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Hors d'oeuvres: Consuming La Petite Maison

INTERSTICES 23

Introduction

Hors d'oeuvres are enjoyed best as tiny, delectable constructions designed to delight the mouth and palate and prepare the diner for ensuing culinary experiences. The term came into the French language towards the end of the sixteenth century, formally in the context of architecture and building, more than one hundred years before the term was employed gastronomically.¹ Their most elaborate entwining was encountered in the clandestine spaces of the French bourgeoisie of the eighteenth siècle, where extravagance and excess were often balanced by the whimsical and delicate. Here is where our enfolding relations between these two worlds begin, in the architectural treatise and erotic novella of Jean-François de Bastide's *La Petite Maison* (1758).

The libertine novella is a plot of seduction and taste, taking place in *La Petite Maison*, one of the infamous bourgeoisie pleasure houses dotted through the faubourgs and banlieues of Paris. Bastide's *La Petite Maison* represents a confluence of artisanal opulence and burgeoning secular taste that follows a wager between the Marquis de Trémicour and his invitee, Méлите, an intelligent, virtuous *bonne femme*. The protagonist's journey throughout the spaces of the residence, from the vestibule to jardin, salon to boudoir, is marked by architectural wonders building a libidinous intensity between suitor and invitee.² The Maison's ability to overwhelm with its successive rooms of refined architectural embellishments from noted rococo artisans (Boucher or Clerici, for example) across the continent parallels the romantic entanglement between the two young aesthetes.

The novella has been the focus of much fascination from the perspective of architectural aesthetics, philosophy, and literary theory. The interrelation between the sensory and emotive dimensions of life and that of fact, were the hallmark of French humanism, birthing new philosophies of experience, secular gout, scientific invention, and the spectacle of artifice. Bastide's co-conspirator Jacques-François Blondel, renowned for his *Treatise on Architecture in Modern Taste, or On the Decoration of Pleasure Houses* (1737), imbibed these complexities within the novella, which until very recently has built an abundance of architectural interpretation exploring the intersection of spatial syntax and aesthetics. Nuanced notions of ordinance and convenience, sexuality and space, the

picturesque and architectural promenade form the centrepiece of key readings reflected upon here. While each is viewed from distinct lenses, all gaze briefly over another feature of the narrative, the machine. The novel machinery which braced alongside the French Enlightenment was lifted from the realm of industry to intensify delight within the private interiors and exteriors of Blondel's wealthy class.³ It is thus here where we find a new reading of *La Petite Maison*, the affective aura of the machine and its sublime encounter through delectable acts of aesthetic consumption.

Interpreting *La Petite Maison*

Since being penned, the novella has attracted the eye of a gamut of architectural theorists and essayists. Contemporary interpretations include Rodolphe el-Khoury and Anthony Vidler's sophisticated binding of *convenance* to convenience and passages of the bourgeoisie interior.⁴ Carole Martin (2004) has drawn attention to the illusion of the surface and the transitional device of "the architectural promenade." Mark Taylor (2010) has inverted the focus to the picturesque jardins of *La Petite Maison* as an opening for lustful undertones synonymous with the rise of the bourgeoisie. Paul Young (2006) has focused on the confluence of two kinds of interiors within the libertine: the psychological and the material. And Jaqueline Liss (2006) and Juhani Pallasmaa (2008) have unravelled *La Petite Maison* as "an influencer" in notions of eroticism and space. Finally, Annette Condello (2008) offers a reflection on the etymology of *hors d'oeuvres* shared by both architecture and gastronomy, and elegantly sets taste, style, and machinery in step within the unfolding narrative.

The Princeton, Rodolphe el-Khoury, translation of *La Petite Maison* (1996) frames the melange between libertine Jean-François de Bastide and architect Jacques-François Blondel as mobilising the first forms of modern architectural criticism. Divined as a didactic narrative, it entwined the sensory artisanal with the architectural innovation as an educational device for the burgeoning humanist appetite of the French siècle des Lumières. Bastide's novella simultaneously cast "sexuality and space"⁵ as an architectural, aesthetic, and philosophical affair. While it is true that these themes feature largely in el-Khoury and Vidler's introductory appraisal of *La Petite Maison*, particularly the aesthetics of goût and architecture to inspire sexual appetite, key space is given to the structure and episodic mirroring of the narrative and dialogue, with the symmetry and ordonnance of the layout of the *petite maison*, as el-Khoury writes: "The temporary dimension of the narrative is calibrated to the spatial hierarchy of the apartments and is translated into the dialogue and description of corresponding length."⁶

The virtue and vice played out through the narrative are simulated through embellishment, character, and atmospherics of the right and left wings. The arrangement of both wings followed "established rules of bienséance through the hierarchical structuring of public and private spaces."⁷ Here, el-Khoury builds upon Blondel's development of *convenance*, a technique which used proportion, assembly, and spatial arrangement to "perfect a harmony between the whole and its parts" relying heavily on the convenience of "distribution" and "adjacencies" to threshold passages between public and private, and that of display, comfort, and differential mood.⁸

Here, the machinery of the interior is captured either in terms of their assembly

for convenience, in the passages between cabinet and salon, or in the theatricality of space—emphasising the atmospherics of illusion and lighting to affect the sensations. Further, this aids in framing the more descriptive aesthetics encapsulated within the novella—the scenographic and picturesque—both within the interior and the assimilation with the jardin. The role of jardin becomes a key feature within Mark Taylor’s interpretation of the novella, where the garden is seen as playing an “explicitly erotic role in the pursuit of individual pleasure.”⁹ With an astute and faithful analysis of the growing interplay and attraction between the two protagonists, Taylor looks to a range of literary and painterly exemplars, such as Vivant Denon’s erotic *Point de Lendemain* (1777), Emmanuel de Ghendt’s *La Nuit* (1778), and Jean-Honoré Fragonard’s exhilarating and sexualised rococo scene *The Happy Hazards of the Swing* (1776) to illustrate the device of the garden to convey the affective and indeed carnal conditions elicited through the picturesque. Taylor expounds on the renewed rediscovery of nature and natural inclinations within the eighteenth century spurred on by Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s ideals of natural escapes within the city.¹⁰ This naturalism, free of instructive artisanal taste but obscured by spatial devices such as groves, natural ballrooms and amphitheatres, is viewed in terms of their spatial effect to “invoke an erotic ambiguity, blurring any distinctions between home and garden and affording the seamless passage from one to the other.”¹¹ The lens here is focused on the atmospherics, such as the interplay of illumination and darkness, to evoke the ability to lose oneself and one’s affairs in the nocturnal wildness of the exterior. As with el-Khoury and Vidler, and perhaps reasonably so in this natural context, little attention is paid to the effect of technical ingenuity, such as the evocative sounds produced by the hydraulic-powered water jets and reflecting ponds or the breathtaking choreography of novel fireworks enlightening the night sky with countless hues. Yet verdant foliage, taste, and fragrance imbued through the garden, as with the interior of *La Petite Maison*, affect a broader vessel for sexual pleasure and the release of erotic impulses.¹²

Machines hors d'oeuvre

With these various interpretations of *La Petite Maison*, we now turn to Annette Condello’s interrogation of *hors d'oeuvres* and the discovery of the literal connections between the architectural and the gastronomic, relatively obscured through the passing of history. Condello’s investigation into the emergence of the term has helped frame the interchange and appropriation of a number of architectural terms into cuisine, and similarly the process of sketching, modelling, and construction adopted by the likes of celebrated French pastry chef Antonin Careme (1783–1833) who was so enamoured by the process that he studied architectural drafting.

[...] architects or cooks often made small-scale spatial models and drawings of such *hors d'oeuvres* in advance of constructing the actual objects [...] royal and papal banquets merged architecture and cuisine and associated them with permanence and indulgent luxury [...] Such intricately presented small-scale architectural ensembles would have undoubtedly impressed the food taster.¹³

Hors d'oeuvres, taken in direct translation implies “outside-the-work.”¹⁴ Architecturally these were associated with smaller ancillary buildings complementary to

the major architectural edifice. These *bâtiments* included follies, grottos, garden pavilions, and smaller suites or apartments, the more famous being Madame de Pompadour's *Petite Trianon* set within the broader estate of Versailles. As their culinary counterparts reflected, architectural *hors d'oeuvres* emerging from the eighteenth century engaged with the excessive, extravagant, and superfluous. The subsequent transference of the architectural *hors d'oeuvres* into the interior, seems a befitting conflation of the culinary and architectural worlds. Their intertwining needs of taste, delight, and spectacle reflexively informed each practice. Condello traces the link between *hors d'oeuvres* and *assiette volante*—*petite* food morsels, which “flew down the throat unnoticed.”¹⁵ Within the interior, these terms flourished to inform culinary apparatuses that delivered cuisine with similar affects, such as the *table volante*, or flying table. The vertical systems “provided places and means for sumptuous, dramatic dining without the disruption of servants.”¹⁶

While Blondel had, through his earlier treatise on architecture in modern taste, anticipated the physical separation of spheres between servants and the new wealthy classes, this position was clarified more descriptively in *La Petite Maison* where numerous mechanical *hors d'oeuvres* manipulate space for the convenience and escape of private lives. Intriguingly, these contraptions paralleled with other voyeuristic and erotic mechanics fashionable at the time, including peepholes, projectors, and cameras, aiding in the development of “secret and arousing chambers of desire.”¹⁷

The ultimate confluence of the exterior architectural *hors d'oeuvre* with its culinary cousin thus occurs within the interior of *La Petite Maison*'s dining room, where, with astonishing affect, the *table volante* heightens the wager and indeed desirous charge between suitor and young femme. The vertical transport made possible by the mechanical *hors d'oeuvre* becomes a mnemonic symbol for transport of another kind, those aroused by aesthetics upon the sensations. The shared deployment of *hors d'oeuvre* in architecture, the culinary field, and indeed spaces of pleasure and spectacle, indelibly tied humanist ingenuity, architecture, taste, and the machine to veritable degrees of consumption and aesthetics.

Gastronomy and eroticism have overlapped since the tasting of the forbidden fruit [...] but the oral proclivities of Eros were particularly pronounced in the eighteenth century, when the libertine was typically known to match sexual excess with gastronomical indulgence. [...] The gustative analogy stressed the immediacy of apprehension in taste, the direct sensory contact with matter. [...] The tactile vision of taste could be deployed as an organ of desire in the amorous rapport with architecture.¹⁸

***La Petite Maison* and desirous forces**

Significant to *La Petite Maison*'s mixed genre “was a narrative and theoretical framework for demonstrating much-debated theses on sensation, affect and desire.”¹⁹ The natural inclination thus has been to read the novella through Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement* (1790) or Étienne Bonnot de Condillac's *Traité des sensations* (1754). However, it is within Edmund Burke's arguably less celebrated tome, *The Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), that we find an alternative lens through which to view the

novella's aesthetic underpinnings, more attuned to the sensibilities of secular experience and the relationship to architectural excess.

Bound up in Burke's treatise is the physiological basis of the sublime encounter. Burke was the first to systematise by way of taxonomy, the sublime affect, which was "seen as a leading, an overpowering of self to a state of intense self-presence or state of otherness."²⁰ He examined the power of bodies, both animate and inanimate, to affect other bodies, through physiological and emotive drives upon the soul. The sublime moment was seen as an "irresistible desirous force" encountered in the intensities of both pleasure and pain, encompassing states of astonishment, vastness, infinity, reverence, and indeed uncertainty, terror, or horror. In experiencing the sublime, the viewer follows specific stages of confrontation, blockage, and transport, so that:

[...] the mind is so entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence of reason on that object which employs it. Hence arises the great power of the sublime, that far from being produced by them, anticipates our reasonings and hurries us on by an irresistible force.²¹

Burke argued for the sublime experience through the natural and artifice; the obscurity found in poetry and magnitude in architecture, the awe in lightness, the obscure in darkness, the "infinity in pleasing objects"²² and indeed the passions aroused by the light in buildings.²³ He makes space for invention too, as in the sublime infinity attained through artistic works and fireworks:

In works of art, this kind of grandeur, which consists in multitude [...] a profusion of excellent things is not to be attained, or with too much difficulty; and, because in many cases this splendid confusion would destroy all use [...]

There are, however, a sort of fireworks, and some other things, that in this way succeed well, and are truly grand [...] sublimity to a richness and profusion of images, in which the mind is so dazzled as to make it impossible to attend to that exact coherence and agreement of the allusions.²⁴

The sublime thus transcends the normative to usher in the "empowering" novel, whether via artifice, architecture, or invention. In this light, *La Petite Maison* can be read as an evocation of the sublime experience. Indeed, it transacts something much more than a seductive wager or the radiance of the artisanal, it encapsulates a libidinous procession from the picturesque, the beautiful, to the astonishingly sublime by the slow penetration of the machine into the *Maison's* interior. In step within the narrative and unfolding ardour, is humanist technology as an aid to architectural innovation, secular consumption, and the psycho-spatial erotic.

We know this, through the dialogue of the feminine protagonist and its eventual sublimation, marked inexorably by the gradual appearance of these machine contraptions. In the initial pages of the novella, we observe a verbal frisson with measured control, between Méлите and her host Trémicour.

[Méлите] I am more in my role than you. You told me that your house would seduce me; I bet she wouldn't seduce me. Do you believe that indulging me in all these charms deserves the reproach of infidelity?²⁵

The coquettish exchange is matched by the picturesque artisanal interiors embellished with the lightness of lilac and jonquil. As the plot deepens, the opulence of the surroundings opens up to marked innovations within *La Maison's*

passages, cabinets, and exteriors. There are hydraulics within the cabinet de toilette, fountains and fireworks within the jardin, all of which aid to edge the object of desire, the young mademoiselle, to come undone. The penultimate affect is found within the dining room, where the machine directs the mise en scène. Here, a *table volante*, laden with a banquet of sumptuous delicacies, ushers in the sublime moment. Following the first course—the *premier plat*—the *table volante* disappears into the floor to the cellar below and is replaced by another from above. Méлите, astonished and unable to eschew Trémicour's advances by intellect, succumbs to her bodily intensities sans parole and soon after loses the wager.

She ate little and only wanted to drink water; she was distracted, dreamy [...] Méлите although stricken, only glanced and soon returned her eyes to her plate. She had not looked twice at Trémicour and had not uttered twenty words; but Trémicour never ceased to look at her, and read her heart even better than her eyes.²⁶

The dining room and its flying table represent the ultimate act of desire and consumption. The confrontation of this interior *hors d'oeuvre* contraption fills the mind of Méлите with such intensity (blockage) and suspends the supreme moment for infinity (transport). *La Petite Maison* thus becomes a treatise not just in the architectural, but also a philosophical treatment of sensation and affect, from the virtuous picturesque to the desirous force of secular novelties of the bourgeois pleasure house.

Banquet

The fascination with machines like those of *La Petite Maison*, as devices for novel consumption has mobilised expositions throughout history. From the automata exhibitions of Vaucanson and his *Digesting Duck* (1739) and Cox and Merlin with their *Silver Swan* (1773) across the eighteenth century, Catherine the Great's mechanical masterpieces within the Hermitage, to the more affective dimensions of psychic machines explored in the early Surrealists' exhibitions.²⁷ More recently, there has been a resurgence of these themes, in exhibitions such as David Lynch's interplay between machines and film in *Machines, Abstraction and Women* or the multitude of exhibitions exploring the role of machines in design, desire, or creativity, showcased at Goldsmiths (2014) or the Design Museum (2022) for example.²⁸

It is with this frame and our prior philosophical reading of *La Petite Maison*'s machine *hors d'oeuvre* that we now discuss the work that comprised the *Banquet* (2022) exhibition, with a specific focus on the evolution of the installation *La Petite*, inspired by the novella. *Banquet* began with literary and filmic moments surrounding the consumption of food, chosen for their relationship between food, the machine, and architecture. These fictional moments were extracted through architectural processes and became a series of courses contemplating key socio-political periods since the Industrial Revolution. These courses were also characterised by the act of translation, as layers of digital, analogue, and human communication were distilled into the final product. This mode of non-verbal communication, across large territories and time spans, began to shape and structure the machines, to flavour their operation and to preserve their imperfections.

The eighteenth century, as captured through Bastide's novella, witnessed a seismic shift in the relationship between urbanisation, architectural production, and innovation spearheaded by a reprisal of humanist ideals. These events precipitated the emergence of commoditised shared experiences of food and aesthetic consumption mobilised through the advent of the machine. Food became a resource of both necessity and excess, through which the relationship between architecture, food, and machines was forever entwined. New architecture, interiors, and landscapes were born, rarefying the capacity of taste to shape and register human experience and exaggerate the romance and sensuality of its consumption and excess.²⁹

The layout of the exhibition reimagined Sydney's Tin Sheds Gallery as a conceptual banquet hall, composed by a number of interactive food machines that were located around the space, tied to these fictional narratives. The banquet hall referenced *Nero Germanicus'* rotating golden banquet hall (the first food machine) creating a theatrical space interrogating the rituals of food, fiction, and the human condition through an eclectic and transhistorical degustation of mechanical installations. Each of these installations was comprised of a series of ingredients, including the reference film, the machine itself, digital renders, hand drawings, and readymade artefacts. In concert, these elements translated the fictional narrative into a process of architectural consumption. The menu of courses, installed in the gallery, consisted of the following:

I *Hors d'oeuvre: Petite*

Inspired by Jean-François de Bastide's, *La Petite Maison* (1758)

This station explores the desirous forces embodied in the novella's erotic dining scene. The architectural *table volante* offers an artisanal interactive food conveyor replete with *hors d'oeuvres* paired alongside a recreation of an eighteenth siècle rococo wall section.

II *Soupe: Rondel*

Inspired by George Orwell's *1984* (1948) and Michael Radford's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1984)

This course explores socialist themes through the mechanism of cameras, a mirror, a statue of Polish socialist Rosa Luxembourg, and landscape soup bowls. The station recreates the production line of the narrative's canteen scene.

III *Entrée: Ho Wah*

Inspired by Ang Lee's *Eat Drink Man Woman* (1994)

The entrée station explores culinary familial memories and the ritualistic use of food throughout the film. The emotional unfolding of the key characters is expressed through an interactive illustrated folding screen common to those found in 1970s Chinese restaurants to divide and marry space together.

IV Main: Apocalypse

Inspired by Hayao Miyazaki's *Spirited Away* (2001)

The main course explores 1980s Japanese excess and consumption evoked in the film through the eyes of young Chihiro. The pig, the symbol of consumption, greed, and hypocrisy captured in *Spirited Away* is reformulated into the 1980s game Operation fashioned in silhouette by unfolding packaging layers of a toy pig.

V Aperitif: Sleeper

Inspired by Frank Herbert's *Dune* (1965) and David Lynch's *Dune* (1984)

This station explores a triptych of brutal acts perpetrated on the diminutive, human, and planetary scale through the film and novel. An aperitif bar set between green operating curtains, presents an alcoholic tenderising machine taking the form of a sectioned metropolis complete with a sub-pylon system for juice extraction.

VI Café: Godard is Dead

Inspired by Jean-Luc Godard's *Two or Three Things I Know About Her* (1967)

This course explores the well-known café scene of two strangers, a coffee machine, the spiralling cosmology of coffee closeups, and Godard's philosophical monologue on the state of the world. The station depicts the ephemeral nature of time through the hourglass and percolating bubbles of three coffee machines projected in plan and elevation through mirrored devices.

VII Dessert: He is Free

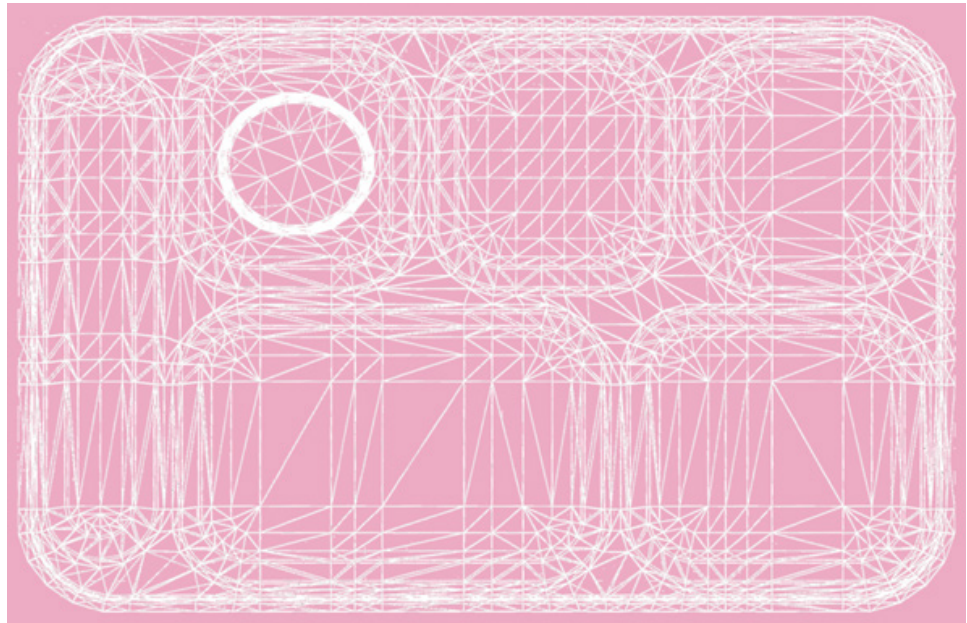
Inspired by Wes Anderson's *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2014)

The dessert station explores an escape scene abetted by the secretion of tools within Mendl's choux pastry dessert—a motif throughout the film and a mnemonic link to the hotel itself. The machine evokes the relationship between drawing, escape, and Anderson's elevational obsessions, via a layered wall re-animating the escape route by the dispensing of edible treats.

During production, a number of edible food courses paired with custom wine selections were developed alongside the creation of these machines. These moments had moods and emotions which *Banquet* set out to mobilise. In order to make the sequence of courses more legible, the layout of the space was arranged in the format of a seven-course airline meal (Fig. 1), representing the cross-border travel occurring throughout the collaboration, as well as the condensing and unpacking of food through consumption. This became another key theme as the work developed, where packaging became a recurring, and often leading theme in the creation of the work. The disposable but delicate nature of food packaging is tied into the ephemerality of the exhibition experience, intended to be consumed and then forgotten. The format enabled a number of performative events with creative practitioners and the public over the course of the exhibition. In

this sense, the exhibition was a transaction between the machine, as an operable aesthetic object, the edible artefact it produced, and the interactive architecture of the banquet hall that encompassed it.

Fig. 1 Michael Chapman (2022). Banquet exhibition layout and catalogue cover. [Digital image, Michael Chapman]



***Petite* and acts of consumption**

Course I *Hors d'oeuvre: Petite*, as we have mentioned, was not only the introductory course, but also marked the role of seduction and consumption, not just in the unfolding liaison between the novella's lead characters, but also as a symbol of the relations between consumption, architecture, and the machinic innovation of the humanist era. The rapture for innovation and automation, such as those curiosities found within *La Petite Maison*, heralded a new world of mass consumption. The premier course of *Banquet* reconceptualised the dining scene and climactic ending to Bastide's novella through an interplay of the material (physical) and the immaterial (digital) to affect the sensations. The physical was encapsulated by a re-interpretation of the architectural edifice of the little house—*la cloison intérieure*—suspended alongside a *table volante*—*le convoyeur*—which activated the production of *hors d'oeuvres en-masse*. Architectural and episodic interpretations of the literary novella were captured by architectural imagery—*l'image infinie*—and a filmic piece—*le poème neural*—simultaneously conveying the power of physiological drives and impulses over the intellect. Together, these morsels of *Petite* staged the endless enthrall of opulent consumption entertained within *La Petite Maison* and, indeed, throughout the bourgeois century (Figs. 2 and 3). It suggests the consequences of desire and its relations with mass consumption, which continues today in the hyper-real glaze of digital reality.

La cloison intérieure* and *Le convoyeur

Conviviality and convenience, virtue and vice, *maison* and machine, artisanal and technical, l'homme and mademoiselle, production and consumption, food and desire. A menagerie of complementary and charged literary devices within the libertine novella became the inspiration for *Petite*. Here both edifice and

Figs. 2 and 3 Marissa Lindquist (2022). *Petite* station. [Photograph, Baja Maska, 2022]



machine—*La cloison intérieure* and *Le convoyeur*—stand in unison, the feminine artisanal paired with the masculine technical in materiality and substance. This pairing is not incidental. The historical conflation of women and the interior was attributed by the Goncourt brothers in the early nineteenth century in their reference to the relationship between female identity and the rococo interior.³⁰ Some two centuries earlier, Descartes had furnaced in his *Traité de l'homme* (1662) views of man as machine, effectively disassociating man from God as the ultimate autonomous apparatus, opening the gateway to the pleasures of secular life.

Intentionally, the creation of *La cloison intérieure*, the feminine parti, involved an experimental process by digitally describing *Petite*'s wall into a series of patterns to cut and fabricate over one hundred panels of soft materials through a computer numerical control (CNC) machine. More accustomed to machining hard substrates, an uncommon tooling bit associated with the food process (a pizza cutter) helped form the various architectural ornaments: the archway, reveals, wall reliefs, and eighteenth century-styled architraves to each leaf (Fig. 4). Bound together and suspended above the floor, *La cloison intérieure* imbued a delicate and fragile presence. The masculine parti, *Le convoyeur*, reconceptualised a food conveyor machine through a process of hybrid embellishment to render a *table*

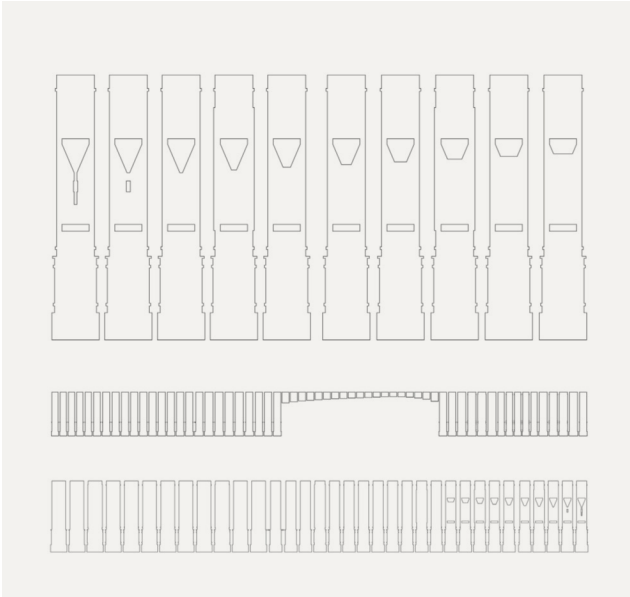


Fig. 4 Marissa Lindquist (2022).
Patterns for *La cloison intérieure*
[Digital drawings, Marissa Lindquist]

Fig. 5 Marissa Lindquist (2022).
Elévation of *Petite* [Digital drawings,
Marissa Lindquist]

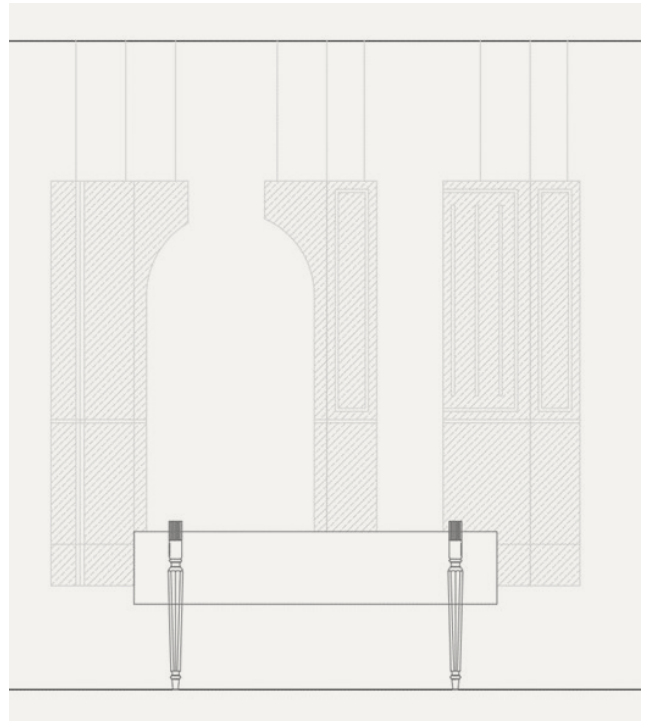


Fig. 6 Marissa Lindquist (2022).
Les vol-au-veux and *Le convoyeur*
[Photograph, Baja Maska, 2022]



volante, or mechanical *hors d'oeuvre*. Equally fragile, the encasing surrounding *Le convoyeur* was fashioned with a digitally machined cowl made of food-grade polystyrene. Its artifice, which signalled the manufacture of consumerist production, was balanced by the artisanal, hand-turned, aged timber ornate legs, which lifted *Le convoyeur* to the level of *La cloison intérieure* (Fig. 5). A working machine within the gallery space, it doled out *petite hors d'oeuvres* or *vol-au-veux* (breath of desire) for the duration of the show.

As an ensemble, *La cloison intérieure* and *Le convoyeur* captured a further device used within the plot of *La Petite Maison*—that of transference. Slippages of love and reason between the masculine and feminine are demonstrated at points along the narrative and throughout the dialogue of the lead protagonists. One slips into the nature of the other to create an atmosphere of confusion, an act of losing oneself. These slippages were incorporated within both parts, of the course. Carved out deep within the interior of *La cloison intérieure* is the silhouette of a food auger, the critical component in the production of *petite hors d'oeuvres*. Conversely, the *petite hors d'oeuvres* doled out within *Le convoyeur* are a material duplicate of *Petite's* floating edifice (Fig. 6). Both affected, one is transposed in the other. The machinery of mass production and culinary consumption, the architectural *hors d'oeuvre* emulates the artisanal in the technical and technicality of the crafted at play within the bourgeois *La Petite Maison*.

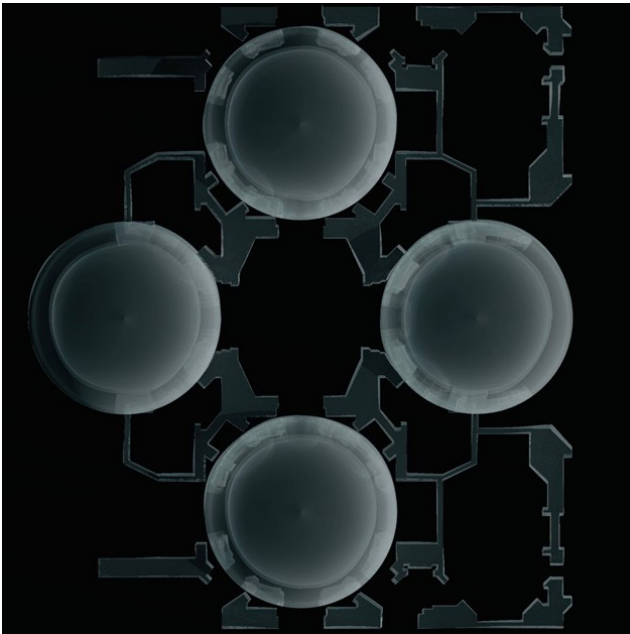
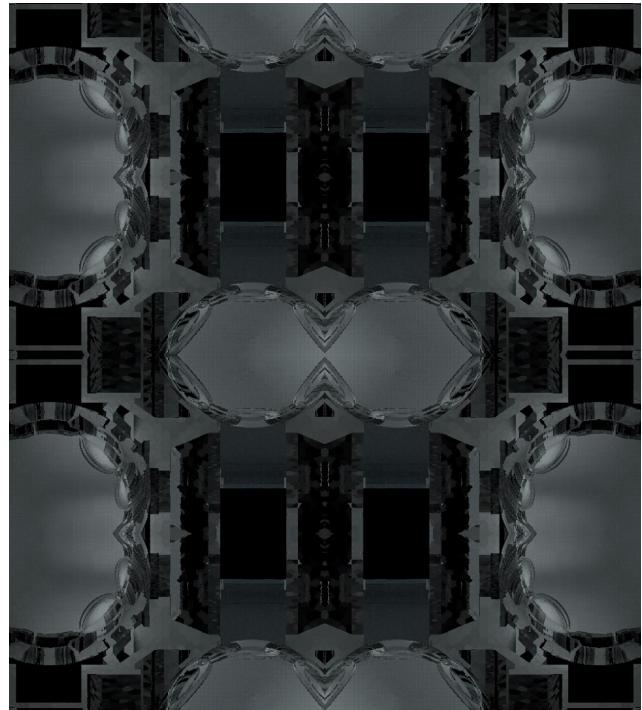


Fig. 7 Michael Chapman (2022). *L'image infinie I* [Digital render, Michael Chapman]

Fig. 8 Michael Chapman (2022). *L'image infinie II* [Digital render, Michael Chapman]



L'image infinie and Le poème neural

The accompanying digital work of *le hors d'oeuvre* embellished a large-scale architectural render and filmic piece as digital ornamentation to the gallery walls surrounding *Petite*. The digital render redrew elements at different scales of both the ornamentation, planning, and detail (Fig. 7), as revealed in the illustrations included in Bastide's original architectural treatise-come-novella. These

experienced in reading the poem itself (Fig. 10). The piece played with sequence, cadence, and disappearance to affect the sequence of seduction, defeat, and ultimate deceit of the wager unraveled throughout the narrative. The animated format of the words themselves, pirouetted between *you, me, consume* to inform a double sense, a loss of oneself to the sublime moment of consumption, both by desire within the novella and the captive aura of the mechanistic age. The interplay of words arrayed across the screen, like *hors d'oeuvres* parsed out on a conveyor. It represented the physiological (blockage), the neural (interiorisation), and the conceit (transport), an evocation of the Burkean sublime found within the novel.

En fin

Key to this paper is the role of the architectural *hors d'oeuvre* and the production and consumption of space in the Age of Enlightenment. Originally as an architectural work separate from a major composition, often in the garden or elsewhere, these constructions were associated with excess and aesthetics of the new wealthy class. Unsurprisingly, with the rise of gastronomy and the emergence of the private spectacle, these terms became interchangeable, linking food with architecture. *Hors d'oeuvres* inherently embody the delicate and the consuming, an intensity of construction fabricated for delight. The context of *La Petite Maison* is a space of virtue and vice, authenticity and artifice,³³ capturing a sensory diegesis of a pure young femme and her gradual encounter with the sublime interior. Here, *hors d'oeuvres* were masterfully brought inside enacting a spatial doubling of the interior charged with the psycho-erotic through an interior-machine hybrid.

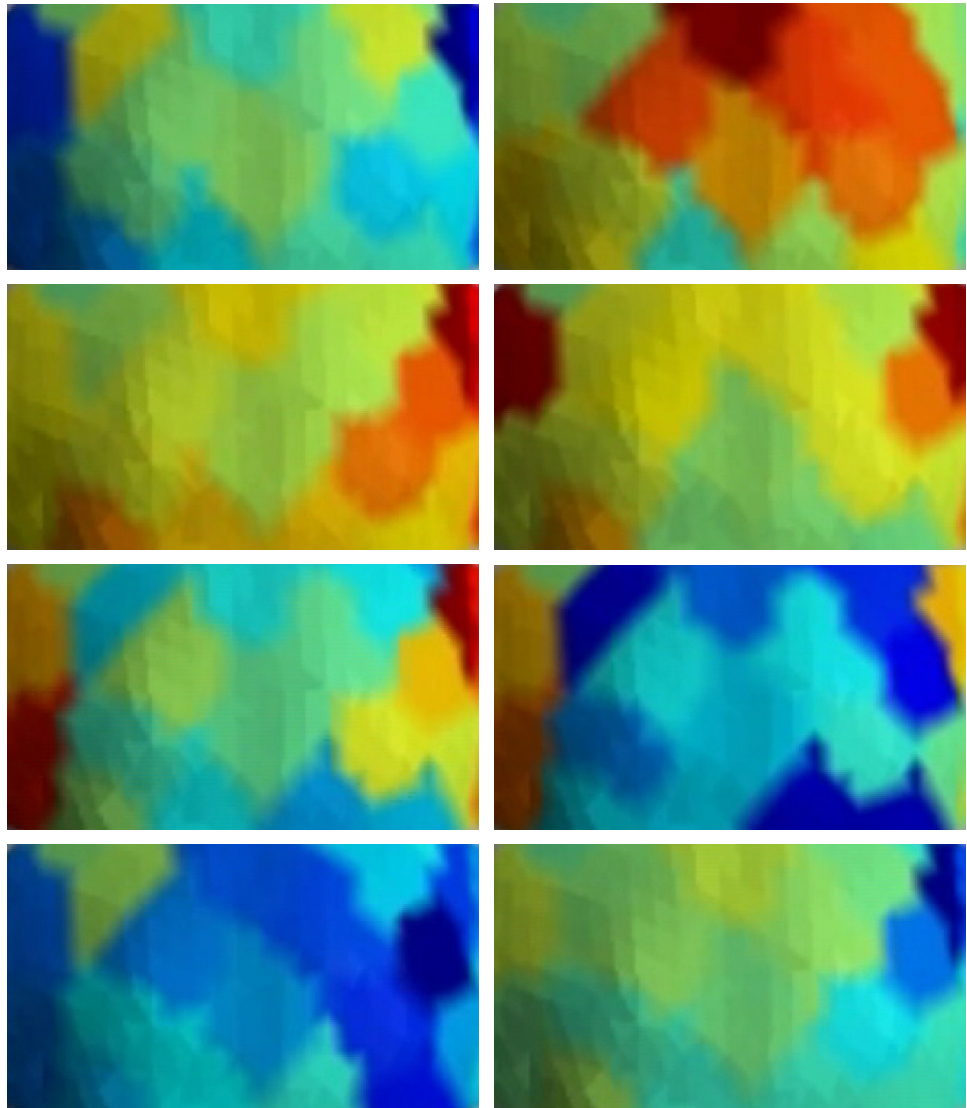
Banquet's Petite—the first course of an exhibition on food, architecture, and the human condition—presents a *table volante*, a moving conveyor embodying the auric glare of mass production and consumption. In the context of *La Petite Maison*, it signals the ability of the machine to curate experience, desire, and slippages into love, shifting appetites from artisanal opulence to a rapture for the technical. *Petite's* machine presents an endless offering of “soft” *hors d'oeuvres* (*vol-au-veux*), feminine-shaped morsels, which share the same materiality of the reconstructed eighteenth-century architectural edifice which floats alongside. The work conflates the machined, the fabricated, desire and consumption to convey a relational moment through which the Burkean sublime is aroused until a point of subliminal transference within the bourgeoisie interior. Digital compositions accompanying *Petite* parallel these acts and suggest an infinite doubling (Rice, 2006) of interiority both in film and architectural rendering.

La Petite Maison embodies multiple layers of meaning, aesthetics, and philosophical interpretations. Its original intention was an architectural and aesthetic treatise, popularised through the device of a novella, as a means to educate the new consumers of opulence and taste, the bourgeoisie. The novella indelibly connects with notions of the picturesque and the beautiful, captured through its ornate interiors and rococo jardins, transposing the exterior into the interior. It is a treatise also of another kind, that of the sexuality and eroticism embedded within the architectural promenade of delight and anticipation. Bound together with technological advancements of the era, the little maison represents a catalogue of the novel machinery available to wealthy, and their affordance for the convivial and convenience of public and private lives. *La Petite Maison*, however,

as is the premise of this article, is a coding of the philosophical evocation of the sublime emerging in the late eighteenth century, and the capacity of architecture and the machine to affect a physiological condition on the body. It makes space for the seductive force of the sublime, more readily discernible in a bodily and, indeed, an erotic sense in the age of humanist excess.

Running throughout the creation of *Petite* and, indeed, *Banquet* is a mimesis of production reflecting the intertwining of the machine with the artisanal, engaging the industrial machining processes with the delicate handmade. This exchange established a method of working, drawn from the literary, transferred compositionally by analogue drawing, digitised, machined, and physically fabricated. Through the work, we “uncovered a mode of communication and translation, between humans and machines, cities and landscapes, continually navigating the real and the fictional, the possible and impossible, and to record, inhabit and digest this collaborative wandering into the unknown.”³⁴

Fig. 10 Marissa Lindquist (2022). Neural imaging encountering *Le poème neural*—animated behind the poem projected on the wall. [Neural imagery, Marissa Lindquist]



NOTES

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4. Jean-François de Bastide, *La Petite Maison: An Architectural Seduction*, trans. and introduction Rodolphe el-Khoury (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996 [1758]).
5. Anthony Vidler, in de Bastide, *La Petite Maison*, 18.
6. Rodolphe el-Khoury, in de Bastide, *La Petite Maison*, 23.
7. Rodolphe el-Khoury, in de Bastide, *La Petite Maison*, 23.
8. Jacques-François Blondel, in Benhamou, "Parallel Walls, Parallel Worlds," 1.
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14. Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. "hors d'oeuvre (n.)," <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hors%20d%27oeuvre> (accessed 28 February 2024).
15. Condello, "Architectural *Hors d'oeuvres*," 193.
16. Condello, "Architectural *Hors d'oeuvres*," 193.
17. Anthony Vidler, in de Bastide, *La Petite Maison*, 15.
18. Rodolphe el-Khoury, in de Bastide, *La Petite Maison*, 41.
19. Rodolphe el-Khoury, in de Bastide, *La Petite Maison*, 20.
20. Marissa Lindquist and Jill Franz, "Sublime Acts: Desire in the Studio," in *IDEA Symposium Proceeding, Interior: A State of Becoming, Book 1*, edited by Di Smith and Lynn Churchill (Australia: Curtin University/IDEA—Interior Design/Interior Architecture Educators Association, 2012), 1–9.
21. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful*, edited and introduction by James Boulton (London, UK and New York, NY: Routledge Classics, 2015 [1757]).
22. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry*, 77.
23. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry*, 81.
24. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry*, 77.
25. Jean-François de Bastide, *La Petite Maison: An Architectural Seduction*, (Paris, Fr: *Librairie des Bibliophiles*: 1879 [1763 version français]), 7, https://fr.wikisource.org/wiki/La_Petite_Maison (accessed 21 August 2023).
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