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## Course Programme

*Mapping Meals and their Spaces*

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**DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL ENGINEERING**  
AALBORG UNIVERSITY

# **Course Programme**

## **“Mapping Meals and their Spaces”**

**Tenna Doktor Olsen Tvedebrink**



Aalborg University  
Department of Civil Engineering  
Center for Food Science, Design and Experience

**DCE Lecture Notes No. 37**

**Course Programme**  
**“Mapping Meals and their Spaces”**

by

Tenna Doktor Olsen Tvedebrink

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# **COURSE** **PROGRAMME**

**“Mapping Meals and their Spaces”**

## **P1 2015**



**Figure 1: The Mealscape**

*"The dining room is a theatre wherein the kitchen serves as the wings and the table as the stage. This theatre requires equipment, this stage needs a décor, this kitchen needs a plot."*

Quote by Chatillon-Plesis 1984

(Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2007:75)  
(Illustration by Tenna D.O. Tvedebrink 2014)

## Dear students

Welcome to your first DESIGN course: *'Mapping Meals and their Spaces'*.

I hope you are ready to learn about the emerging discipline of Food Design and the so-called "Design Thinking" perspective, as well as how to implement the interdisciplinary knowledge characterizing your new education *Integrated Food Studies* into more detailed considerations on how to investigate and evaluate public meal spaces and create public meal experiences.

This course programme will guide you through the purpose and content of the DESIGN course; the extent of the different lectures and the various workshop exercises, as well as the demands for the final assignment and evaluation criteria for the exam held in November.

As such, this course programme will be your guidance for the next months, as well as for the individual study time where you need to prepare the final assignment for the examination. So please read it carefully and keep it safe 😊

I hope you will have an inspiring semester and that you will enjoy the course.  
I know each of the teachers and supervisors look forward to meet and work with you!  
And hopefully I will see you and get to know you next spring.

**All the best**

**Tenna**

Course responsible

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## Introduction to course

As you probably will be told a lot during the first days in your semester, the education '*Integrated Food Studies*' is based on an integration of the knowledge, skills and competencies captured with the three overall research perspectives of: *Public Health Nutrition (PHN)*, *Food Networks & Innovation (FINE)*, and *Food+Design (DESIGN)*.

In short, PHN can broadly be defined as the research perspective of healthy meals, food service and the public health nutrition aspects of food. FINE is a research perspective broadly approaching the socio-technical understanding of food-environments, governance and the policy-processes related contexts of various food systems. Whereas, DESIGN is related to a broad research perspective focusing on the *aesthetic* understanding and *creative* work with various food experiences and food contexts. Throughout the entire IFS-education these three major research perspectives and their inherit theories, methods and approaches supplement, support and counterweight each other, thereby aiming at providing you with an *integrated* understanding and *integrated* research approach to the complex concept of food studies.

This specific DESIGN course: '*Mapping Meals and their Spaces*' in relation hereto aims, on the background of the aesthetic and creative research perspective of the design thinking approach, at **providing you with a basic design frame-of-reference** for the theoretical, methodological, and practical work with analyzing and creating public meal spaces and public meal experiences.

## Course content

The term '*meal*' contains an enormous richness well beyond what we eat. On one hand, a meal is a self-evident and common word in the everyday life vocabulary of the Western world. On the other hand, it is a concept in which different researchers from various academic disciplines try to pinpoint some features of our eating habits and our essence as social actors and members of a certain culture. A '*meal*' is thus a complex phenomenon often involving interactions between many different *persons*, *ideas*, *spaces* and *objects* (natural as well as artificial). The *experience* of a meal is therefore also much more than the nutritional and physiological-sensory input (the sense of taste, smell, sight, texture, sound, mouth feeling etc.) of eating a specific food object. The experience of a meal is *also* about the political, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual and *aesthetic* dimensions unfolded in the spaces surrounding a meal (see e.g. the arguments put forth by Finkelstein 1989, Meiselman 2008 or Korsmeyer 2002). But, furthermore, a meal is also about the design of the entire *atmosphere* and *scenery*; the landscape, architectural space, interior details and specific objects framing the meal. Thereby the overall content of this DESIGN course closely boards with the research perspectives of FINE and PHN. However, in addition to the domains of policy, governance and public health nutrition **this DESIGN course focuses on the aesthetic and creative understanding of meal-spaces and meal-experiences.**

A number of academic writers and researchers have attempted to describe the complex phenomena; meal-spaces and meal-experiences, and relative hereto explain how a meal stands out from just grazing, eating a snack or just eating any other food item. In this DESIGN

course you are presented to some key-examples on this (see e.g. Meiselman 2008; Edwards & Gustafsson 2008b, Gustafsson et al. 2006). Furthermore, you are introduced to two theoretical models developed for analyzing and evaluating the experiences of a meal and the aesthetics of built environments – or what could also be called *architectural spaces*. Those two theoretical models are: 1) **the design model (ELLIPSE)** developed by Danish designer Vita Riis (see Riis 2001), and **the culinary model (FAMM)** developed by Swedish hospitality researcher Inga-Britt Gustafsson (see Gustafsson 2004; Edwards & Gustafsson 2008a, 2008b; Gustafsson et al. 2006).

The culinary model (FAMM) developed by Gustafsson is based on the evaluation methods of the Michelin Guide on hotel and restaurants. According to Gustafsson: *“the meal takes place in a room (room), where consumers meet waiters and other consumers (meeting), and where dishes and drinks (products) are served. Backstage there are several rules, laws and economic and management resources (management control system) that are needed to make the meal possible and make the experience an entirety as a meal (entirety – expressing an atmosphere)”* (Gustafsson et al. 2006:84). Together the **‘room’** (built environment with style history, architectural style, decoration, textiles, design), **‘meeting’** (interactions), **‘products’**, **‘management control system’** (economics, laws and logistics, and **‘atmosphere’** are the major five aspects for developing meal service - or what we in this course calls meal experiences - in restaurants. Gustafsson emphasizes that those five major aspects needs to be considered in an integrated manner, and understood by utilizing different types of knowledge such as scientific knowledge, practical-productive knowledge, aesthetic knowledge, and ethical knowledge.

With the article *‘The room and atmosphere as aspects of the meal: a review’* Edwards & Gustafsson (2008a) focus on **the aesthetic dimensions of a meal**. They focus on the aspects of the ‘room’ and the ‘atmosphere’. They argue that every consumption of food or a meal takes place within what can termed a ‘room’, although they emphasize, that this ‘room’ in reality can be a wide variety of settings and built environment – both indoor and outdoor, private and public (Edwards & Gustafsson, 2008a:22). According to Edwards & Gustafsson (2008a) different aspects and features of that ‘room’ contributes to the overall ‘atmosphere’. As you see, the ‘atmosphere’ is a term that is rather difficult to quantify and describe, thus also very difficult to start analyzing and evaluating. The purpose with the article written by Edwards & Gustafsson (2008a) is therefore to review existing academic literature, to try and outline aspects of this ‘room’ and ‘atmosphere’. They do so under the headings of *interior variables, layout and design variables*, as well as *human variables*. However, they emphasize that it is important to recognize and appreciate that other attributes of similar or equal importance also exist (Edwards & Gustafsson 2008a).

In the first sentence of the actual article Edwards & Gustafsson moved directly from using the notion ‘room’ to in their own terms more accurately calling it *“the place where the consumption of food and beverages takes place”* (Edwards & Gustafsson, 2008a:22). In this ‘room’ or ‘place’ Edwards & Gustafsson (2008a) argue there is a multitude of features – fixed features such as chairs, tables, lights and colors; to moveable features such as people (consumers and staff). Together they help create the ‘atmosphere’ of the room. However, despite their elaborate attempt to review existing academic literature on the subject, they never come quite close to define *how* we can understand those complex aspects of the ‘room’ and the ‘atmosphere’. A criticism of their article could be, that they keep the aspects of ‘room’ and ‘atmosphere’ too broadly defined to ever be able to fully understand how the room and

atmosphere impact on the meal experience in practice – and what you as students in Integrated Food Studies can use it for?

Lately the North American researcher Herbert L. Meiselman (see Meiselman 2008) also addresses the complex understanding of a meal. He argues that the FAMM-model put forth by Gustafsson is not broad enough to fully understand and appreciate the complexity of a meal. Meiselman argues that a meal should be analyzed from the following views: *history* (meal patterns over time); *product development* (food combinations); *food service* (food sequences, food compatibilities, sensory themes); *designer/artists* (meal locations, environments, physical settings); *sensory* (combination of sensory experiences); *biology* (food intake, timing and pattern); *physiology* (internal hunger and satiety, signals); *nutrition/dietetics* (food intake and macro/micro nutrients); *anthropology* (cultural differences); *Sociology* (commensality and social rules/rituals); *psychology* (basic unit of eating); *Marketing* (price, value, brand and satisfaction); *Abnormal psychology/health* (undereating and overeating) (Meiselman, 2008:14). However, Meiselman (2008) in comparison to Gustafsson (2004) does not offer any specific theoretical model for how to analyze a meal based on all these different perspectives. So, for now – for practical reasons, we must stick to the theoretical model developed by Gustafsson (2004). BUT! Based on the arguments put forth by Meiselman (2008) we, however, need to be aware that this theoretical model – the FAMM - is not complete. That *one* of the weaknesses in the FAMM-model, despite the elaborate attempts, is that the model does not offer any detailed insight into the design perspective and *how* we analyze the aesthetic dimensions of the ‘room’ or ‘atmosphere’. Instead, often the notions ‘room’, ‘place’, and ‘atmosphere’ – as well as ‘settings’ and ‘built environment’ are being used interchangeably.

Luckily, this is not the case if we move to the research areas of architectural theory and interior design. Contrary the FAMM-model, the design-model (ELLIPSE) outlined by the Danish Vita Riis (see Riis 2001), is not developed for analyzing meals. It is a model developed for analyzing different scales of the built environment: *architecture*, *product design* and *graphic design*. This is what this course aims at providing you through a mix of lectures, exercises and practical design work.

With the design-model Riis (2001) offers an outline of some of the basic design parameters which needs to be considered when analyzing and/or creating a object/product/space. Riis (2001) splits the design-model into two major dimensions; the ‘**inner**’ and the ‘**outer**’ dimension. The “inner” dimensions are the functional, technical and structural aspects of an object/product/space, whereas the “outer” dimensions are the shape, style and beauty of an object/product/space. With these two dimensions Riis (2001) focuses on the relation between shaping an aesthetic object/product/space, and the use of modern materials and technology. Important in Riis’ model is furthermore that design-parameters change throughout history due to developments in style, taste, craft, skills and technologies. The context of an object/product/space is therefore important for understanding and evaluating its design qualities. Furthermore the intention of the design-model is that **it can be used both as an analytical tool for evaluating an existing object/product/space, but also as a design tool for creating new objects/products/spaces**. This is crucial to remember when you begin analyzing and creating your own meal experiences during the course.

However, as you will see from the texts provided in the course Riis (2001) does not specifically work with the aspect of ‘atmosphere’ in her theoretical model. Instead she uses

notions as 'style', 'aesthetics', 'image', 'identity' and 'experience'. Still, with the help of the German professor in Philosophy, Gernot Böhme, we can perhaps begin to elaborate a bit more on the understanding of the term atmosphere. With the text *'The art of the stage set as a paradigm for an aesthetics of atmospheres'*, Böhme (2013) provides a more artistic and emotional understanding of the term 'atmosphere'. Here he argues first of all that the term 'atmosphere' covers the moods and emotional things of space – the 'room' communicates a certain "feeling" to us, and that creating an atmosphere – despite its intangible and indefinite character - is something which has been going on for centuries within the theatrical performances and the art of stage setting. According to Böhme (2013) the theoretical origin of the term 'atmosphere' relate to early writings on subjects like "taste", and thereby the term not only relates to the visual and auditory senses most obvious in the theatrical world, but also to the olfactory and gustatory senses! Böhme (2013) thus argues that atmospheres are a kind of totality – the ever present "backgrounds" in our everyday life – which is not only passive frames, but also active stages continuously producing emotional experiences in us depending on the design(s) constituting the specific place, space and situation.

As you hopefully can read from the above short introduction to some of the texts provided in the course, there are many perspectives to the complex understanding of a meal, and there is not just one answer or solution for how to approach it. But that is the key in academic thinking – and especially in *integrated* thinking. You will always have to compare, combine and discuss from various perspectives to get a deeper understanding. Therefore, in this DESIGN course I would like to urge you *to explore* the potentials of the two theoretical models developed by Gustafsson (2004) and Riis (2001) by combining them. **Try and use the design-model developed by Riis to elaborate on the built environment; the 'room' and 'atmosphere' aspects of the FAMM-model developed by Gustafsson (2004).** And see if it brings you closer to an understanding of how to analyze and evaluate meal spaces, as well as creating future meal experiences.

## Overall course framework

To help you get started with the work of analyzing and evaluating meal spaces, as well as creating meal experiences, we have established an overall "framework" – an imaginary meal context for you to analyze, but also for you to practice and get familiar with the course literature and how to use the two theoretical models in practice. This "framework" takes its point of departure in the historical era called: *La Belle Époque*.

***La Belle Époque*** is French for "Beautiful Era" and is a significant period in Western cultural history that started around 1890 and ended when World War I began in 1914. The *Belle Époque* era is a period characterized first of all by optimism and peace in Western Europe, but also by the fast development of new technologies, brilliant scientific discoveries and economic prosperity in particularly England (London), France (Paris), Germany, Austria and North-East America (see e.g. Shattuck 1955). Here the bourgeoisie upper class prospered. Successful industrialists had become the new social elite who strived for entertainment and demanded joy of living. This meant that during this particular era the so-called 'Arts' flourished and many masterpieces of architecture, design, interior, literature, music, theater, fashion and gastronomy (sic!) gained huge recognition.



**Figure 2: The Restaurant**

*The first public restaurants sold little food, but instead were public spaces or 'resaurateur's rooms' where people too frail to eat a regular meal went to drink a restorative boullion to restore or rest one's body from hunger or fatigue.*

(Finkelstein 1989, Spang 2002)  
(Illustration by Tenna D.O. Tvedebrink 2013)



From this specific era we see the development of public entertainment (or what is more broadly referred to as hospitality today) in casinos and cabarets like the *Moulin Rouge* with courtesans in exotic feathers and fur dancing can-can, music halls and theatres with extraordinary interior designs. We see a huge development in bistros, cafés, salons and fine-dining restaurants like the famous *Maxim's* and *Hôtel Ritz* where French haute cuisine were modernized by chefs like the French Auguste Escoffier, who became highly esteemed among European gourmets (see Mennell 1985). Escoffier cut down on the cumbersome garnishes, insisted that all food had to be edible and focused instead on the perfect balance of a few superb ingredients, simply-cooked vegetables, as well as a sprinkling of parsley (see Willan 1977 and Mennell 1985). This also meant that Escoffier gave up on the impressive ornamental displays; the *pièces montées* and elaborate *socles* on which food had been mounted during the previous era of the famous chef Antonine Carême. For hundreds of years, diners had been served in the style called *à la française*, with a large number of different dishes set out on the table at once. With Escoffier it was altered into *service à la Russe* serving dishes individually and consecutively rather than simultaneously. **By some, the years of the *Belle Époque* are therefore often referred to as the “Banquet years”.** The ‘banquet’ was the supreme rite, where the upper class celebrated the vitality of life over long tables decorated with a pompous display of luxury foods such like champagne, oysters, blini with caviar, consommé, foie gras, truffles, endive and asparagus (see Shattuck 1955, Willan 1977, Mennell 1985).

As written in Tvedebrink (2013:122) during this era the Eiffel Tower was built in Paris and huge developments in architecture, engineering, urban planning and landscape design/gardening, interior design and product design occurred. Depending on what designer or architect we engage in, there are different styles to understand, for instance the avant-garde iron structures of the Industrialization or the stunning Art Nouveau interiors, tableware, jewelry and graphic design. However, it all began with the French Revolution (1789-1799). Here the courtly banquets previously practiced by Kings and Noblemen were replaced by new forms of festivity and sociability (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2007). During the late Renaissance, the power of the aristocratic households was largely reduced and many cooks were left unemployed. Presumably, this meant that many skilled cooks established other places to work and serve meals for the new class: the *bourgeoisie* who could pay for such meals. And cooks were turned into a professionalization of ‘chefs’ and the emergence of “modern” restaurants. In 1789, the shared revolutionary optimism presumably led the proprietors of the new *cirque de Palais Royal* (a multi-venture centre of enlightenment and entertainment) advertised that their ample establishment included both a café and a restaurant (Spang 2002; Mennell 2003).

According to sociologist Joanna Finkelstein (1989:38-39), the diners/customers at some of the first restaurants did not come there for fine eating, but instead it was a commercial enterprise imitating the fashionable style and form of life associated with the declining aristocracy. They wanted to appear as the new social elite, and dining at restaurants thus became a status symbol and a way to display a new and fashionable lifestyle (Gustafsson et al. 2008). Finkelstein (1989:37) notes how restaurateurs in their competition for business fostered a particular interest in the “*theatricality of gastronomy and the drama of the restaurant*”. Meaning that **restaurateurs employed the design and presentation of food, décor or service as a mean to attract and distract customers** (Finkelstein 1989). [Tvedebrink 2013:122-123] In continuation hereof, Strong (2002) notes that the modern understanding of a dining room as a separate space for eating does not officially appear in

French literature until around mid-17th century as a '*sale á manger*' and in English literature until the mid-18th century as a '*dining room*' [sic!]. However, in 1773 the Scottish-born architect and interior designer Robert Adam supposedly highlighted a series of fundamental differences distinguishing French and English dining rooms.

In England, men stayed behind to talk and drink, whereas in France they withdrew into the *salon* to have conversations (Strong 2002). Strong (2002:245) notes that this leads Adam to conclude that the English dining room must, therefore, be elegant and splendid in its interior style – and “*instead of being hung with damask, tapestry etc., they are always furnished with stucco, and adorned with statues and paintings, that they may not retain the smell of the victuals*”. And Strong (2002:245) continues his reference to Adam stating that “*it was essential for the architect to have total control over the whole mise-en-scène down to the curtains and the silver*”. What is important to notice, according to Strong (2002), is that even though by the late 18th century that a special room for eating was established in domestic houses, it did not mean that the interior was permanently set up. Instead the chairs stood against the wall and were only brought forward for the meal. The table was the only permanent and central element of the ‘tablescape’ remaining in position in the room when not eating (Strong 2002). Nevertheless, by the 1850s, Strong (2002) notes that the occupation with the choreography of *bourgeois* domestic everyday eating and dinner parties had turned into a major preoccupation for architects, who not only designed special breakfast or luncheon rooms and state dining rooms, but who also engaged in an *orchestration* of spaces and movements of dinner guests that ensured they would never cross paths with the servants bringing food from the kitchen. The dining room, thereby, according to Strong (2002:290), became a “*clear symbol of class distinction, an embodiment of the separation of the owners and the family from the servants and the practicalities of cooking. It was a room for display...*”. [Tvedebrink 2013:123]

In the late 19th–early 20th century with the French chef George Auguste Escoffier (1847-1935) who is considered the “father” of *cuisine classique*, the food serving style had transformed from *service á la française* to *service á la russe* (Franck 2002). Here, in the opulent and exclusive eating environments of Hotel Ritz and Hotel Savoy, dishes were presented one after another in sequence directly to each guest individually by a waiter, instead of being located on a grand table before the meal. In that way the food would presumably remain hot and keep its flavour longer than previously (Franck 2002; Strong 2002). However, according to Franck (2002:60), elaborately constructed cold dishes, often in aspic, could still be used as display. With the transition from *service á la française* to *service á la russe*, the spectacular grand tables and interior landscapes of different tableware dating back to medieval and renaissance eras were rejected – leaving the ‘tablescapes’ quite empty [Olsen 2008:32]. Instead the ‘tablescapes’ and interior, according to Strong (2002:298-99), were decorated with real flowers and plants in “fancy flower pots”, silver centrepieces and candelabra. Despite the transition from *service á la française* to *service á la russe*, due to the large amount of different courses served during a meal (*hors d'oeuvre*, soups, fish, *entrée*, *piece de résistance*, sorbet, roast and salad, vegetables, hot sweet, ice cream, dessert, coffee and liqueurs) still demanded a plenitude of porcelain service, tableware, damask tablecloth and cutlery for display which was further emphasized and empowered by the increasing industrialization, mass production and franchise of such handicrafts (Strong 2002). In that way, some of the earliest interiors of restaurants and hotels closely imitated the domestic *bourgeois* dining room tendencies with distinctive interior ‘assemblages’ of delicate porcelain, copper ware, grand mirrors, landscape paintings and candlelit tables dressed in damask. [Tvedebrink

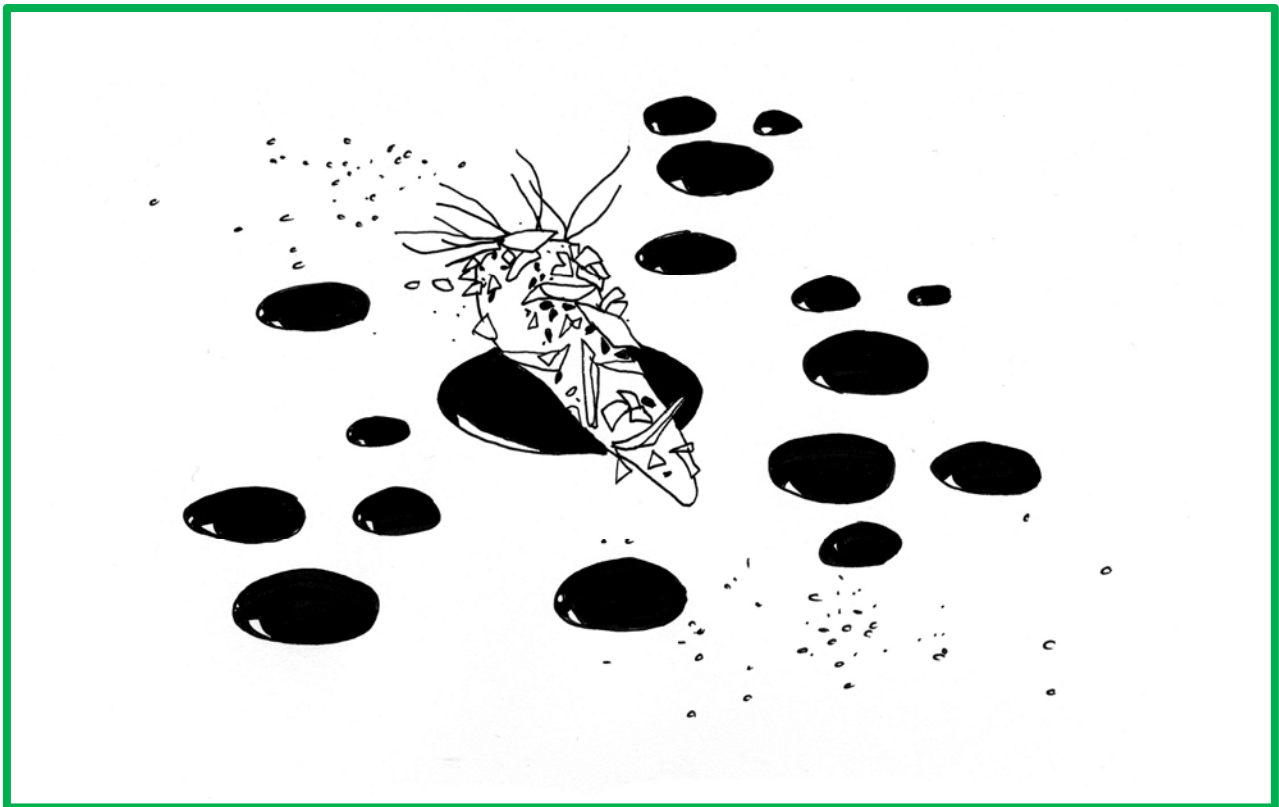


2013:122-123] **The *Belle Époque* was an era of opulent luxury and especially in retrospect, considered a “golden age” fostering a series of magnificent meal experiences integrating both food and design.**

Today, in Denmark, more precisely in Copenhagen in the beautiful Royal Garden ‘Frederiksberg Have’ in the gourmet restaurant ‘Mielcke & Hurtigkarl’ we have our own version of an extraordinary meal environment integrating food, art and design to create luxurious total experiences. Mielcke & Hurtigkarl is led by the Danish chef; Jacob Mielcke, and is based on a highly technical, multi-sensuous and artistic expression promoting season-based food produce. The multi-sensuous approach in the kitchen is also reflected in the restaurant interior, which is characterized by an open view into the surrounding garden and a spectacular décor created by a series of top-artist and prominent fashion designers in Denmark where herbs, lighting design, smells and sounds are merged together. In recent years there has been an increased focus on the certain “Nordic spirit” governing both the design of food servings and interiors in Scandinavian restaurants. Mielcke & Hurtigkarl is (even though Jacob himself don’t like to say so) considered one of the forerunners in this new “Nordic spirit”, with their new much more technological and scientific cooking that likewise introduced a revival of the importance of the visual appearance of the food and on the theatrical presentation of dishes in front of an “audience”. See also [www.mhcph.com](http://www.mhcph.com) for further information.

Relative hereto Finkelstein (1989) notes that most dining out in our contemporary society is closely linked to the *bourgeois* notion of self-presentation and the material mediation of social relations through ‘images’ of what is fashionable. Thereby, public spaces, like restaurants through their iconic represented ambiances/atmospheres, decors, furnishings, lighting, tableware and food, are regarded as places of personal experience, excitement, pleasure and well-being that are strongly governed by the tendencies of the fashion. Finkelstein (1989:3) even concludes: “*The physical appearance of the restaurant, its ambiance and décor, are as important to the event of dining out as are the comestibles...the restaurant has the double function of being an architecture of desire and an inventory of the private, subjective world*”. [Tvedebrink 2013:122-123]

So in my opinion, today the meal experiences created at Mielcke & Hurtigkarl can be compared to the opulent luxury and magnificent meal experiences created in the “golden age” of the *Belle Époque* era. Here the interior design of the restaurant turns the meal into a total-experience, where the interior architecture (the room) and overall atmosphere become an essential part of *staging* the meal experience and *seducing* the consumers. We could perhaps even claim that Mielcke & Hurtigkarl become state-of-the-art in Interior Design for Food?



**Figure 3: Food Design**

*A wide range of research related activities characterize the links between hospitality and Food Design. Although Food Design does not yet have a definition in the academic literature there are as such many working explanations to be found.*

(Zampollo 2013)

(Illustration by Tenna D.O. Tvedebrink 2013)

## The final assignment

### The Culinary Banquet 2015

In the final assignment of this course, we propose to celebrate the revival of the *Belle Époque* in Mielcke & Hurtigkarl with a spectacular meal event called: *Culinary Banquet 2015*.

There are two possible contexts and locations for this magnificent meal event.

The first location is the dining room at Mielcke & Hurtigkarl. Today it is possible to eat there, but perhaps it would also be possible to create an intimate, very exclusive dinner banquet imitating the “golden days” of the *Belle Époque*? Obviously the sophisticated and exclusive context of the restaurant would make the banquet an event created for a very limited and perhaps wealthy group of persons. But perhaps the banquet could be used to create attention to the wonders and spectacles of the *Belle Époque* era in a more profound and informative way? Furthermore, the concept for the Mealscape of a banquet would have to respect and adapt to the existing architecture and interior design developed at the restaurant.

The second location is the garden surrounding the restaurant – Frederiksberg Have. This romantic-inspired garden was founded around 1801 and can be transformed into an outdoor facility framing several hundreds of people. The “interior” of the garden has the possibility of being completely transformed during such events and there are fewer limits for this “interior design” and perhaps the banquet could be used to create a grand event establishing wider public attention to the wonders and spectacles of the *Belle Époque* era?

In the final assignment you can choose between – or combine - the dining room at Mielcke & Hurtigkarl or the surrounding garden at Frederiksberg Have.

### How to approach the meal analysis?

As emphasized by Meiselman (2008), the ‘room’ and ‘atmosphere’ in the model developed by Gustafsson (2004) is not restricted to the physical setting of a specific dining room. It is *more* than the physical setting, it involves the interaction of people and spaces (Meiselman 2008). Those spaces are often designed in some way, whether it is the interior of some indoor setting or the exterior or landscape of an outdoor setting. When people eat they further often employ specific objects such like furniture (chair, table etc.) and utensils (tableware, plates etc.) in the process of eating. According to Sobal & Wansink (2007) these components; the places and objects of the built environment at many scales influence decisions about types and amounts of food eaten, and therefore determine food intake. As emphasized with the design-model developed by Riis (2001), built environments are multi-scalar, existing in larger and smaller units of analysis, ranging from the macro-scale of landscapes and cities; the mid-scale of buildings, rooms and interiors; to the micro-scale of furniture, products and objects. The point made by Sobal & Wansink (2007) is that “geographies” of built environments provide a subtle, pervasive, and often unconscious influence on food choices, food intake, obesity, and health. Therefore reengineering and intentionally designing built environments may offer opportunities to shape food intake and influence meal experiences.

Taking their point of departure in geography and the core concept of the word “landscape” Sobal & Wansink (2007) adopts the suffix “-scape” to develop four levels defining the ‘room’ and ‘atmosphere’ of a meal. According to the English Oxford Dictionary, the etymological meaning of “scape” can be traced back to: *a specific view of a space or scenery from a given perspective*. In that way a “landscape” has a *tangible* manifestation that can be sensed (heard, smelled, tasted, touched and seen), but it also has an *intangible* essence that can evoke

affective responses, generate and stimulate memories, and spark imagination. In that way the “scape” interweaves the body with society and culture, nature, and the world at large. The traditional use of the suffix “-scape” is thus, according to Mikkelsen (2011), used to denote the spatially arranged artifacts in our surroundings, but the notion also offers the advantage of studying *phenomena* that are unevenly distributed in space and appear in a variety of shapes and contexts. On the basis of this understanding, Sobal & Wansink (2007) define four descriptive levels for an analysis of the ‘room’ and ‘atmosphere’. Those are the *roomscape*, *tablescape*, *platescape* and *foodscape*. Together those four “scapes” represents the entire landscape of a meal – or what we here choose to call the MEALSCAPE:

**The MEALscape**, like a landscape, is much more than just the physical space to which it can refer. It may refer to an intangible association, a connection, an unbounded place, an imagined place. The mealscape is thus the entire phenomena (the world-level or macro-scale) of a meal. It contains all the other “scapes”, all the dimensions, aspects and scales related the built environment and context of a meal, and thereby also the overall ‘atmosphere’ of the meal.

**The ROOMscape** is the mid-scale of the built environment. It is the scale of the interior design and appearance of the meal setting. Here décor, furniture placements, ambient conditions like lighting, temperature and sounds impact on the experience of a meal.

**The TABLEscape** is also part of the mid-scale of the built environment. It is the scale of the furniture and appearance of the place where the food is served and eaten. Here furniture elements, surface materials, number and configurations of objects, table layout, utensils, textiles, tableware, as well as persons present impact on the experience of a meal.

**The PLATEscape** is part of the micro-scale of the built environment. It is the scale of the containers, vessels or other small objects like plates, bowls, glasses, cups, packages, boxes, bags, wrappers, bottles, jars, cans etc. commonly used to contain foods and beverages. The platescape is a pervasive form of built environment from which individuals eat directly.

**The FOODscape** is another part of the micro-scale of the built environment of a meal. Foods and dishes are objects that are typically prepared before eating, and foods themselves constitute small-scale components of the built environment. Foodscapes represent the view of a particular food object, the dinner course and the specific dishes.

In the lectures and exercises we focus on how to analyze the design context of the MEALSCAPE – the space and artifacts of a meal experience. On the background of a brief outline of a specific period in western design history and its major culinary events, as well as key-persons within disciplines such like: gastronomy, architecture and design, we explore the aesthetic aspects of a meal. This knowledge is provided to you through a series of lectures, followed by individual exercises, group work, and a final assignment to be presented in a portfolio at the exam. **So, it is important you take photos, and document your work with the exercises during the course.**

## The Portfolio

Each group makes a portfolio written in English of maximum 6 A3-pages.

The portfolio should illustrate a pictorial/graphical understanding of how to analyze, evaluate and create a meal space design/Mealscape. For instance through the creative tools taught during the workshop; moodboard, photos, drawings/sketches, diagrams, collage, key-words and short statements. Furthermore, see the 'assignment specifications' below and description in the summary lectures we will upload on MOODLE by the end of the workshops.

During the entire course, each student either individually or in groups, has researched, registered, analyzed and designed aspects of the Mealscape. Now it is time to finish this work. The portfolio as such takes its point of departure in the exercises assigned to you during the workshop. Based on these exercises the portfolio must present your groups' ideas and overall concept for a meal experience for the Culinary Banquet 2015 (see assignment specifications).

For you to be able to make decisions and establish arguments that support the creative development of your ideas and concept, we expect that you show how you use and reflect on the theoretical knowledge, methods and creative tools gathered from provided literature, lectures and exercises in the course and workshops. We expect that you show you have gained basic knowledge about the period of *Belle Époque*, the two theoretical models developed by Riis (2001) and Gustafsson (2004) and about restaurant Mielcke & Hurtigkarl. Together the literature, theory and different methodologies constitute the basis of your future analytical and creative tools for how to evaluate meal spaces and create meal experiences.

## Assignment specifications

The portfolio should at least present the following:

- **History (era, style and master architect) - 1 A3 page**

*In lecture 2 each student was assigned a specific architect/designer to perform research on. Furthermore you were in lecture 2 introduced to the Belle Époque era and some of the different design styles characterizing this era. Now you (as a group) should choose **one** of the below master architects/designer, and briefly outline key-terms and concepts describing the era, style and characteristics of the chosen architect/designer:*

*Hector Guimard  
Joseph Frank  
Charles Rennie Mackintosh  
Aubrey Vincent Beardsley  
William Morris*

*This designer should be your key-inspiration for the mood board you need to create for communicating your concept for the Mealscape of the Culinary Banquet 2015 (see the bullet "concept" below).*

- **Meal (dinner course and food) - 1 A3 page**

*In lecture 6 you were analyzing a dinner course from the era of Belle Époque, developed by Escoffier. Choose **one** of the below dinner courses. Briefly outline key-terms and concepts describing the specific Belle Époque dinner course you chose use knowledge gained from the other lectures to describe the sensory and aesthetic qualities of the three dishes (the starter, the main course and the dessert).*

*Starter: Lobster Américaine*

*Starter: Petit Gateau de Crabe Boston*

*Starter: Turbot Poche Amiral*

# # #

*Main course: Caille en Sarcophage avec Sauce Périgourdine*

*Main course: Tournedos Rossini*

*Main course: Sole Alice*

# # #

*Dessert: Poire belle Hélène*

*Dessert: Pêches Melba*

*Dessert: Sarah Bernhardt*

*This dinner course with its three dishes is the actual food/meal served at your particular Culinary Banquet 2015. It should therefore be part of your key-inspiration for the moodboard you need to create for communicating your concept for the Mealscape of the Banquet (see the bullet “concept” below).*

- **Context (place and persona) - 2 A3 pages**

*In lecture 6 you were visiting the restaurant Mielcke 6 Hurtigkarl in Frederiksberg Have and analyzed the restaurant scenery (room and atmosphere). Choose one of the two locations (restaurant dining room or surrounding garden) for developing your own concept for the Mealscape of the Culinary Banquet 2015. Briefly present essential aspects about the chosen place and target group/persona.*

- **Concept (event and mealscape) - 1 A3 page**

*Throughout the different lectures and exercises you have been provided with theoretical knowledge, design research methods and creative tools to analyze and evaluate meal spaces, as well as create concepts for meal experiences. Use this knowledge and tools together with the above 3 bullets (history, meal and context) to create your own interpretation of the Culinary Banquet 2015 and a concept for its’ Mealscape. Illustrate and describe key-concepts for instance by use of moodboard (collage of photos/drawings depicting chosen colors, objects, style, atmosphere etc.) and key-words.*

- **Reflections (knowledge, skills and competencies) - 1 A3 page (written)**

*Briefly reflect on your learning process and your implementation of theory, methods and creative tools. Your reflections should be based on the following four questions:*

*. What is the most important thing you have learned in this course – and why?  
(Approximately 150 words)*

*. What is the FAMM-model (Gustafsson 2004) – and how can it be used?  
(Approximately 100 words)*

*. What is the ELLIPSE-model (Riis 2001) – and how can it be used?  
(Approximately 100 words)*

*. What is a 'Persona' – and how can it be used?  
(Approximately 100 words)*

## **Exam and evaluation**

According to the: *"Curriculum for Master's Program in Integrated Food Studies- 2015"*, published by the Faculty of Engineering and Science, the Study board for Planning, the course: *"Mapping Meals and their Spaces"* is completed with an internal exam, individually evaluated. This means each student will have to do an individual oral presentation, held in English.

You will use the portfolio (developed in groups during the course) as a guideline for your oral presentation. The examination of each student is limited to 20 minutes. This means you have a short time to present the entire portfolio. So be prepared.

At the exam we expect that all demands for the portfolio have been fulfilled. So remember to bring 1 printed version of your portfolio to the exam. This will be the media for your presentation, as well as part of our evaluation of your performance in the course. Based on your performance, you will receive a "pass" or "fail".

Further details about the specific date, time and location will be provided later in Moodle. Also further evaluation criteria are stated in the Framework Provisions, published by the Faculty of Engineering and Science and The Faculty of Medicine, Aalborg University.



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### Additional literature:

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