

Eating Words: Text, Image, Food

a one day workshop organized by the Centre for Material Texts, University of Cambridge



Some of our most material interactions with texts are grounded in the very food that we eat. Comestibles are eloquent objects; they come stamped with words, festooned with decorative designs, and wrapped in packaging that is at once visually and verbally loquacious. The kitchen has long been a textual domain, regulated by cookery books and recipe collections and noisy with inscriptions on pots, pans, plates and pastry-moulds. This one-day colloquium will explore numerous aspects of the relationship between writing, eating and domestic life across a broad swathe of history, in order to illuminate the unsuspected power of words and pictures in a paradigmatically practical locale and to shed light on the textual condition more broadly.

Questions to be addressed include:

- What is the relationship between the visual and the verbal in the history of food?
- What archival and physical evidence survives for the textual realms of the kitchen, and what methodological challenges does it present?
- Who produces the texts that circulate during the preparation and consumption of food, and for whom?
- How do the textual economies of the kitchen relate to those of other household spaces—the study, the library, the gallery—and of the wider world?
- How are public historical or cultural events refracted in the domestic locale and its object-worlds?
- What permutations has the metaphor of reading-as-eating undergone in its long history?

Speakers include: Deborah Krohn (Bard Graduate Centre), Sara Pennell (Roehampton University)

This one-day workshop will take place under the auspices of the Centre for Material Texts, University of Cambridge, on 13 September 2011. Please submit 250 word proposals for 20 minute papers by 1 May to Melissa Calaresu (mtc12@cam.ac.uk) and Jason Scott-Warren (jes1003@cam.ac.uk). <http://www.english.cam.ac.uk/cmt>