



Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich

Collection of Prints and Drawings ETH Zürich
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Press release
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A Feast for the Eyes Eating, Drinking and Table-Talk

5 November to 23 December 2014; 5 to 18 January 2015
Opening: Tuesday, 4 November 2014, 6 p.m.

“Eating and drinking nourish man’s life” writes Goethe in his play Goetz von Berlichingen. Antonius Anthus, on the other hand, in his Lectures on The Art of Eating (1838), states that “Man does not eat to live any more than he lives to eat; he eats because he is hungry, or has an appetite, or because the clock strikes twelve.” Either way: eating and drinking are integral to our lives. And the fundamental importance of this everyday activity is summed up by the fact that even the old-fashioned word “victuals” is so closely related to “vital”.

The portrayal of eating and drinking is as elementary as the act of eating and drinking itself. But it isn’t always entirely straightforward, as many a cookbook illustration shows. The current enthusiasm for the cult of star chefs and sommeliers, television bake-offs, cookery competitions, restaurant guides, food magazines and food porn in general has spawned some fairly bizarre representations of what eating is all about.

A feast for the eyes demands a certain aesthetic slant, involving not only the art of cuisine, but the visual arts as well. And that is what this exhibition addresses – though it is of course first and foremost about ways of seeing. We take a look at various aspects of food and drink and all things related: production and products, decor, preparation, presentation and – albeit less frequently portrayed – the act of consumption itself. Here is something that is truly universal, shared by all, and yet with so many variations and situations that it is never commonplace.

The exhibition presents prints, drawings and multiples on eating and drinking – for our consumption, for us to ingest and imbibe, if only metaphorically. However, the tenet still holds that the eye can feast. On the menu is an appetising selection of stylistically and artistically diverse works spanning several centuries: high and low, old and new – a veritable hotpot of culinary themes.

Whether or not the viewer savours the tidbits we have served up here from Collection of Prints and Drawings ETH Zürich is, needless to say, entirely a matter of taste.

Curator of the exhibition: Eva Korazija

For further information and visual material, please contact Patrizia Solombrino, Tel. 044 632 40 46 or patrizia.solombrino@gs.ethz.ch