

Refined Sugars is the first show at Winona. It's an exhibition of sorts and an event of sorts. It won't last more than the evening. Since we're new in the neighbourhood we wanted to take the excuse to have a party. There's a wonderful bakery on the corner of rue de l'Intendant and rue de Ribaucourt who can print images on cakes. They print them with edible dyes onto paper made of sugar and when they mount it it melts and transfers the image right into the surface of the cake. What better way to open a new chapter than inviting all of our friends to participate in its consumption?




The images are all made by friends of ours too. Mekhitar took the photograph of the hummus, after a plate made by his mother. Margaux compiled the table of recent public apologies, with the size of the apology defining the slice of the cake (Risk Reward Ratio). Emile made the green image of a man and a woman back when he still had a studio in the previous building of Level 5. The flavours and the decorations were decided by each of the artists in collaboration with the bakery — like the relationship between a painter and a framer. Chocolate for Mekhitar, lemon for Margaux, whipped cream for Emile. By the time you read this text, its likely that the exhibition will be wholly or partly moved into throats and bellies, so you'll have to believe us when we say they were beautiful images, made more beautiful by the knowledge they were printed on perishable materials.

A first show in a new space should be lo-fi and potlatch. It should be about finding ways to work with what's at hand. About channelling the local and the familiar in order to make things happen. This is how a project space can function on limited means. Our overheads in this space are low. The rent we each pay is roughly equivalent to a basic gym membership, which helps to free the space from the need to justify itself to external demands from a market or from a funding body. The basic attitude might be called unproductive. A dead end. We spend with the left hand what we earn with the right. In a little over a year this whole building will be torn down. By the end of the night this exhibition will be consumed.

In English, people say "you can't have your cake and eat it too" which is a way of forcing the dichotomy between the conservation value of a thing and the use value of a thing. It defines an opposition between aesthetics on one hand and utility on the other. The rarefied thing (the kept cake) vs. the consumption of the same thing, or rather its conversion into energy, pleasure and fat. In the end, where we locate ourselves within this dichotomy might be revealing of some larger stakes in the production of contemporary art...

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
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