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Zürcher Hochschule der Künste
Zurich University of the Arts
Fermentation Stories
An evening of knowledge exchange, collaborative practice and tasting with BadLab (Anne-Laure Franchette, Corinna Mattner, Maya Minder)
14 December 2022, 5-9pm
ReCreaZZ, Zentralwäscherei, Neue Hard 12, 8005 Zurich
An interactive event commissioned by re-source | Sustainability in the Arts

«Fermentation Stories»

An evening of knowledge sharing, collaborative practices and tasting.

The metabolic process that takes place in fermented foods has a positive impact on the human gut bacteria. This microbial mechanism also tells us stories about food politics, self-sufficiency, small-scale and local production. The ferments on the table are in constant flux and illustrate the symbiotic coexistence between plants, animals and humans. Decomposition and composition are transferred to the table through the stains and the transformation of the table setting during the event. This laboratory of knowledge exchange is a practical exercise of un-learning and DIWO (Do it With Others). We became microbial in the sense of network thinking.

14 December 2022, 5-7pm.

ReCreaZZ, Zentralwäscherei, Neue Hard 12, 8005 Zurich
Concept and inputs by and with BadLab (Anne-Laure Franchette, Corinna Mattner, Maya Minder)

An interactive event commissioned by re-source | Sustainability in the Arts, ZHdK

To disseminate further, BadLab is happy to share with you this zine of recipes selected by Maya Minder, alongside the Cultural Revivalist Manifesto by Sandor Katz and illustrations by Carla Opetnik.

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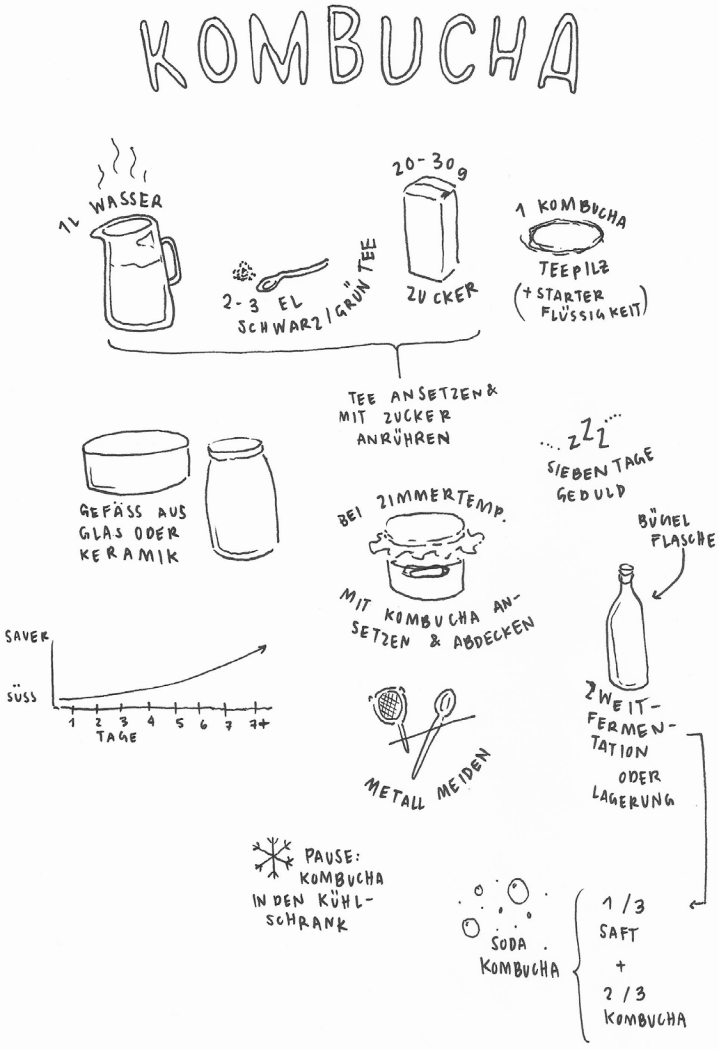


Aubergines Sottolio

1 kg eggplants, cut lengthwise into 5mm strips
1 tbsp salt
2 cl white wine vinegar
3 cloves of garlic cut into thin slices
1/2 bunch rosemary
1/2 lemon in slices
2 dl olive oil

Cut the eggplants into oblong strips of 5mm. Salt them and let the salt work for 20 minutes. Take a kitchen towel and squeeze out the excess water wrapped in the towel.

Put the eggplants back into the salad bowl and sprinkle them with the white wine vinegar. Let them sit like that for another 20 minutes. Take the same kitchen towel and squeeze out the excess liquid. Fill a canning jar with the eggplant, along with, thinly sliced garlic, lemon slices and rosemary evenly. Press everything firmly into the jar and fill the jar to the brim with olive oil.

The sottolio can be consumed after 3 weeks, during this time put the jar in a cool place (room temperature works as well) and do not open it. After opening it, keep it in the refrigerator for 2 weeks. Closed and kept in a cool place the Sottolio can be kept for 1 year!

Hoshigaki - a Japanese Autumn Recipe

3-6 persimmon fruits
long string
a lot of autumn sun and time
daily massage

Choose the persimmons at your local greengrocer. They should be beautiful, without dents and with a stem. The stem is needed because you will hang the persimmon fruit with it. Peel the persimmon fruit while huming a Japanese tune. Make sure you leave the top attachment with the stem and four leaves intact. Tie the peeled persimmons to a string with a 10cm gap between them. Hang them on a bamboo stick or similar in a place where they are exposed to the warmth of the autumn sun.

Let the Hoshigakis hang as such and after a few days, start massaging them daily (at least once a day). When the tanins in the fruit decay, the flesh softens and the fruit becomes softer, at first only near the surface and eventually to the core. The leathery surface will darken and turn brown. Be careful when massaging the hoshigakis, when the flesh is at its softest, as it may burst through the skin. If mold appears on the outer skin, then you may discard them. You massage them until a layer of sugar blossoms on the skin.

For centuries, dried persimmons have been produced in Japan/Korea and China. They are one of the mildly sweet dried fruits, which people enjoy to cut open with a cup of tea. There are two types of persimmons, the soft, round ones called Fuyu and the hard, more elongated and pointed ones called Hachiya. In Japan, only the Hachiya varieties are processed into Hochigaki.

Potpurri - Lactofermented vegetables According to sauerkraut technique

Sauerkraut is the classic of all fermentations and is a recipe that is strongly linked to local history and peculiarities. To the Metzgete, with potatoes or simply cold as a small snack in between - sauerkraut tastes good, contains a lot of vitamin C and is thanks to the lactic acid bacteria good for our digestion. Sauerkraut is one of the vegetables that used to provide valuable vitamins even in winter. Today we mostly reach for the jar or the bag on the supermarket shelf, which then has already been pasteurized to guarantee its shelf life, but thus also lose the valuable lactic acid bacteria. It is quite simple to make sauerkraut yourself. You only need a white cabbage and ideally a special fermentation pot. This is ideally made of stoneware and offers pickled vegetables the best conditions to ferment. Salt, pressure and time transform the shaved white cabbage into delicious sauerkraut. With a few tips and tricks the sauerkraut succeeds and can be refined with new ideas and ingredients to a potpurri cabbage.

You can also make your own creations in a simple and uncomplicated way, like the example of ranch sauerkraut.

Ingredients:
1 white cabbage
1-2 onions (small)
2-3 apples
1 chili pepper (optional)
salt 3-5
spices (e.g. peppercorns, bay leaves, juniper berries, caraway seeds)
possibly a little brine

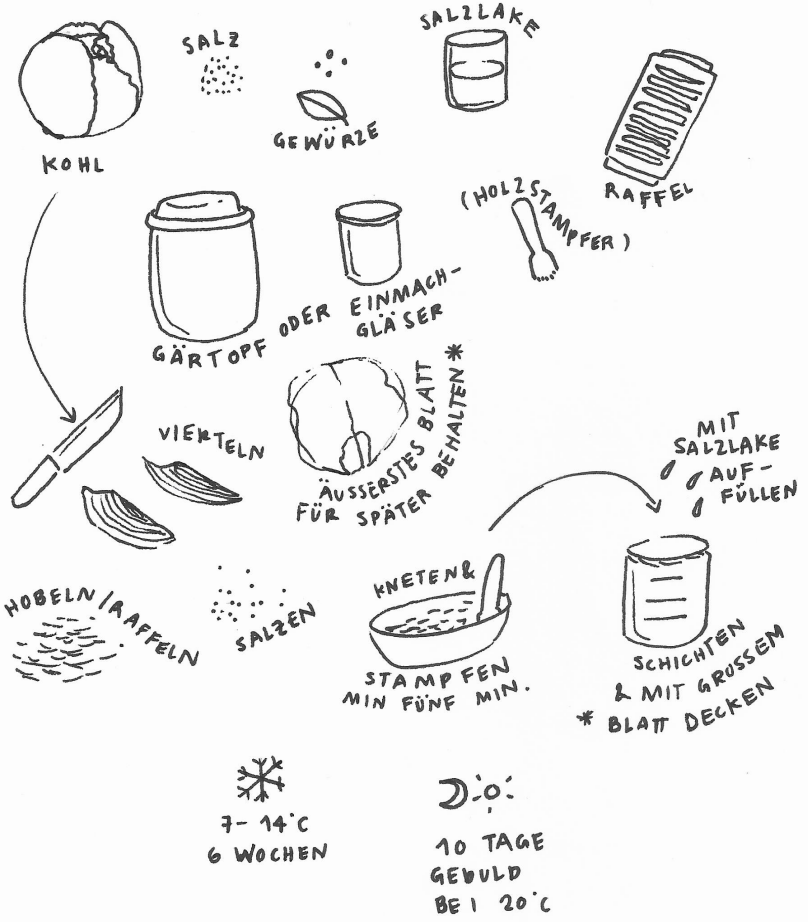
Utensils:
Sauerkraut slicer (it also works with a normal grater or cut by hand), fermentation pot (instead of which can also be used canning jars), wooden masher (optional).

HOW TO:
Quarter the cabbage heads and remove the stalk and outer leaves (keep them). The cabbage is now shaved and finely grated, or use a knife and try to maintain as even a cut as possible. Peel and finely slice the onions (0.5mm strips), halve the apple, remove the core and slice as finely as possible. Cut the chili pepper diagonally into nice strips, about 3mm.

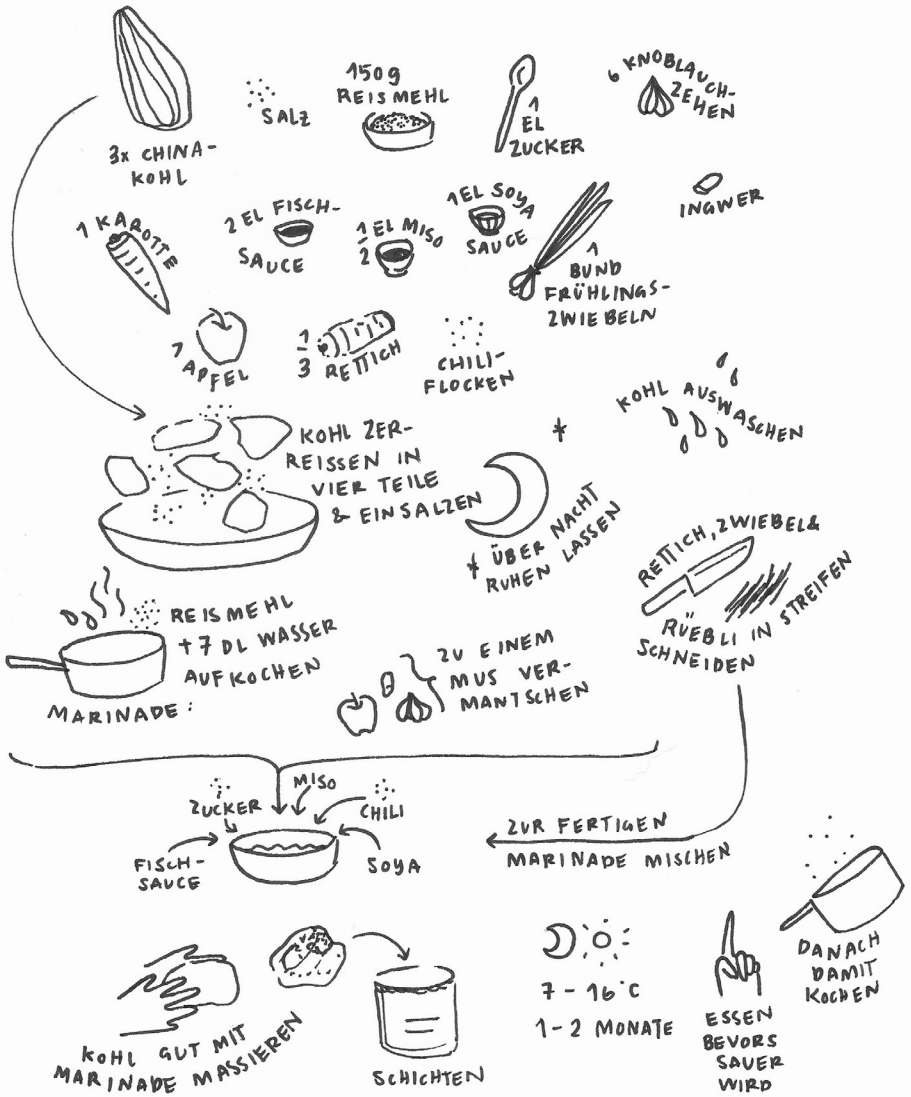
The cabbage with apple, onion and chili is now mixed with salt and tamped through in at least 5 minutes, using the wooden tamper or by hand. It is important to note that you always use a tip too much salt and knead well, if you are not sure you can weigh the effective amount of cabbage and then measure the amount of salt. Kneading and the osmosis effect causes a lot of vegetable (cell) water to escape and dilute the salt content. The mixture should taste a little too salty, this guarantees that the fermentation will proceed well and no mold can form. Now layer the mashed vegetables in the containers, making sure that everything is well pressed and does not contain air bubbles.

Oxygen entrapment leads to oxidation and therefore possible mold growth (aerobic/anaerobic). You can use the outer cabbage leaves to cover the top layer, the cabbage should be under its own vegetable juice, if not you can add a little brine. Fill the jar to the brim if possible and seal tightly. Leave the jar at room temperature for 10 days to start the fermentation process. After that, you can put the jar in the cellar or in a dark cool place (12-18 degrees is ideal) and let it ferment for 6 weeks. Your first own sauerkraut/potpurri is ready to taste!
If there is a white mold on the top layer (usually slimy), the sauerkraut is not fermented and lost, but you can simply skim it off generously. Underneath, the sauerkraut is edible in an intact state. After opening, store in the refrigerator and eat in after feeling or 2 weeks.

SAUERKRAUT



KIMCHI



Extract from: Katz, Sandor Ellix. „The Art of Fermentation: An In-Depth Exploration of Essential Concepts and Processes from Around the World."

„A Cultural Revivalist Manifesto" by Sandor Katz

We must reclaim our food. Food is much more than simply nourishment. It embodies a complex web of relationships. It is a huge part of the context in which we exist. Reclaiming our food means actively involving ourselves in this web. The foods that fill our contemporary supermarket shelves are products of a globalized infrastructure of proprietary genetic material, synthetic and often dangerous chemicals, monocultures, long-distance transportation, factory-scale processing, wasteful packaging, and energy-sucking refrigeration. The food being produced by this system is destroying the earth, destroying our health, destroying economic vitality, and robbing us of our dignity by breeding dependency and reducing us to the subservient role of consumer.

We need to cultivate a different set of relationships:

Relationships with Plants and Animals

This is where our food comes from, plants and animals (with microbial assistance). We cannot continue to distance ourselves from the sources of our food, relegating it to highly specialized, mostly faraway, mass-production monocultures, cut off from our lives. Historically, by necessity, we related to the plants and animals we ate. We knew them, relied upon them, and through their pursuit and cultivation, we were intimately connected to our environment. We need to become reconnected to the sources of our sustenance. Get to know the plants around you. Grow some herbs or vegetables. Glean and use unharvested fruit. Plant a tree, or care for one, or many. Forage weeds from your yard. If you enjoy eggs, milk, or meat, consider exploring the path of raising chickens or other livestock on a small scale. Find a way to observe and participate in slaughtering and butchering. Respect, honor, and appreciate the life that goes into our food. We have coevolved with these other beings, and our fates are intertwined.

Relationships with Farmers and Producers

Buy local food! Support local agriculture! Get to know farmers, and buy directly from them. Agricultural revitalization is real economic stimulus and real economic security. Beyond the raw products of agriculture, most people enjoy foods and beverages that have been processed, whether it's cheese, salami, or tempeh. Many of these "value-added" processes involve fermentation. Support small-scale local processing and production. It means fresher food, local jobs, decentralization, and greater resilience in the face of change. Local production includes not only commercial manufacturers but small informal production shared through alternative economies such as gift exchange, barter, voluntary donations, herdshares, community supported models, or illicit underground sales. Find a niche you can fill in the reemergent web of food creators.

Relationships with Ancestors

Our ancestors paid much more attention to their ancestors than people in our time typically do. We have our God, and canonize various historical or mythological heroes into icons, but in our time we have very little appreciation for the general continuous lineage itself. However mixed our heritage may be, we are, each of us, the spawn of ancient lineages, which have bestowed upon us incredible cultural legacies. We must remember, rediscover, and reclaim our ancestors, however we can, and honor, protect, and perpetuate their gifts, including tangible ones such as seeds and fermentation processes. Cultural revival is necessary in order to maintain their great legacy to us. Keeping it alive is the ultimate in ancestor worship.

Relationships with Mysteries

Mysteries endure. Despite all the impressive advances in microscopic imaging, genetic analysis, and other forms of scientific investigation, the realm of the microscopic is still very little understood. For that matter, so is much about our own bodies and minds. Let us honor the mysteries and revel in the fact that we will never understand everything.

Relationships with Community

Self-sufficiency is a dangerous myth. We need each other. Love your circle, cultivate it, and enlarge it. Share food you grow or make with your community, and encourage others in their food production activities. Community is never perfect and takes hard work, because people have such varied visions, ideas, and values. But do the hard work of finding common ground, and build community with the people around you.

Relationships with Movements of Resistance

Our growing awareness as individuals creating change in our own lives, and communities can (and must) build into galvanizing social movements. While reviving local food systems, we can also address inequitable access to resources by becoming part of existing movements for food justice and food sovereignty. While making use of indigenous wisdom in our cultural revival efforts, we can also acknowledge and act in solidarity with indigenous peoples struggling for survival. While trying to limit our own carbon footprints and environmental impact, we can also join social movements demanding the same of corporations and government policies. Personal actions can be powerful, but nothing like the force of collective action.

Relationships to Materials

„We must strive to maximize the use of whatever is abundant, easy, low-impact, and reusable. We do not need infinitely more special equipment and gadgetry. We must interrupt the disposable society. Where feasible, scavenge materials to reuse them; process fibers from plants or animals; build a house from earthen materials. DIY culture!

These are but a few strands of a densely interwoven web of relationships that can sustain and enrich us. Fermentation is one way in which we may consciously cultivate this web. This is the daily practice of cultural revival. By engaging life forces, we rediscover and reconnect with our context."

BadLab is a collective laboratory of interdisciplinary ideas and practices around bio-domestic knowledges, biodiversity, sustainability and resilience. We think of biological wisdom and social transformation as key notions that guide our doings. The diversity of practices inside our collective body, allows for different perspectives to develop. Womxn and ancestral knowledge, mystical approaches, care practices and DIY strategies, are foremost important in how we create, explore, and make together. BadLab activities consist of artistic installations, performances and food events. We facilitate a varied set of workshops linked to the interests and practices of each of the members of the group. Examples of workshops range from plant printing techniques, up-cycling activities, wild and garden plant explorations, cooking and catering events, distillation DIY methods, fermentation workshops, etc. Workshops happen in both local and international circles.We are alive since 2019.

http://badlab.coalitioncyborg.org/
@badlab_y

Anne-Laure Franchette is an artist with a background in humanities. She is part of the interdisciplinary study group TETI, initiator of the Zurich Art Space Guide, co-founder and curator of VOLUMES. She is interested in spontaneous, unwanted or unmapped circulations and explores contemporary textures and narratives through archival research, material re-appropriation and collaborative practices.

Corinna Mattner is an experimental fashion maker, member of the global movement Fashion Revolution and the Zurich community space ReCreaZZZ. She explores the commonalities of transdisciplinary collaborations and develops projects that raise awareness of production, consumption and waste through repair and reuse solutions and practices.

Maya Minder introduces herself as an artist of «eat art» — a versatile expression that can be translated as art mediated by food, but also as the art of feeding oneself. She uses the metaphor of fermentation as a reflection of social agitation. Following the biohacker, maker and thirdspace movements, she applies grassroots ideas, safe zones and citizen science to her field to enable collective storytelling through food and cooking.