

70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV

Lucy + Jorge Orta
City of Philadelphia Moral Arts Program



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Lucy + Jorge Orta

City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program

This book was published on the occasion of
70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV
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AMERICAN NATIVE PEANUTS
MIRKARA YELLOW BEAN
WANTLOWER BEAN
NIELSEN-FAHR
OLYKROL
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Foreword

Jane Golden

In 2009, as The City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program began to explore opportunities beyond muralmaking, one of the first opportunities we pursued was a light-based project with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Paris-based Studio Orta first came to our attention then as artists who had begun to use light in their practice. While we ultimately worked with J. Meejin Yoon on the temporary artwork, *Light Drift* (2010), installed in and along the banks of the Schuylkill River, we remained intrigued by Lucy + Jorge Orta's public performances and installations, particularly their series of large-scale public meals staged throughout the world. Inspired by Philadelphia's increasingly thriving food culture — dedicated food organizations, urban farms, community gardens, green markets, and home cooking communities — we reached out to the Ortas in 2012 to ponder the potential of a new staging of their *70 x 7 The Meal* in Philadelphia. We then sought and received support from the William Penn Foundation and PNC Arts Alive to further develop our evolving ideas and produce what would become the Ortas' 34th and most ambitious staging of *70 x 7 The Meal*.

It was clear at the outset that *The Meal* wouldn't follow a familiar process or production schedule. It would test our skills as makers and managers, but just as importantly, it would be a public engagement process unlike any we had previously undertaken. It was an ideal challenge as we launched our 30th anniversary celebration, one that would allow us to explore, on a grand scale, the social and experimental dimensions of art in public space. Based on previous Orta "Meals" we knew that whatever project we created together would be about the

culture and politics of food production and that it would be specific to the Philadelphia region.

As we researched Philadelphia's evolving food landscape we learned that it is a complicated one. While some neighborhoods are food deserts, the city also has a vibrant network of farmers' markets and food distribution sources, an active culinary scene that relies on locally raised produce, and opportunities to participate in community sponsored agriculture. Through our organizational work in Philadelphia communities over 30 years, we had met and worked with Marathon Farm and local restauranteurs like Marc Vetri. Throughout 2012 and 2013, we would come to meet many more food activists and locavores, along with producers and consumers in the city and in the fertile valleys beyond the city borders.

During Lucy Orta's first visit to Philadelphia in July 2012, we wanted to introduce her to the built and natural landscapes of the Philadelphia city and region — and attendant food issues and assets. She conferred with representatives of the Food Trust, Farm to City, Fair Food, SHARE Food Program, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation's Philly Homegrown initiative, among many others. As we met with these stakeholders, they talked about their work and its importance to public health, cultural traditions, and local economies. Lucy heard repeatedly about losses to biodiversity — about how many species of fruits and vegetables were disappearing — and what that will mean to future food sources and to our collective nutrition. And we began to scout the city for a special and distinctly Philadelphia location where the Ortas'

In the shadow of City Hall we sampled a menu of heirloom produce provided by local farmers and discussed and debated how our food system can better serve the needs of people and our planet.

visual and performative work of public art, a free sit-down meal for nearly 1,000 people, would take place.

When Lucy and Jorge returned in November 2012, they suggested that the Philadelphia staging of *The Meal* focus on the importance of preserving heirloom foods and their role in creating a healthier food system and environment. Mural Arts project managers Judy Hellman and Netanel Portier built out the project's stakeholder community by taking the Ortas to visit nearby family farms. The Ortas also produced extensive photographic documentation of local produce that would serve as the basis of their designs for our Meal's plate and table runner — signature visual components of each iteration of *The Meal*.

Hellman and Portier also began to consider how the larger Philadelphia community might come to understand the implications of biodiversity in its food sources, and to build understanding for and appreciation of the promise of *70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV*. They re-convened the project stakeholders and additional advocates

and producers to shape their counsel and participation. They knew the issues, they knew each other, and they welcomed the attention and interest that a project like *The Meal* might bring to food production and distribution in the region.

Our preparation for *The Meal* took the form of *What We Sow*, a four month "season" of 20+ public events that invited Philadelphians to heirloom food tastings, cooking demonstrations and conversations at existing events like weekly farmers' markets and "night markets," and tours of community gardens (with murals!). It culminated with a presentation by Lucy and Jorge Orta at Moore College of Art and Design just prior to *The Meal* itself. We encouraged everyone who attended these events to share their contact information with us and from that list we selected a random group of nearly 200 participants to join our project partners, funders and stakeholders in staging *70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV* on Saturday, October 5, 2013.

The Ortas' planned site for *70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV*, Independence Mall at Independence National Historical

Park, took months to negotiate. Yet just days before staging our meal for 904 participants, a new site had to be found because of the partial federal government shutdown that began on October 1. As complicated as the original plan was because of federal government regulations, security concerns, and necessary street closures, city officials proved extraordinarily cooperative and gracious as we scrambled to re-configure almost every element of *The Meal*, save for its menu and tableware.

Late in the afternoon of Saturday, October 5th, guests now made their way to communal tables set on Thomas Paine Plaza at Philadelphia's Municipal Services Building for *70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV*. In the shadow of City Hall we sampled a menu of heirloom produce provided by local farmers and discussed and debated how our food system can better serve the needs of people and our planet. Meal-inspired kits containing a selection of the menu's heirloom produce and a segment of the Ortas' table runner were also distributed throughout the city, allowing 500 more Philadelphians to stage their own versions of *The Meal* that same day.

The strength of the ideas, the network that inspired *The Meal*, and the commitment of everyone, from the artists themselves, to extraordinary project managers and temporary staff, to the 150 volunteers, caterers and city staff who pulled it off launched Mural Arts' 30th anniversary year with a standard of creativity, professionalism and, yes, magic that have come to characterize our best work.

70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV clearly shaped the future of Mural Arts beyond a genre-specific format and expanded on the social and civic foundations of mural-making

by addressing the relationship between local communities, regional ecologies, global economies, and the politics of food production. Perhaps the project's impact was best articulated by visiting curator Lucia Sanroman: "By working with Lucy and Jorge Orta, who are at the forefront of public art, of social practice, and of community-based co-production, Mural Arts was able to catalyze new networks and new participants from all social backgrounds that have a shared interest in finding spaces for civic engagement based on active dialogue and collective experience."

Jane Golden

Executive Director

City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program



What is 70 x 7?

70 x 7, a biblical reference *Ad Infinitum* (Lc. 17,4) – FOREVER

7, a symbol present in mythology, cultures and religions

70 x 7, a formula to stage meals

7 guests invite **7**, who in turn invite **7**, *Ad Infinitum*

70 x 7, transforming the ancestral ritual, *The Meal*

Bringing people from different horizons together around same table

Opposite page: For 70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV, Lucy + Jorge Orta designed two Royal Limoges porcelaine plates, each an edition of 600.

70 x 7 The Meal

Lucy Orta

1. John Tomanio, "Our Dwindling Food Variety,"
National Geographic, <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2011/07/food-ark/food-variety-graphic>, (July 2011)

Over the last century an estimated 90% of heirloom fruit and vegetable varieties have vanished in the United States. To cite a few of the shocking statistics: of the 7,000 apple varieties once grown fewer than 100 remain, of the 500 cabbages only 28 remain, the 400 varieties of peas have diminished to just 25, and even the staple food source of sweet corn has been decimated from 300 to 12.¹ What will happen in the next 50 years, within our generation?

70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV proved to be an ideal strategy to develop a truly collective message around this horrifying loss of biodiversity that affects growers, distributors and eaters alike. Our collective motivation became the drive to preserve the rapidly disappearing food heritage by communicating on different levels and to different audiences the importance that food diversity has to our health, and to that of the necessary diversity of living organisms on our planet. Working in collaboration with Mural Arts and Philadelphia's deeply embedded array of food organizations, urban farms, farmers' markets, and allotment gardens, we created a collective 'meeting-point': a monumental public installation in the form of a table set for nearly 1,000 guests where a diverse range of communities in and around Philadelphia could converge to mingle, taste, discuss, exchange and spread knowledge about the importance of heirloom species, and at the same time celebrate both bio- and cultural diversity.

Our vocation as artists has been to imagine and realize publicly engaging art. Since the first intimate *70 x 7 The Meal* in the small town of Innsbruck, Austria in 2000, we have staged 35 meals called "acts" that have united tens of thousands of

people throughout the world around an ever-unfolding table to debate and discuss social, environmental, and political issues that affect our local or global communities. Through our choice of unusual settings to stage our meals and creation of unique table runners and limited edition Royal Limoges plates to accompany each act, we look to transform the daily ritual of dining together into an experience to be remembered and reenacted, forever. But our creative and intellectual quest is not satisfied until we are convinced that the art has become a living sculpture, where the public is no longer a passive spectator and where art has been generated by the community and become a meaningful part of people's lives. This is the deepest challenge we face when approaching each artwork, and we are never sure that we can reach these goals.

Thanks to Mural Arts, *70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV* takes art beyond the realm of purely relational to that of operational aesthetics because it truly did operate within the community. In the 18-month lead up to the public event, art was a trigger for great activity. And on the day, the emotion of communing with an artwork installed on the Thomas Paine Plaza emanated from the social dynamics and cohabitation of public space, where disparate communities mingled through conversations that inspired, and where the enjoyment of being part of the ephemeral moment and the essential need to share an experience was visible on each and every one of the faces of the participants seated at our table. Art is a catalyst for change.

Lucy Orta
Artist



AUNT MOLLY'S
GROUND CHERRY

PUN

ARLET CUS
SQ

QUENEPA

FISH

HONG HON HEIN





The What We Sow season of events included heirloom produce tastings; seed saving workshops; Mural, Market and Garden Tours and even an heirloom happy hour. We also worked with Laura Deutch (above with Farmer Ed Yin) to capture the food- and culture-inspired stories of growers and market-goers. Pictured across: Bill Freese, science policy analyst with the Center for Food Safety.





What We Sow

Jon McGoran

In preparation for the October 2013 staging of the City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program and Lucy + Jorge Orta's *70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV*, Mural Arts launched *What We Sow*, a summer-long exploration of art and food, with a special focus on heirloom produce. *What We Sow* offered the public a forum for rethinking the relationship between the food we eat and the people, the places, and the processes that produce it. Part of that series was a panel discussion, "The Politics of Seed Saving in the Age of GMOs". As an advocate for labeling GMOs (genetically modified organisms), author of two novels about GMOs, and, at the time, editor of *Grid* magazine, I was asked to moderate. *What We Sow* culminated in an amazing meal of heirloom vegetables for 904, and I was fortunate to have been part of that, as well.

For thousands of years, what we now call heirloom food was simply "food," and seed saving, the practice at the heart of heirloom foods, was an essential part of agriculture. Since agriculture was invented, farmers have been selecting seeds from plants with the most desirable traits and planting those seeds, perpetuating those traits and amplifying them over generations. Those emerging traits were essential to the success of agriculture, freeing humanity from lives of hunting and gathering, allowing us to settle down and find time for things like art and literature (and living past the age of thirty). Together with hybridization—adding pollen from one plant to a second to create a third—seed saving has given us virtually every type of vegetable we eat today.

But just as agriculture followed hunting and gathering, so did industrialization follow agriculture. It first revolutionized

the processing of our food, but more recently it has transformed the growing of it, as well. Twenty years ago, GMOs entered our food stream, but even before then, modern agriculture had brought forth a new type of hybrid plant that was fruitful and robust, but only for one generation. Saving seeds became a literally fruitless endeavor, and seeds had to be repurchased from the manufacturer each year. Now, in the age of GMOs, saving seeds is often not only fruitless, it is illegal, prohibited by the licensing agreements and aggressively litigated.

The industrial model has benefits, but they are not evenly distributed. It consolidates wealth, using economies of scale to enhance the profitability of doing things big. But sometimes that scale is itself a problem. Livestock operations become so vast that byproducts which would fertilize fields on smaller farms instead become lakes of toxic waste. Grain farms become so enormous they are dependent on monoculture—millions of acres planted with crops that are genetically identical. That's not how plants are meant to grow, and inducing them to do so requires massive applications of herbicides, insecticides and chemical fertilizers.

As the byproducts of industrialization change our very climate, a food system so reliant on a handful of GMO varieties becomes increasingly vulnerable. In a food system so dominated by a handful of patented and genetically engineered crops, the failure of just a few seed lines could be cataclysmic. And the millions of acres planted with identical GMO crops are removed from the selection process that advances desirable traits; the crops planted on them aren't allowed to adapt to a changing climate.

Fortunately, just as agriculture never completely displaced gathering — and Philadelphia’s wonderful local foragers are helping revive the art of finding delicacies growing wild in the woods and in the city — neither did industrialism completely take over the production of our food. And what grip it has is slipping.

We are entering a post-industrial age of food, with a renewed appreciation for small, for individual, for food made by human beings that tastes of place and time. Philadelphia is bursting with examples of local food production, makers of artisanal bread, cheese and beer. The surrounding countryside is verdant with small farms growing food — much of it heirloom, from seeds selected and grown over generations or swapped and traded with other growers. Each bite of these foods reflects not just the land on which it was bred, but the wisdom and experience of each individual who had a hand in growing it, back to the first farmers who cultivated it from the wild.

Throughout history, humans have accumulated knowledge: vast bodies of scientific achievement, libraries of great literature, and museums filled with art. Heirloom foods are similarly a repository of the knowledge and experience of the growers whose expertise improved each strain and helped prepare them to succeed in their different homes, who coaxed them to bring forth a range of different flavors, different colors. Seed savers seek to preserve that biodiversity, that heritage of the past. But they also represent hope for the future; each seed selected and saved is another step towards a world of greater diversity and resilience, a world filled with foods that are adapting to a changing world.

There is plenty of science to what they do, both time honored and cutting edge. But there is art, too. Food can be artful in many ways. Culinary artists transform simple foods into masterpieces. Food can be artful in a more intrinsic way, as well. Growers produce unique and beautiful varieties that testify to the artistry of those who bred them. Look at the fish pepper, the Christmas lima bean, the elephant heart plum. You don’t create those by science alone. The culmination of *What We Sow was 70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV*, where we saw food as art of a different sort, a merging of these other art forms with the conceptual, the visual, the performative. And it was thrilling.

The Meal wasn’t just about rethinking heirloom foods. It was also about celebrating them. With 904 people sitting elbow to elbow, the dinner presented intimacy and individuality on a grand scale, a beautiful paradox of small writ large. It brought together farmers and gardeners, activists and artists, young people and old, business and civic leaders—as well as passersby, skateboarders, and tourists from around the world. It was 904 individuals with histories and experiences and journeys that had brought them to that one place and time, to celebrate with foods whose stories were as unique as their own.

JON MCGORAN is the author of *Drift*, an ecological thriller about genetically engineered food, and its sequel, *Deadout*. He has been writing about food and sustainability for over twenty years as communications director at Weavers Way Co-op and editor of *The Shuttle*, as editor in chief at *Grid* magazine, and as an advocate for urban agriculture, cooperative development and labeling of genetically engineered foods.





Previous page: Heirloom apples were handed out by volunteers to passersby during The Meal.

This page: 150 volunteers were recruited and then trained the day of The Meal to arrange, set and clear the tables; serve food; greet participants; and facilitate discussions around the table.













The beautiful, locally-sourced meal designed by chef Marc Vetri was inspired by our region's unique heirloom fruits and vegetables. Large, family-style plates were brought to the tables by volunteers who then sat down to join in the communal meal with participants from all neighborhoods of Philadelphia and beyond.



Relational Exchange

Janet Kaplan

70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV, created in Philadelphia in conjunction with the City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program's *What We Sow* initiative, is the 34th in an ongoing series of ritual meals and public conversations focused on critical social and ecological needs and systems that have been conceptualized and staged throughout the world by British artist Lucy Orta and her Argentinian husband and artistic partner Jorge Orta.

For Philadelphia, the Ortas chose to highlight issues of food equity and sustainability and the importance of preserving heirloom species of food, with the dining group of 904 including many involved in the arts and in local processes of food production and distribution. Seated at long communal tables, they were invited to share a free meal of locally sourced heirloom vegetables specially prepared by local star chef Marc Vetri. They were also prompted to discuss a series of prepared questions that were designed to elicit ideas about the politics of food and the impact of socially engaged art.

This was part of a significant move for Mural Arts in that it resituated the concept of "art" from the terrain of "things made" — such as specific murals painted on a specific wall, designed to be there into the foreseeable future — to the field of temporary, contingent, and ephemeral experience. This does not signal Mural Arts abandoning their long-term involvement with community murals, a program that has made Philadelphia so widely known for the rich imagery of its urban public face. Rather it is a move in which they seek to expand their community-based practice and use their wide recognition to develop other projects that explore

what has come to be termed "relational." Conceptualized by theorists including French curator Nicolas Bourriaud and British critic Claire Bishop, among others, "relational arts" take as theoretical and practical points of departure issues of human relations and social contexts. Here, artists serve as catalysts for temporary open-ended interactions rather than as makers of discrete, finite things. Thus, in their conception of *The Meal*, the Ortas sought to carry experience away from singular encounters between a viewer and an object and move into the terrain of collective temporary exchanges. The work exists not as a thing, but as a relationship between people, facilitated, perhaps, by a temporary deployment of things. As British artist Jeremy Deller pointedly described his artistic trajectory, "I went from being an artist who makes things to being an artist who makes things happen." The meaning of the work is thus derived not from its materiality and confrontation with a passive audience, but rather from the process of collective engagement, the creation of a social environment where participants are gathered to share a common experience. It is a form of social practice that uses social systems, situations, and public space as its materials.

For *The Meal*, the fulcrum was food, its propagation, cultivation, transformation, and distribution—all culminating in a huge meal, staged in public space, at which diners were invited to experience the gastronomic rewards of regional farmers, using heirloom vegetables to demonstrate the ways in which such food can have local and global impact and in addition be notably delicious.

The meal itself was realized as an amalgam of a tightly scripted spectacle with carefully designed products — fabric table runners with statistics documenting dwindling species of produce, limited edition Royal Limoges porcelain plates inscribed with the Orta's drawings, and carrying bags for participants to take home the plate they dined off of — and open-ended, participant-generated conversations that developed around the generalized thematic of access to food and its meaning for the various diners, ranging from local farmers to the city's mayor.

In developing this project, the Ortas positioned themselves among a large range of artists and groups that have been using the sharing of food as a strategic means for social engagement and as a medium for moving art into the space of the public, whether on the street, or, as here, the municipal plaza. Among them, *The Meal* shares a conceptual resonance with Philly Stake, a local iteration of the micro-granting projects that have emerged internationally. Locally produced foods are prepared by and for local participants who pay small sums to eat together, not only as communal diners, but as an audience for local groups that present their socially engaged projects for which they seek funding support. Those who dine get to vote and, in a very satisfying moment of direct action and minimized bureaucracy, the one or two winners are simply handed paper shopping bags holding their share of the money gathered by the group that night. Conceived largely by artists, in the face of drastic cuts in so many areas of arts and social funding, this form of relational exchange offers a very concrete model for grass-roots direct action centered around the sharing of locally produced food.

Conflict Kitchen is another of many such on-going food-based social projects, here developed in the form of a restaurant, initiated at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh in 2010 by artists Jon Rubin and Dawn Weleski. Their focus is on communal dining as a local forum for engagement with international socio-political conflicts. While the ingredients are locally sourced, the foods that are made from them are representative of traditional cuisines from countries, among them Cuba, Afghanistan, Iran, and Venezuela, with which the United States is pointedly in current conflict. Each *Conflict Kitchen* iteration is augmented by events, performances, and discussions that seek to expand public engagement with the culture, politics, and economic issues at stake within the focus country. Here food serves as a marker of cultural/political identity. You may eat food from North Korea, a country largely closed to the wider world, while reading about its cultural and political connections and disconnections from texts written on placemats and napkins and sandwich wrappings. Thus the communal meal, set within a culturally and politically charged matrix, becomes a physical engagement with seemingly intractable geopolitical configurations. In this continually re-calibrated series, *Conflict Kitchen* strategically uses food as a visceral vehicle around which to think about many kinds of socio-political issues. While facilitated by the work of artists, the interactions of the participants cannot be scripted. That is their power.

Relational works are well-prepared and grounded events, but they are open to the immediacy of contingencies that require flexible adaptability. For example the Ortas' *70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV*, required a

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last-minute, totally unexpected change of venue that re-situated the whole project. Planned for the nationally iconic site of Independence Mall, federal governmental closures necessitated its move to the more centralized site of the Thomas Paine Plaza at the Municipal Services Building, directly across the street from Philadelphia’s locally iconic monument, City Hall. While both sites are urban and public, with historic and contemporary resonance, this redirection (which involved the complete redesign of the seating of over 900 people) proved to be a welcome, if disconcerting change. Under the watchful eye of William Penn who stands atop the wedding cake grandeur of City Hall, this re-siting was fortuitous in that it offered more accessible local impact. This had been among the goals the Ortas and Mural Arts sought to achieve. The irony that the original site, chosen for the project because of its national importance and its very public nature, would be made inaccessible due to a political stalemate in Washington, speaks pointedly to the larger context in which issues of food accessibility and sustainability, and their subtext of intractable poverty and hunger in America, are so often politically mired. While the nation’s government had shut

itself down, the local municipality was available in a way that reinforced an essential focus of the project — local food, local growers, local organizers, local diners, the true potential for sustainability that the local can imply. Unlike several Percent for Art permanent sculptural installations that are also sited on the plaza, each secured in an impermeable fixity, *The Meal* was a temporary project, alive with eating, discussion, and debate about the politics of food production, a healthier ecology and a more sustainable food system. In the end, it offered an intriguing vision of flexibility, inclusivity and a model for the relational potential that the very terms “municipal” and “services” might imply, produce, and embrace.

Janet Kaplan is a Professor of Art History and Director of the BFA in Curatorial Studies at Moore College of Art & Design. Former Executive Editor of *Art Journal*, a periodical published by the College Art Association, she teaches courses on historical and contemporary artists’ explorations of gender, exhibitions, public art, and social practice.

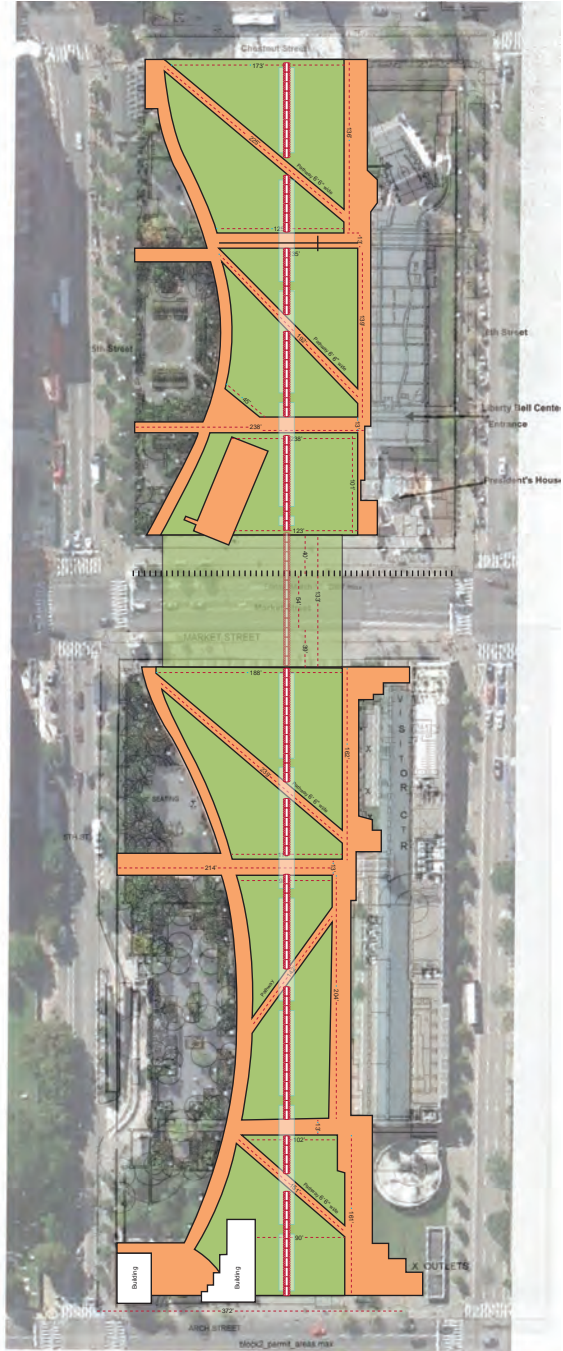
City of Philadelphia
MuralArtsProgram

Lucy + Jorge Orta
 70X7 The Meal, act XXXIV
 Independence National Historical Park
 Proposed Site Layout



THE DIMENSIONS OF THE
 TABLES ARE (INCHES) =
 96" LONG AND 42" WIDE

LONG TABLE TOTAL:
APPROXIMATELY 900





70
X7 **THE MEAL**
act XXXIV

MENU

Di Firenze Fennel and Parmesan Gratin

(Fennel, Olive Oil, Red Pepper Flakes,
Parmesan Cheese, Salt, Pepper)

Waltham Butternut Squash Caponata

(Grapeseed Oil, Butternut Squash,
Fennel, Red Onion, Garlic, Tomatoes, Pine Nuts,
Golden Raisins, Red Wine Vinegar, Salt, Pepper)

**Traditional Bagna Cauda with
Heirloom Vegetables**

(Heavy Cream, Milk, Anchovies,
Olive Oil, Garlic, Di Firenze Fennel, Galantina Chicory,
Cosmic Purple Carrots, Petite Marble Potatoes -
All Blue, Bintje, Russian Banana, Yellow Finn)

**Red Thumb Fingerling Potatoes
with Haricot Vert Salad**

(Fingerling Potatoes, Haricot Vert, Olive Oil,
Sherry Vinegar, Garlic, Rosemary, Salt, Pepper)

Menu by Chef Marc Vetri

Catered by Cescaphe Event Group

Heirloom produce provided by:

Green Meadow Farm - Gap, PA

Heritage Farm - Philadelphia, PA

Lancaster Farm Fresh Cooperative - Leola, PA

Bread provided by:

The Restaurant School at Walnut Hill College



70 x7 THE MEAL act XXXIV

WHAT IS HEIRLOOM?

- 1. AGE** - Heirloom plants are considered those bred prior to the 1950s, before the rise of genetically modified hybrid plants.
- 2. OPEN-POLLINATION** - No one owns the rights to heirloom plants and their cultivation. Seeds collected from an heirloom plant in one year will produce a plant with most of the same characteristics as the parent plant.
- 3. DURABILITY** - Most heirloom plants were cultivated for specific locations and have built-in disease, weather, and pest resistant qualities. These unique traits give them a leg-up over conventional plants.
- 4. QUALITY** - Many growers and farmers choose heirloom because the quality of flavor, texture, and beauty cannot be matched by conventional plants.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

What are the major food issues facing the world today?

What are you willing to sacrifice in food quality or safety in return for convenience?

How much diversity in the food supply is good for the environment and for people?

What are the benefits and drawbacks to heirloom foods versus genetically modified foods (GMOs)?

Should food labeling be required to identify whether they contain genetically modified organisms (GMO)?

*Use the back of this card to provide answers.
Feedback gathered during 70 x 7 The Meal will be
shared with food and civic leaders in Philadelphia.*







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Joe Volpe, Natalie Parks, Jayson Grossberg and the catering staff of Cescaphe Event Group

Royal Limoges
Atelier Le Mée
The team at Studio Orta

City of Philadelphia

The 150 volunteers and Mural Arts staff who made *70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXVI* possible on October 5th, 2013



About Mural Arts

The Mural Arts Program is the nation's largest public art program, dedicated to the belief that art ignites change. For nearly 30 years, the Mural Arts Program has united artists and communities through a collaborative process, rooted in the traditions of mural-making, to create art that transforms public spaces and individual lives. Mural Arts engages communities in 50 to 100 mural and public art projects each year, including a restoration program that maintains the collection. The murals also create unique project-based learning opportunities for thousands of youth and adults in the Art Education for Youth, Restorative Justice, and Behavioral Health programs. Each year, 14,000 residents and visitors tour the Mural Arts Program's outdoor art gallery, which has become part of the city's civic landscape and a source of pride and inspiration. The Mural Arts Program has created over 3,600 murals and works of public art, earning Philadelphia international recognition as the "City of Murals."

About Lucy + Jorge Orta

Lucy + Jorge Orta's collaborative practice draws upon urgent ecological and social sustainability issues to create artworks employing diverse media, including drawing, sculpture, installation, couture, painting, silkscreen, photography, video and light, as well as staged ephemeral interventions and performances. Amongst their most emblematic series are: *Refuge Wear* and *Body Architecture*, portable minimum habitats bridging architecture and dress; *HortiRecycling*, exploring the food chain in global and local contexts; *70 x 7 The Meal*, about the ritual of dining and its role in community networking; *Nexus Architecture*, alternative modes of establishing the social link; and *Clouds* and *OrtaWater*, addressing the increasing scarcity of this vital resource and the problems arising from its pollution and corporate control. For this project the

artists received the Green Leaf Award in 2007 for artistic excellence with an environmental message, presented by the United Nations Environment Programme in partnership with the Natural World Museum at the Nobel Peace Center in Oslo, Norway. Two recent bodies of work *Antarctica* and *Amazonia* reflect on the value of the natural environment to our daily lives and to our survival.

Lucy + Jorge Orta's artwork has been the focus of major solo exhibitions at the Venice Biennale (1995); Johannesburg Biennial (1997); Weiner Secession, Vienna (1999); Barbican Art Gallery, London (2005); Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Venice (2005); Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2006); the Biennial of the End of the World, Ushuaia, and the Antarctic Peninsula (2007); Hangar Bicocca spazio d'arte, Milan (2008); Natural History Museum, London (2010); Shanghai Biennale (2012); Tufts University Art Gallery, Medford (2012); MAXXI National Museum of XXI Century Arts,



Rome (2012); Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery, Wesleyan University, Middletown (2013); Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield (2013); and Parc de la Villette, Paris (2014).

Lucy Orta was born in 1966 in Sutton Coldfield, United Kingdom. She graduated with an honours degree in fashion-knitwear design from Nottingham Trent University (1989). After moving to Paris, Lucy began practicing as a visual artist in 1991, exhibiting her work in galleries and museums internationally. She is currently Chair of Art in the Environment at the London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London, where she has been Professor of Art and the Environment since 2007. Lucy was the inaugural Rootstein Hopkins Chair from 2002–07, and was Head of Man & Humanity at the Design Academy Eindhoven, a pioneering socially-driven and sustainable master program she co-founded in 2002.

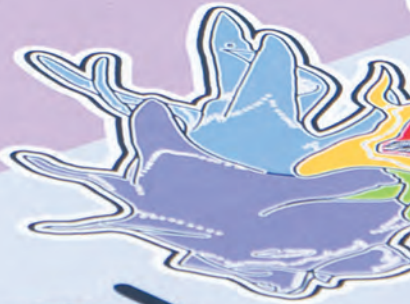
Jorge Orta was born in 1953 in Rosario, Argentina. He studied simultaneously at the faculty of fine arts (1972–79) and the faculty of architecture (1973–80) of the Universidad Nacional de Rosario. Jorge was a lecturer in the faculty of fine arts at the Universidad Nacional de Rosario and a member of CONICET, the Argentinean national council for scientific research, until 1984, when he received a scholarship from the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs to pursue a D.E.A. (Diplôme d'études approfondies) at the Sorbonne in Paris.

Lucy + Jorge Orta's studios are located in central Paris and at Les Moulins in Seine-et-Marne.
www.studio-orta.com



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Credits

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70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV City of
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“The Meal reinforced notions of how public art has vast potential for bringing awareness of need for social change.”

“Hospitality is public art and it builds strong communities and positive civic energy.”

“I never really considered heirloom fruits and vegetables of being an important topic before this event.”

“Food is a vital axis of health for us as a community as well as individuals.”

“It was a highly meaningful event, and I appreciated especially the inclusivity. What else speaks to our identities as Philadelphians more than sitting at a table between a Mennonite farmer and a woman who just finished her shift at McDonalds? Beautiful, redemptive, much-appreciated event.”

*Reviews from participants at
70 x 7 The Meal, act XXXIV*



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