. The project mixed religious and pagan references: from church to museum, from private veneration to public stroll, from ecclesiastical atmosphere to the installation’s smells and the sweet tastes of the *ensaimada*” ROMA, 2010. In the catalog for the *Miralda* exhibition (Galería Moisés Pérez de Albéniz, Pamplona), ANTONI MERCADER, 2009, observes: “Classifying a career of more than thirty years as unclassifiable is somewhat paradoxical.” Accompanied by four publications in newspaper form, *@Table!* (MIAM, Sète) is subdivided into the same number of fields: “Salle à manger Tabou,” “Réservoir végétarien ou carnivore” (a vegetable garden of medicinal and aromatic plants, with the resin and polyester sculpture of the steer-pig-sheep – *Tri-Uni-Corn* – from *Wheat & Steak*, Kansas City, 1981), “Projets du *Food Culture Museum*,” and “Archives *FoodCultura*” (a collection of objects, videos, and documents, together with the *Salle Mythologie populaire* installation). “Beyond the objects and other food and agriculture marketing inventions, Miralda mainly collects experiences [...] In some ways, *@Table!* is a kind of forum. Each visitor who brings their culinary baggage to it carries the experience of all the others to the same extent” LEYDIER, 2009. “Antoni Miralda is not a modest artist,



TransEAT Menu, 2003



Lysistrata, 2003



X-mas in Guantánamo, 2004



Picantó a la Moritz, 2005



Sabores y Lenguas: São Paulo, 2006



Oda a la papa, 2008



but modest art has a strong presence in his works. I met him a few years ago in Miami. His partner Montse Guillén was making strange meals for their *FoodCultura* Foundation, which was turned into a restaurant for the occasion. Dishes prepared entirely from insects, following recipes from far-flung countries, were available for tasting [...] The town of Sète takes pride in offering Miralda a stage in this project, which brings together the most modest cooks from the street or Grandma's recipes and the culinary learning of the great molecular chefs. Miralda is a secret artist who reveals to us the poetry of normal images and objects, magnificently setting out the passionate and mystical relationship that men and women have with what they eat" DI ROSA, 2009. "Two video montages make up the best moments in the exhibition. *Cause à effet* is a quick series of short film clips in which people eat and drink. It matters little which, be it love-potion or beer, raw meat or slice of bread: an obsessive succession of close-ups of mouths, teeth, chewing, eyes excited by the pleasure of absorption or lit up by appetite remind us that the human being, when feeding, is no more than an animal, and one of the most uncouth. The second montage shows the adventures of Popeye, and recalls the fact that the famous sailor with the spinach was a war propaganda figure for the United States. Food is definitely a geopolitical affair" PHILIPPE DAGEN, 2009. He takes part in the *Illuminations. Visionary Catalonia* (CCCB, Barcelona) exhibition. *Corso Maíz Mito* was the title of a project that did not come off in Lima.

## 2010

Fifteen years after his first retrospective, he opens *De gustibus non disputandum* [On tastes there is no Dispute] (Palacio de Velázquez, MNCARS, Madrid). "The temporary nature of Miralda's work and his expansive participatory formula underline how complicated it is to set out a conventional retrospective exhibition [...] Miralda considers, however, that 'the retrospective exhibition formula allows for clarification of my work, as it has never been sufficiently well explained, which hasn't been helped by my nomadic spirit, nor, of course, the temporary nature of a large part of my work'" TEJEDA, 2010. "It is by no means common to witness such minute ethnographic observation along with an appetite so voracious that it has taken him around the Americas, Europe, India, Japan, Australia,

and much of Africa to then monumentalize the intimate and take the local abroad" GARCÍA CANCLINI, 2010. "A basic strategy of kitsch, pastiche is very different from collage [...] The term *pasticcio*, inspired by the Italian dish in which foods are eventually mixed together, is better known in its French version, and was applied in the Renaissance to musical or pictorial works created with bits and pieces of other originals. Pastiche kitsch works with two almost contradictory elements, excess and remains [...] Perhaps that is why kitsch – the etymology of which comes from the German *kitschen* – finds a soul mate in cooking" CELESTE OLALQUIAGA, 2010. *Alba. Celebración del amanecer* takes place as a breakfast-offering to the winged lionesses of the Palacio de Velázquez (El Retiro, Noche en Blanco, Madrid). Coinciding with World Food Day (October 16), *FoodCultura* starts its annual *Sant Stomak* commemorations. The *Olienunllum* (*You Are Not Alone*, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona) action, set around the olive tree in the Fundació Joan Miró courtyard, consists of a cocktail made from distilled arbequina olive oil ("Miró 47.5°"), served in test tubes and offered on an olive-shaped table, lit by oil lamps; a sampling of artisanal breads soaked in extra virgin arbequina olive oil rounded off the tasting. *Hostias con tinta de calamar*, in collaboration with Alicia Ríos, offered participants a sheet of wafer on which to write or draw with fresh squid ink, eventually making up the publication *Poble News #1* (Tallers Oberts del Poble Nou, Taller & Arxiu *FoodCultura*, Barcelona).

## 2011

*Digestible News, Kreëmart News* (Miami Art Basel; *Frames and Documents: Conceptualist Practices*, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation) suggests reflection on news that is consumed without people being conscious of its assimilation, inviting participants to experiment with the idea of creating, eating, and digesting news – literally – , thanks to wafer paper and digital printing with edible ink. The project will be run again as *Digestible News Marseille* (*Cuisines en Friche*, Marseille, 2013). Miami (Art & Work) is also the scene for the *Lingua* installation: "The walls of the consulting room of dentist and collector Arturo Mosquera

offer an ideal setting for the photographs of tongues. For Mosquera, the exhibition has educational value. The patients are at first surprised, and then thoroughly look through a dossier on Miralda's career. Many reply to a questionnaire about favorite dishes and places in which to enjoy them, called *Sabiduría de la memoria del gusto* [wisdom of taste's memory], which allows the public to take part in the show" SARAH MORENO, 2011. In *Papa Stomacal d'après Miró*, Miralda combines Miró's *La Pomme de terre* drawing (1928) with an X-ray of his own stomach. He takes part in the *L'art del menjar. De la natura morta a Ferran Adrià* (La Pedrera, Barcelona) exhibition.

## 2012

In 2012, he moves into an old industrial building in the Barcelona neighborhood of Poblenou ("Poble New" in Miralda's slang). "Antoni Miralda greets me in Barcelona, at the place that for him acts as home, warehouse, and laboratory. In these huge premises, in boxes, display cases, notepads, and books, there are more than fifty years of a life dedicated to translating into the language of art our ways of producing, preparing, and consuming food. Miralda tirelessly pursues a thrilling project [...] Every one of the artist's interventions contributes to the construction of the manifesto" CHEVALLIER, 2014. He presents *Altar Ego* (Bòlit, Centre d'Art Contemporani, Girona), and takes charge of the Barcelona Pavilion at the Shanghai Biennial, for which he creates twelve tongue-shaped collages (*Twin Tastes & Tongues*). "The deadlines are short. Another artist might perhaps be stressed. But Miralda doesn't seem to be. 'The thing is,' he clarifies, 'I live comfortably with stress. I need to work fast'" LLÄTZER MOIX, 2012. "Barcelona and Shanghai have been twinned since 2001. More than through political agreements, the twinning process of the culture of local food – tapas in Shanghai, Chinese *jiaozi* dumplings in Barcelona – has come about through the globalization of gastronomy, making it possible to trace a fluctuating absence and presence from Barcelona to Shanghai and vice versa. In the cracks of the confrontation of these two cities, a new territory will emerge. A territory populated by the imaginaries of the Far East and the far West, urban palimpsests of ramblas and skyscrapers. With a steaming

new cuisine that crosses lime with egg and hundred-year-old ginger with *pan con tomate* [bread with tomato]" MORANDEIRA, 2012.

## 2013

*Sabores y Lenguas: Santiago de Chile* (Galería Metropolitana, 2013). "There's an adage that goes 'When all arts collapse, the noble art of cooking will still be alive.' Miralda's proposals and projects can be understood as a desire to artistically interpret and preserve the planet's culinary traditions. The result is a kind of archive-museum-stage-library-laboratory-workshop-kitchen, which makes completely new ways of understanding cultural situations and phenomena associated with food viable. His projects contaminate museums with everyday flavors. To do this, he constantly makes use of popular platforms. Ideas such as that of the guerrilla and cultural resistance are related to his work" CONRADO URIBE, 2013. "A bridge between stomach, brain, and heart; that's how we define *FoodCultura*" MIRALDA, 2013 (2). In the MACBA Study Centre, he presents the *Twin Tastes & Tongues* archive. He coorganizes *F.O.O.D. (Food, Objects, Objectives, Design)* (Mint Museum Uptown, Charlotte, North Carolina).

## 2014

In the first location of the double exhibition *FOOD* (SESC, São Paulo; MuCEM, Marseilles), he participates with the restaurant-installation *Vanitas* – an evocation of the *memento mori* (remember that you will die) of Spanish Baroque –, which includes the video *Brainfood*: in the second, he does so with 124 objects from *FoodCultura* and the museum itself, among which are eighty table-bells and a set of mugs decorated in the traditional style of working-class taverns. "In São Paulo, the video of the skull coming to life in the form of exuberant vegetable growth was an allegory of the life cycle" CHEVALLIER, 2014. "I choose objects according to affective criteria: I like them, they talk to me, and I think they understand one another, they form couples, make families. Each journey is a chance to bring back a number of discoveries that end up pairing themselves off with other objects that are waiting for them at home" MIRALDA, 2014. He contributes to *Confessions of the Imperfect*



Power Food, 2008



Dolçura d'en-saïm-ada, 2009



@Table!, 2009



De gustibus non disputandum, 2010



Poble News #1, 2011



Twin Tastes & Tongues, 2012



(Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven) with a series of barricades made out of local energy-drink cans (*Can Barricade*). He runs the *Almuerzo de domingo* workshop, during which the pages of an edible book are illustrated (*Big Draw*, Museu Picasso, Barcelona).

## 2015

He is awarded the Premio Fundación Arte y Mecenazgo [art and patronage foundation prize]. He takes part in the Curitiba Biennial in Brazil (*Luz do mundo*) with the installation **Café Bueno** (Museu Municipal de Arte). "In the *Café* – which gets its name from Maria Bueno, a saint of the people – twice a week we serve an Ecumenical Menu and an Ecumenical Combo, with three starters (three communion wafers) and a main dish, accompanied by Mass wine, water, and fruit juice. The ecumenical connection is Afro-Brazilian, Catholic, Islamic, and Jewish. A monitor shows the thanksgiving to the saint, which was filmed in the Curitiba cemetery, and the space is illuminated by lamps with her image on them, as the theme of the Biennial is light" MIRALDA, 2015. At the Spanish Pavilion at Expo Milan, held under the banner of "Feed the World. Energy for Life," he presents the audiovisual installation **El viaje del sabor**, a suitcase measuring 10 ft by 18 ft. At the Arts & Food (La Triennale di Milano), he exhibits *Food Situation for a Patriotic Banquet*, an installation that was canceled in 1972 and restored in 2010 for his Madrid retrospective. In the *Die Grimmwelt* (Kassel) exhibition, he produces the *Banquet Table Tales* mural. *FoodCultura* opens a stall in the La Boqueria market (Barcelona) dedicated to *Sant Stomak*. "Since Friday, La Boqueria, the jewel in the crown of Barcelona markets, also has its own patron saint. It is *Sant Stomak*, an atypical blessed one between sacred and pagan, protector of metabolic equilibrium and agricultural biodiversity, created by the artist Antoni Miralda. An enlarged reproduction of a Neapolitan ex-voto is to be found there, in the shape of a human torso, which Miralda has turned into a 'cupboard-filing cabinet of offerings.' Like an amiable sorcerer, the artist handed out, to tourists and locals, little images of the saint bearing a special prayer: 'Make us reflect on the contradictions

of food in contemporary society, agro-culture devoured by consumerism, artificial nature, and deforestation. Protect us from food insecurity, fast food, and obesity" ROBERTA BOSCO, 2015. His solo exhibition **What you want is what you get** (Galería Moisés Pérez de Albéniz, Madrid), whose title plays on the slogan from a nineties McDonalds slogan ("We've got what you want"), includes the videos *Love Affair* and *Rebaño clónico*. "The façade of the Moisés Peréz de Albéniz gallery in Madrid is, when seen from a distance, a new display window of the McDonalds hamburger chain [...] Miralda has included in the exhibition a piece in which the flags of the United States and of McDonalds fly intertwined, performing a weird dance to the accompaniment of the sound of two people making love. The sheep wandering down the streets of Madrid perform a striking choreography in which a cloned flock advance to the tune of Mozart's *Agnus Dei*. A real feast in which Miralda invites the spectator to participate in a delirious banquet" ÁNGELES GARCÍA, 2015. "When people say that Ferran Adrià has turned the act of eating into an artistic experience, they forget that Miralda had already made gastronomic experience into art. Adrià represented Spain, deservedly, at the 2007 Documenta in Kassel, but no one remembered that Miralda had been there in 1977 (thirty years earlier!) with a ritual involving food" PARREÑO, 2015. "*Love Affair* is a big video-screening that shows the US and McDonalds flags on the same mast. Eroticized by the wind, they dance at the wedding of United States culture and the junk food sector [...] The presentation that Miralda makes of the aberrations of culinary culture is enigmatic and expansive, at the same time as offering tragic testimony of our present" SICHEL, 2015.

## 2016

At Barcelona's Loop Festival, Miralda and Rossell present the video *Boum! Boum! En avant la musique!*, shot in Paris in 1974 and featuring Xifra and Restany. MACBA publishes *Quadern portàtil* (Portable Notebooks) issue 33, with two original texts in French by art critic Pierre Restany (1930–2003), *Miralda! 'Une vie d'artiste'* (1981) and *Dix ans sont passés: le Mont-Serré donne sur la Terrasse* (1991). In a witty and humorous style, he covers Miralda's career both in Europe and

the United States, from the sixties through to 1991. Curated by Vicent Todolí, the **MIRALDA MADEINUSA** exhibition opens at MACBA, centered around the projects the artist carried out in the United States between 1972 and 1999, and the *MIRALDA MADEINUSA* catalog is published in Catalan, Spanish, and English. Later, the book *El Internacional 1984–1986*. New York's *Archaeological Sandwich* (*FoodCultura* and Éditions Dilecta, Paris) appears, with texts by Paul Freedman, Pierre Restany, James Casey, Ronald Christ, Adam Gopnik among others. Forming part of the *Tide by Side: Opening Processional Performance*, Faena Art, Miami Beach, run by Claire Tancons, the **Miami Global Banquet** is held: at sunrise, a raft goes down Indian Creek River, laden with seven ingredients (pineapple, yam, crocodile, shell, corn, turkey, and palm heart), which are unloaded in Collins Avenue, opposite architect Rem Koolhaas' recently opened Faena Forum; in the next stage, the foods are cooked in seven restaurants, transported by motorcade, and handed out to those present; the musical repertoire ranges from banging pots and pans to a sound piece for concrete mixers that evokes digestion. "Everything about our artist that doesn't fit into the biographical sketch can be summed up in three of his maxims: 'I always chose the most difficult and happiest path,' 'Never use the word "disappointment," 'Bear in mind that only what is done at the last minute is done well'" GALLERO, 2007.



FOOD, 2014



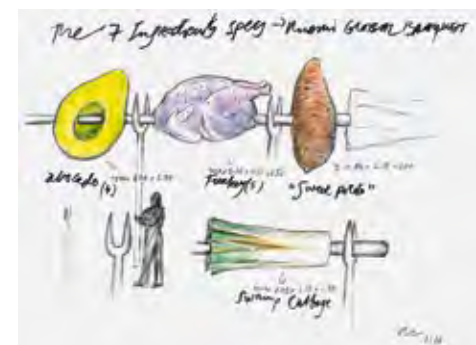
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## List of Works

pp. 16–21
**SANGRÍA 228 WEST B'WAY**
New York, October 27–28, 1972
Co-author: Muntadas
Slide show and documentary material of the action
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

pp. 22–23
**EDIBLE LANDSCAPE**
Museum of Contemporary Crafts, New York, December 7, 1972
Documentary material of the installation
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

pp. 24–27
**FOOD SITUATION FOR A PATRIOTIC BANQUET**
New York, 1972–73 (unrealized project) / Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, 2010
8 tray-flags (colored rice, ceramic and methacrylate), menus (digital printing on paper), fabric, furniture and preparatory drawings
Variable dimensions
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**THE SEATTLE BANQUET**
Henry Gallery, Seattle, 1973

**Eat Art with Miralda**
1973
Single-channel video, color, sound, 13 min
MACBA COLLECTION. MACBA FOUNDATION

Drawings and collage
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**FOOD DEMONSTRATION**
Abraham & Strauss, Brooklyn, New York, 1974

**Abraham & Strauss Food Demonstration**
1974/2016
Collaborator: Coralí Mercader
Single-channel video edited from Super-8 film and photos, color, no sound, 5 min 5 s
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST
Drawings-collage and documentary material of the performance
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

pp. 28–31
**MOVABLE FEAST**
Ninth Avenue International Festival, New York, May 12, 1974
Collaborators: Ninth Avenue International Festival Committee, New York Hilton Hotel Bakers, Manganaro’s Restaurant

**Movable Feast Ninth Avenue**
1974/2016
Collaborator: Coralí Mercader
Single-channel video edited from drawings, slides and photos, b/w and color, no sound, 3 min 50 s
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

Preparatory drawings and documentary material of the project
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

pp. 32–35
**RED DIE #2**
Fine Arts Building, New York, May 22, 1976
Collaborators: Bibi Escalas and Johanna Heer
Preparatory drawings and documentary material of the performance
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

pp. 36–43
**LABOR DAY FESTA**
Artpark, Lewiston (New York), September 5, 1977
Collaborators: Diana Domken, Bill Creston (video) and the Artpark team

**Labor Day Festa Artpark**
1977/2016
Collaborator: Coralí Mercader
Single-channel video edited from Super-8 film, drawings and photographs, b/w and color, no sound, 16 min 30 s
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

Preparatory drawings and documentary material
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

pp. 44–57
**BREADLINE**
Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, October 28 – November 27, 1977
Collaborators: 65 Kilgore College Rangerettes; Rita Gardner; David Ross (video); Marilyn Lubetkin, Rainbow-Houston bakery and the restaurants: Alfreda’s, Ballatori, James Coney Island, Foulards, Herb Farm, Las Cazuelas, Shangai East and Tops Drive-Inn

**Breadline**
1977/2016
Colored bread, neon, sugar, fabric and wood
Variable dimensions
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Macaroni Landscape**
1977/2016
Digital inkjet printing
8 photos de 111 × 125 cm ea. and 4 drawings 111 × 80.5 cm ea.
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**The Rita Gardner Show**
1977
Author: Rita Gardner
Single-channel video, b/w, sound, 29 min
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Breadline: Opening Routine**
1977/2009
Single-channel video, b/w and color, sound, 10 min
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Texas TV Dinner**
1977/2016
7 channels video installation: 7 sets of headphone cups, trays with sauces and condiments, TV screens, fabric and wood
450 × 87 × 75 cm
Videos, 1979/2009, color, sound
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST
Preparatory drawings, photos and documentary material
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**SANTA ARMY NAVY**
1979
Single-channel video edited from Super–8 film, color, sound, 40 min
MACBA COLLECTION. MACBA FOUNDATION

pp. 58–83
**WHEAT & STEAK**
Kansas City, November 7–21, 1981
Collaborators: Suzie Aron (director of the project), Baker boys, Banda 23rd Street Marching Cobras, Roach Cadillac, Jim Dawson, Dale Eldred, Farmland, Jerry and Stand Goldberg, Dean Graves, Bill Hays, Willy Knight, Stephaney Leedy, Tom and Dave Miller, Bill Popplewell, Albert Silverman/Central Bag Company, Morton Sosland, Mark Wilson, Bonnie Winston, and Fahmi and Frieda Zeko.

**PARADE**
Kansas City, November 7, 1981

**Tri-Uni-Corn**
1981
Fiberglass, corncob and pedestal table
518 × 418 × 213 cm
MUSEO NACIONAL CENTRO DE ARTE REINA SOFIA, MADRID

**Steaks**
1981/2010
Digital printing on Styrofoam and Wood
3 units of 110 × 80 cm ea.
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Utensils**
1981
Painted wood
Knife: 110 × 25 cm; fork: 110 × 45 cm; sickle: 100 × 80 cm
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Sacks**
1981
Chalcography on burlap sack, linen and polyester
3 units of 100 × 60 cm ea.
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Wheat & Steak Parade**
2007
Single-channel video, color, sound, 15 min
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**GOLD TASTE**
Kansas City Board of Trade, November 13–15, 1981
Slides transferred to video projected on wall/screen of colored bread
Light box. Digital printing on acetate
1981/2016
6 units of 53.6 × 80.6 × 40 cm ea.
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Wheat & Steak Gold Taste**
2008
Single-channel video, color, sound, 23 min
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Blue & Steak**
1980
Single-channel video edited from Super-8 film, color, no sound, 5 min
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

Objects, preparatory drawings and documentary material
Collection of the artist

pp. 84–87
**THANKSGIVING: THE ANIMALS’ BANQUET**
Bronx Zoo, New York, November 27–29, 1981
Co-author: Karin Bacon
(Work not included in the exhibition)

pp. 88–107
**MIAMI PROJECTS**
New World Festival of the Arts, Miami, June 4–26, 1982
Co-authors: Montse Guillén and César Trasobares
Collaborators: Gilbert’s Bakery and Raymond Bravo
Various objects, tabloid, preparatory drawings and documentary material
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

pp. 112–33
**SANTA COMIDA**
1984–89
Collaborators: John Mason, Keith Farington (altars) and Regina Vater (publication)
El Museo del Barrio, New York, 1984
Other presentations (selection): Dade Community College, South Campus Art Gallery, Miami, 1985
*Barcelona-Paris-New York. El camí de dotze artistes catalans, 1960-1980*, Palau Robert, Barcelona, 1985 (group exhibition)
*Magiciens de la terre*, Centre Georges Pompidou - La Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris, 1989 (group exhibition)

Ritual objects and food offerings.
Wooden altars, gelatin silver print photos, colored aluminum foil, light bulbs and various materials
Variable dimensions
MACBA COLLECTION. GOVERNMENT OF CATALONIA LONG-TERM LOAN AND COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**African Tapestry**
Food Pavilion, Expo 2000, Hanover
Fabric
800 × 1800 cm
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Santa Comida on Wheels**
2016
Collaborator: Coralí Mercader
Single-channel video edited from various audio-visual materials, color, sound, 6 min
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

Slide show and documentary material of the different installations
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

pp. 134–61

**EL INTERNACIONAL TAPAS BAR & RESTAURANT**
New York, 1984–86
Co-author: Montse Guillén
Collaborators: Jordi Torrent (video), Bill Dyckes and Marshall Reese (editorial board), Antonio Buendía and Isidro Caniego (cooks) and the rest of the team from *El Internacional* (pastry cooks, kitchen assistants, waiters, barmen, and receptionists)
Installation 2016: bar, furniture, mural and photos

**Moving Toreros**
1952
Plaster figures and cloth screens
77 × 65 × 65 cm
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Lobster Dream**
1984/2004
Fiberglass
12 lamps of 80 × 60 × 20 cm ea.
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Matador Candelabra**
1984/2016
Plaster and ceramic
9 units of 70 × 70 × 30 cm ea.
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Video Menu**
1984
Co-author: Jordi Torrent
Single-channel video, color, no sound, 36 min
MACBA COLLECTION. MACBA FOUNDATION

**Teddy’s Sentimental Room**
1984/1999
Co-author: Jordi Torrent
Single-channel video, color, sound, 21 min
MACBA COLLECTION. MACBA FOUNDATION

**El Internacional à la carte**
1984/2016
Collaborator: Coralí Mercader
Single-channel video, color, sound, 35 min
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Exterior-Interior-Objetos**
2016
Collaborator: Coralí Mercader
Three-channel video installation, color, sound
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**El Internacional As a Stage**
2016
Collaborator: Coralí Mercader
Single-channel video, color, sound, 60 min
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

Preparatory drawings and documentary materials
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

pp. 162–93
**HONEYMOON PROJECT**
Numerous international locations, 1986–92
Collaborators: City Councils of Barcelona, New York, Sète and Terrassa; Esmod schools in Paris and Tokyo, IDEP Barcelona, IFP Las Cumbres Ubrique, Junior Art Center Los Angeles, Miami Dade Community College; Fabric Workshop Philadelphia, Jacob K. Javits Convention Center New York, Lieux publics Marseille, and Winter Garden World Center New York; and, Linda Blumberg, Paul and Anne Boye, Anita Contini, Michel Crespin, John Davis, Steve Dunnington, Miguel Escobar, Marie Jo François, Silvio Gitter, Joan Guaita, Montse Guillén, Thora Jacobson, Ella King Torrey, Livio de Marchi, Manolo Martín, Titina Maselli, Maricel Presilla, Jaume Sisa, Jacques Soullilou, Luis Villalba, Philip Yenawine, and hundreds of other collaborators, artisans, designers, corporate sponsors, participants, and friends of the couple’s families.

**Ba-Ca-Llà**
1987
Collaborators: Ed Koch and Pasqual Maragall
Cod, marble, Plexiglas, lights, and various objects
3 units of 132 × 60 × 30 cm ea.
PRIVATE COLLECTION

**Water Rings**
1989
Idea and design: Chus Burés
Collaborators: Virginia Melches, María Morales Elbaz and Coni Alvarez Diaz (Caribbean Sea); Alicia Chillida (Cantabrian Sea); Ray and Yolanda Tisdale (Pacific Ocean); Miguel San Claudio Santa Cruz (Atlantic Ocean); Benja Villa and Robert Llimós (Mediterranean Sea)
Plexiglas, bronze, water from different seas and oceans, cork, jewelry
30 cm diameter (Columbus)/: 120 cm diameter (Liberty)
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Parabolic Monuments**
1990
Collaborator: Manolo Martín
Fiberglass, aluminum parabolic antennas and iron supports
160 × 260 cm (Columbus) / 215 × 260 cm (Liberty)
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Eternity Ring**
1991
Collaborators: Chus Burés with Carlos Egido and Elisenda Pairo, the Birmingham guild of Jewellers, the Ikon Gallery, and the Birmingham City Council
Copper, bronze and Plexiglas. Interior: rings of various materials
150 cm diameter
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Honeymoon Project Album**
2010/2016
Digital print on paper
Variable dimensions
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

**Honeymoon**
1986–92/2016
9 single-channel videos edited from various audio-visual materials grouped thematically: Commitment; *TV Ring*; Trouseau; *Eternity Ring* (Anne Parouty); Wedding Gifts; Lamb of the Apocalypse; *Liberty Belle*; Wedding; and *Spots Honeymoon*
Color, sound
MACBA COLLECTION. MACBA FOUNDATION (*TV Ring*; *Eternity Ring* and *Spots Honeymoon*)
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST
Various objects, tulle, preparatory drawings and documentary material of the Project
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

pp. 194–205
**BIGFISH MAYAIMI**
Miami, 1996–99
Co-author: Montse Guillén
Collaborators: Ursula Schenone and Umberto Faralla (cook), and the rest of the team of *Bigfish Mayaimi* (kitchen assistants and waiters)

**Have a Good Year**
1995
Recycled rubber and iron
77 × 79 × 89 cm (2 units)
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST
PRIVATE COLLECTION

**Bigfish Miami River**
2016
Collaborator: Coralí Mercader
Single-channel video edited from various audio-visual materials, color, sound, 8 min
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

Preparatory drawings and documentary material
COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST



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- 
- A woman with dark hair, wearing a brown jacket and purple pants, is sitting on a grey floor. She is surrounded by numerous white trays, each containing a different colorful arrangement of rice or beads. The trays are scattered around her, some in the foreground and some in the background. The background is a blue wall with some graffiti. The overall scene is an artistic installation.
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