

*This unlikely story begins on a sea that was a blue dream...i*

Before arriving at the cloudberries and crème, the fluffy desert of choice that completes the holiday meal here, one must endure a traditional Christmas Norwegian dinner that is all about survival.

Two of the most popular dishes to mark this event are meant evoke the hardships of times past, and both are borrowed from a time when living in the mountains and making it through the next few months meant the key concept of preservation: getting what food you had in the autumn to keep you fed until the spring.

Out of this concept, comes Lutefisk. A transformative event in which whitefish, first meticulously dehydrated with Lye, is bloated back to life, and sits in a jellied state, quivering next to a side of peas and gravy. On other tables and other plates for example, Pinnekjøtt, or dried sheep's ribs, evoke the biblical story of an infant revered by shepherd men of modest means.

Interestingly enough, despite all of this moderation, the partaking of lutefisk became most popular as a holiday tradition in the noughties, and consumption rose by 72% between 2005 and 2008, years that were, at least economically speaking, fairly cushy times.

Was this deep reach into the past a form of soul-searching? A ribbon, nervously tying us to the past? What prompted the rise of reconstituted fish as a symbol of the hard working and innocent days of old? Was it the mere austere tendency of the melancholy protestants, or something more contemplative that allowed this delicacy to appear as the holidays' more modern logo?

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'Like a Virgin,' VI, VII's eleventh exhibition, takes various positions around gallery economies, newly built architecture and the gallery's recent move from cellar to storefront.

Some works engage with the 'shop' aspect of the gallery's new location, by presenting cash and carry commodity structures while others deal simply with cash.

Than Hussein Clark's custom-made mantels, *Mrs Teopfler Freeze 1 & 2* (2014) hold a series of precariously poised ceramic works that are joined by ten drawings. (Lighting Fixtures [Libya Suite], 2014.)

Throughout the gallery London-based artist group Am Nuden Da present their work 'Facebook Blue

Filler,' which traces a recent exhibition at VI, VII—David Lieske's 'Déformation Professionnelle.' Installed from memory on behalf of the group by Norwegian artist, Anders Holen, who made decisions related to its appearance and color, this is the 6th iteration of the work, which continues a conversation about authorship, relations and influence.

Several works in the exhibition involve the de-construction and reuse of materials. In Virginia Overton's *Untitled (Oslo blk & wht)* 2014, for example, gray-scale versions of the exhibition poster wrap a beam salvaged from the demolition process in a neighboring room, while Ian Law's *This that*, 2014 incorporates material from his previous exhibition at VI, VII. Trimmed birchwood from panels that dried during his exhibition at the gallery's former location formed the support of a new work that refers to material afterlife. Two works from his 'Manual' series reutilize a photographic archive of previous work locations and works in situ.

Other works have a slight spiritual bent. Brooklyn-based artist Louise Despont's intricate drawings over antique ledger paper picture repeated patterns drawn from nature over handwritten records of cash transactions. Here the implications of monetary exchanges—including systems of power, greed and guilt, feel cleansed.

Nicholas Byrne presents two fabric copies of a Leuchtturm portfolio, with fastening ties that harbor the potential for bringing chaos and disorderly forms under control. Their starched interiors are made of sanitized cotton, the kind that clerics wear beneath their vestments.

Other works such as Megan Francis Sullivan's *After Roe Ethridge [Wolf 1 & 2]*, 2014, deal with flattened potency and projected use-value. Her work is a watercolor copy of a Roe Ethridge photograph used for a Proenza Schouler ad, depicting a taxidermied wolf. The first version, in color, is repeated in black and white; the frame tones shifting from black to brown, insinuating further disembodiment.

In a fairly bright corner of the room, Timothy Furey's stereotype, *Cliché* (2014) makes use of the print process that lent popular, mass produced imagery and threadbare ideas and phrases their name.

i 'The Offshore Pirate,' *Flappers and Philosophers*, F.S.F.

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