No Waste Cooking in consuming cities

*Sissel Gunnerød
Oslo and Akershus University College, Norway

Living in a society of abundance in big cities with amount of food easily accessible, food is wasted extensively on different levels, causing carbon emission. How may artistic interventions offer other perspectives to "consuming cities"?

The aim of this paper is to explore and discuss whether – and if so, how an artistic urban action in Stockholm: No Waste Cooking, may contribute to displacement or redistribution in social practice regarding food, in other spaces.

Using the Swedish artist Andrea Whistendahl’s ongoing project No Waste Cooking as a case study, I will approach the art action through Jacques Rancière’s concept of politic as a distribution and redistribution of the sensible (Rancière, 2000). Since this is an interactive art action, I use my own experience: How has an art action in Stockholm influenced on my thinking and everyday life regarding food, in Oslo?

The art action is about saving and upgrading food from grocery stores that would otherwise have been thrown away. Food is prepared live and served free of charge in the gallery. In 2013 Whistendahl also invited the audience to participate in cooking. As an urban gleaner the artist intervenes between the grocery stores and the consumers/citizens.

The artist creates a space for leftovers, sensations and reflections. In a culture where fresh food is a mantra, the artist serves leftovers from "final date" recommendations in grocery stores. A negative thought: "not fresh" is reformulated positively to "no waste cooking". Energy is generated in the bodies instead of waste and carbon emissions.

I suggest that the political is shown in the redistribution of a material, mental and social room as well – with possibilities for participation, discussion and transformation. However, a presupposition is that the receiver accepts the invitation.

*Presenting author

Keywords: waste (food), politic, redistribution, sensations