

Food and Drink in Performance

Susan Boyle

The Spirit of Ireland: Theatrical layers; narrative, storytelling and sensory engagement design for an Irish spirits education programme.

In 2020, I was tasked with designing and writing an education programme for the Irish Government food board (Bord Bia). This programme was to focus on Irish spirits, including Irish Whiskey, Irish Poitín, Irish cream liqueur and white spirits produced in Ireland.

I approached this project as an opportunity to practically implement some of the observations and learnings I have amassed as part of my overall research into the area of immersive drinks events. I choose to approach this education project from the theatre makers perspective, looking at narrative, scripting and elements of mise en scene. Moreover, I designed a treatment for the sensory considerations of taste and scent.

In this paper, I wish to offer my insights into my design process through discussing the rationale for specific decisions. I will also mention the implications Covid-19 restrictions had on the design and the delivery of this programme and how these challenges may provide opportunities to engage with different target audiences.

Rareş Augustin Crăiuţ

From Mukbang to cancelled shows: online food performances and the senses during COVID-19 lockdowns

This paper explores loss of senses in food performances during the 2020-2021 COVID lockdown characterised, among others, by the closure of live art venues. In live art the shift from in person and unmediated performing as a default condition, to the multiple temporalities of online performance streaming, opens new performative possibilities, as well as vulnerabilities.

I find it important to understand the role of the senses and how food is evolving as artistic material and subject of interest in the new forms of artist-audience interaction, during the COVID lockdown. The strategies and creative solutions developed by artists working with food, could be of interest to others, including the restaurant industry.

The distribution of performance art pieces via online platforms precedes the COVID-19 crisis, with a history that oscillates between experimental art production, and self-promotion of artists and companies (Gemini, Brillì 2020).

Departing from my own personal experience, in the case of “the European TV dinners” series, a food performance that was produced as a series of short movies, and then through interviews and opened discussion with performance artists who had to present food performances online, I want to understand how performance artists, that have picked up online performance art especially due to COVID lockdown measures, are making sense of online mediated food.