

MARO PEBO AND ROLAND VAN DIERENDONCK



CHILI PEPPER PLEASURE

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**DO YOU THINK OF
YOUR FOOD AS
PLEASURE?
CAN SOME FORMS OF
PAIN CAUSE
PLEASURE?**

Half the planet is addicted to capsaicin, the working substance in chili peppers. It is described as a stimulant or even an **aphrodisiac**. There has been proven to be a relationship between capsaicin and serotonin, the love and **happiness hormone**.

Spiciness is not a flavour but it stimulates the same receptors as heat and pain. The proposed hedonistic experience is a pepper tasting and pairing to find your sweet spot of pain and pleasure, to understand the exact amount of capsaicin needed to partake in serotonin-releasing spicy sensations, as well as how chili-spiciness relates to other flavors to achieve the characteristic compositions of regional cuisines and the pain-pleasure cultures in them.





ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

It consists of carefully curated pepper pairings representative of local cuisines from ancient Aztec and Maya traditions, recipes of Mesoamerica, in quantified, increasing levels of spiciness, exploring the limits of pleasure through pain.

Introductions accompany the tasting: what are the chili peppers used for, and where? .

Increasing our literacy about their biochemical properties, wide varieties, and cultural adoption

We offer the pleasure experience of the thresholds of pain, as enjoyed by the cultures that eat chili peppers as a central ingredient of their cuisines.

Chili Pepper Pleasure is an empiric contribution to our food literacy, specifically concerning the biochemistry and cultural history of the pleasure of pain in cuisine where chili pepper is a central ingredient.

ART SCIENCE

The empirical learning experience of Chili Pepper Pleasure is fundamental to learning about the biochemistry interaction of food and our brains, and the relation between stimulation, perception, subjectivity and taste, in order to promote cultural flexibility in learning about ourselves and others in their relation to pain and pleasure in food.



MAIN THEMES

The pleasure of chili food cultures.

The cultures of enjoying and appreciating food.

Food as art medium.

Biochemical level: capsaicin, pain receptors, serotonin, personalized bliss point.



The development of taste and cultural development of taste.

Cultural histories of food and the journey of capsaicin family plants.

Offering an unprecedented experience, the awareness of feeling, and the body as a sensory machine.

MEDIAMATIC

For Mediamatic, in the event Pepper, Plate, Magic, on 9th of June 2022, where we presented the work as a guided meditation for an audience of more than 50 participants. We prepared rectangular plates with three Mexican chili pepper sauces and totopos (triangular corn chips). After an introduction people closed their eyes, and were made aware of their presence, their bodily sensations, specifically their mouth and tongue.



VLEESHAL



For Vleeshal in Middelburg as part of the Public program of Vivan Suter's exhibition Worm in a Water Glass on 3rd of July 2022.

At Vleeshal, we presented a rendering of Chili Pepper pleasure for a smaller group of people, from the biology of chili peppers to the their origins in mesoamerican cultures, allowing for intimate discussions between participants.



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