WHAT IF?
Thinking Through/Confronting Our Relation with Food

Anne de Zeeuw

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Explore lab
Tudelft

1. Abstract

The relations between us and food have become distorted, deviated from their origin and meaning in our daily lives. Where solutions are sought in consciousness, this research focuses on the subconscious level of our relation with food. By changing our perception of food, using architecture as a medium between us, the subject, and food, the object. By researching within a phenomenological framework, nine speculative scenarios have been made with the goal to understand how to influence the public by storytelling in writing, drawing and architecture. The question asked: How can speculative design help architecture enable a meaningful relation between us and food? Starting with understanding the distinction between object, subject, and how they are related, the search continues for architectural means to make a place that enables a change of perception. What changes this perception, is often a small trigger, a salient detail that can be highlighted in design, inviting a change in meaning of the object for the subject. An interplay of inside and outside, authenticity and inauthenticity, will allow for a change in perceiving and understanding both food and ourselves. That is how a fixed and frustrating relation with food can be abandoned, and how a meaningful relation is enabled.

Keywords: food - architecture - phenomenology - salient details - security - freedom - specifying - authorizing - inviting.
Key references: Pallasmaa - Merleau-Ponty - Norberg-Schulz - Tuan - Relph

2. Preface

Over the past months, this research has taken form by a hands on approach. My first aim was to make sure that I was able to design while doing research. The reason for this was that I believe the process of designing includes research, research does not only precede it. Furthermore, I enjoy doing it this way. Quite harmoniously this practical method has been merged with a theoretical framework which expanded and deepened the research. I have managed to develop (even more) a critical position towards architecture, challenged my thinking towards my subject, have been lost in the immersive world of food and found a way to incorporate several ideas into a coherent story.

I have explored through speculative design and phenomenology, not trying to find the correct answer for everyone, but trying to find a story of how a distorted relation with food can change. That is why this book is designed as a storyline. You could still read it as a regular book, but you can also lay several pages out and get an overview of the images with the text.

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4. Introduction

4.1. Fascination

[Foto eetboek] Food has always been a great part of my life. This became very clear when my mother showed me a handmade photo book depicting my 'edible' childhood. On occasions I would show the book to friends. It always painted the distinctive story of my love for food.

Whether it is cooking for parties, going to the market or the act of eating, there was always a social component. Although my mother cooked most of the meals, my father taught me to see good food as a delight, something to celebrate and indulge in. As I grew older, my relation to food changed and became more complex. The indulging part sometimes became a short term comfort.

It was during my master studies when I consciously made the first spatial/social connection between architecture and food, designing a primary school in Rotterdam incorporating food education as a basic component. Not only combining two loved subjects was a new experience, also the story one can tell concerning food with architecture as a medium. The time came to think about graduation and without a doubt, I was keen on pursuing this newly found fascination. Explore lab has been the only studio able to guide me through my own thought process without damaging or diminishing my interest in the subject.

4.2. Problem statement

Every morning my inbox updates me with the new headlines concerning food and almost all of them are of the alarming nature. On the wide spectrum of 'food' or 'eating' related problems there are too many to mention or even make a caption of. These problems are rooted in our communities, economy and society. A better term to express the profound intricacy is 'wicked problem'(Rittel & Webber, 1973), a problem 'whose social complexity means that it has no determinable stopping point'.(Tonkinwise, 2015) When attempting to solve a 'wicked problem', simultaneously there appear even more of such complex problems; therefore making it unsolvable. There is no eminent solution for these problems, although the impact is tangible on a personal level and keeps growing every day.

'American adults just keep on getting fatter' (The New York Times, 2018)
'Food addiction: "It was like I had to control a monster inside me that wanted to eat everything"' (BBC, 2019)

Addiction, extreme dieting, indifference towards food are the daily bread of many, giving food no attention at all or being obsessed by it. It seems like food has lost its central value in life, which is an odd statement when looking at its original value.

In the book '*An Edible History of Humanity*' by Tom Standage it is argued that food has shaped civilization from the invention of farming about 11,000 years ago in its most rudimentary form to the present-day 'paradox of plenty', in which we have the technology to feed the world but it comes at a price to the environment (2009). Looking further back in time, it becomes clear where relations towards food have their origin. 'The primal instinct of all living forms is replenishing the body, depleted by the decomposition incident to life processes, by the absorption of live-sustaining material - food.' Marks(...., p. 479) Evolution has determined that we are strongly influenced, consciously and subconsciously, by food.

So again, how has food lost its value when it is such a primary life condition? The answer might be rather simple. For the majority of the Western population there is no need to bother. Food is simply there. It is everywhere, and it is becoming more and more generic. There are more urgent daily issues to solve and food is shoved to the backseat or even in the trunk. The relation between ourselves and food have become distorted, deviated from their origin and meaning in our daily lives. Do we need to go back to our primal relation with food? What is a 'meaningful relation'?

Solutions to restore these relations are sought in awareness, stimulating us to perceive food as an object of choice. Following this path, it becomes imperative to make food decisions consciously, to be aware of the surrounding temptations. Subsequently, to consciously say no. This goes directly against our instinctive nature, because we are constantly subconsciously triggered by food and food-thoughts. "Many processes in the brain occur automatically and without involvement of our consciousness. This prevents our mind from being overloaded by simple routine tasks."(Soon, Brass, Heinze & Haynes, 2008) To say no is comparable to consciously breathe or blink every moment of the day, it is simply maddening and primarily absurd.
'It will be fruitful to look at eating and drinking behaviour and food choice as basic and ''evolutionarily deep rooted'' behaviours that are largely governed by intuitive action and defensive systems that are not or only partly accessible to conscious control.'(Koster, 2007) So how to change our relation with food on a subconscious level? By changing our perceptions of food, using architecture as a medium.

4.3. Aim
The aim of this research is a multifaceted one. It starts with the desire to get a grip on the problem at hand concerning food and its value to us, and thus the desire to better investigate my relation with food. To note the change in behaviour and the urge to understand this complex and major problem. As stated in the problem statement, the rudimentality of food and the act of eating makes this subject one that considers everyone; we all eat, and without it we would simply die. This is the reason why food's loss of value for me is so intriguing.

Next, my belief in the influence of architecture plays a big role in the aim of this research. Although it can without a doubt become too moralistic, in my opinion, the architect can intervene more in the realm of problem solving. Of course, we provide the basic needs for shelter, warmth and protection, but by restricting yourself to only such primitive goals you may lose the opportunity to enlighten your public on other matters.

Another aim of this research is to understand the method of speculative design better, mostly concerning speculative architecture. By researching this method it will become known to me if this is a direction I can use further in my career. Storytelling is an art I treasure and being able to combine this with architecture would be a great outcome.
On a more personal note, my aim for this research and the method in particular, was to design while doing research. This method has invited me to think big and wild. My creative thinking spiked during the project, which resulted in a very diverse series of speculative 'edible' futures.

The most prominent aim of this research, as stated in the main research question, is the desire to use architecture to invite a change in our relation with food towards a meaningful

one. It is to understand the possibility of changing a perception by telling a story with architecture. The main goal is to understand how to provoke attention and emotions, stimulate thinking and discussion around the subject food with speculative design.
This research will not dictate the best way of relating to food or suggest that we should go back to our primal instinct. It will not include a guide of architectural tools, but a way of thinking and understanding of the mechanisms at work in our daily interactions with our surroundings. By researching this instinctive and suggestive relation with food, we can maybe translate this problem into a discussion which hopefully will result in a change of thinking.

4.4 Research Questions
The question coming from this approach is: How can speculative design help architecture enable a meaningful relation between us and food?
When analysing this question we can distinguish the following terms.
      (How: effect of the method)
      Speculative design: the method
      Architecture: the context/medium
      Meaningful relation: the aim
      Us: the subjective
      Food: the objective
The question actually asks: How can the method help the medium/context enable a meaningful relation between subject and object?
This question will be researched in three sub questions.

1. *How can the phenomenological distinction between subject and object help us understand our relations with food?*
   To answer this question the distinction between subject and object is researched, and when the distinction becomes a blurred line. The scenario *Compost* will guide us through the search to get to grips with this 'encounter' between object and subject. Marcel Proust's madeleine will show us how a sensory experience triggers a meaningful relation with food. We will learn to understand that our relation with food is a dual carriageway, making the act of eating an interaction, changing both subject and object. Conscious and subconscious meaning only comes into existence once we relate to something. But how to understand and influence these encounters?
2. *How can the architect invite meaningful experiences with food?*
   This question will be answered looking into what role architecture plays in the encounters we have, and therefore in the meaningful relations we partake in. Pallasmaa will introduce our three modes of interaction: specifying, inviting and authorizing. The matrix used to specify our research embodies these aspects. But how to incorporate these modes of interaction into architecture?
3. *How can the architect invite meaningful experiences with food?*
   This question will be answered looking into authenticity by making a distinction between inside and outside. The term disneyfication will show the outsideness, expressing a state of sensational experience not connected to any existing context. How can architecture be authentic?

5. Method
5.1 Research method - speculative design

To start understanding the main question of this research it is important to dive into the method which is used. Speculative design is grounded on 'wicked problems', attempting to solve these problems needs a rigorous and total mind changing approach. This type of design thrives on imagination and aims to open up new perspectives. 'Design speculations can act as a catalyst for collectively redefining our relationship to reality.'(Dunne & Raby, 2013, p. 2) The aim is making possible futures and using them as tools to better understand the present and to discuss the kind of future people want and not want. As explained in the book 'Speculative Design' by Dunne and Raby, speculative designs usually take the form of scenarios, often starting with a What-If question, giving the audience the chance to engage in debate and discussion. For the engagement to happen, the scenarios need to be 'provocative, intentionally simplified, and fictional. Their fictional nature requires viewers to suspend their disbelief and allow their imaginations to wander, to momentarily forget how things are now, and wonder about how things could be.' (Dunne & Raby, 2013, p. 3) The scenarios made during this research are not speculations on how things should be, that would be too didactic and moralistic. During this research the aim was not to focus on the current and future needs of the consumer, but rather to imagine a possible future that reflects on the complexity of a current problem, in this case wicked problems concerning food.

By starting the process with asking a What-If question, the audience is given the chance to become an inhabitant of the suggested world. It interacts on the basic level of anyone's imagination, you only have to let your mind go.

Dunne and Raby use a fascinating diagram made by futurist Stuart Candy which consists of a number of cones fanning out from the present into the future, made up out of four levels of likelihood.[1]

The first cone describes probable futures, which consists of what is likely to happen unless some great unknown catastrophe befalls us. This cone takes up the most space.

The second cone contains plausible futures, the space of what could happen. "In the 1970's companies such as Royal Dutch Shell developed techniques for modeling alternative near-future global situations to ensure that they would survive through a number of large-scale, global, economic, or political shifts." (Dunne, pagina 4) This space is about exploring alternative futures of economical and political nature to secure a company from different futures.

The third cone contains possible futures, which makes links between today's world and a suggested one. In the book 'Physics of the Impossible' it states that all changes, either political, social, economic and cultural, are not impossible. (Kaku, 2008) Although it is difficult how we get to this possible future from our present, it is most important to make sure the scenario is scientifically possible. The path from the present to this possible future needs to be a credible series of events, even if they are totally fictional. "This allows viewers to relate the scenario to their own world and to use it as an aid for critical reflection." (Dunne & Raby, 2013, p. 4) It needs to be acceptable to believe. The scenarios generated during this

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[1] 3. For more on this, see Joseph Voros, "A Primer on Futures Studies, Foresight and the Use of Scenarios," *Prospect, the Foresight Bulletin*, no. 6 (December 2001). Available at http://thinkingfutures.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/A_Primer_on_Futures_Studies1.pdf. Accessed September 21, 2019.

research are mostly based on the possible future, guiding the audience into an acceptable series of events.

The fourth cone intersects the probable and plausible, making way for the preferable futures. This is the bit where Dunne and Raby get excited, to use design to open up all sorts of possibilities that can be discussed. Our scenarios are not based on preferable futures, but merely used to warn the audience about the impact of current problems in the coming decades.

Although speculative design had his hayday in the 1960's and 1970's by studios such as Archigram, Archizoom, Superstudio, Ant Farm and Walter Pichler (Dunne & Raby, 2013, p.6), I believe that nowadays we can use this method in all levels of society. This will make reality more flexible which can help address the problems of today by projecting them in their probable/plausible/possible future. Hopefully this will help spot factors that may lead to undesirable futures and address them early on while their impact now is still (in some ways) limited.

5.2. description circumstances - boundaries of subjectivity: phenomenology

The problem statement addresses distorted relations with food. In order to come to grips with the distortion at hand, we first need an analysis of the kind of relations with food we are talking about. It is important here to emphasize the multiplicity. There is not just one kind of relating to food. Attributing too much aspects of one relation to food, we project unto the object what in reality is rooted in ourselves[2]. A risk similar to objectifying presents itself the other way around in that of subjectifying. Putting too much responsibility regarding the relation on our subjective selves, we end up understanding food so generally, that relating to it in several specific ways has become impossible. In both cases we close ourselves off of certain ways of perceiving food, resulting in a superficial understanding of our possible relations with it. Effectively, such an understanding would limit our interaction with food. Hence, we need to make a distinction between what it is about food and what it is about us that makes the many meanings that food has for us.

The theoretical framework allowing us to make this distinction is that of Phenomenology. The founding father of this philosophy, Edmund Husserl, understands it as a 'systematic investigation of consciousness and the object.'(Pimlott, 2017) The investigation here, is focused on 'phenomena', the appearances we encounter in our experience. The distinction between consciousness and object allows for a critique on the subjective and the objective, the inner- and outer-world. In the same way, our investigation into food is focused both inward and outward. We are however not interested in two separate definitions of food, an objective and a subjective one. Our focus is on the relation between subject and object, and how this relation comes about in particular. Phenomenology provides the hermeneutics of subject and object, reflected in the matrix as a grid kickstarting the build-up of our speculative scenarios. Our next step will be to address the interplay between both worlds and the story they tell. With this we can come to a notion of how the architect can design a space, translating inward notions into objects out there that open up new possibilities of interplay for others, changing their default dispositions towards food, allowing for new stories to be told.

5.3. scientific approach and procedure

The interplay between object and subject is reflected in the matrix, which is the starting point of the speculative scenarios.
On the horizontal axis the terms 'Survival', 'Routine' and 'Festivity' describe a subjective sensitive experience; anyone will have an immediate understanding, although different compared to one another. The same action could be experienced as all three descriptions depending on the subject experiencing it and the context the experience takes place in..
On the vertical axis the terms 'Producing', 'Preparing' and 'Consuming' describe an objective empirical experience; these words are describing an action which has a beginning and ending, therefore measurable.
As mentioned, we are interested in the relation between the objective and the subjective, therefore on each axis an opposite term is added. By adding an objective empirical term to the horizontal axis and adding a subjective sensitieve term to the vertical, a measurable form is added to the subjective and a sensitive experience is added to the objective.

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[2] allegorie van de blinden en de olifant. Kahneman:

The intercrossings of the axes yield nine places for food related problems; which are on the one hand grounded in factual global food problems, and on the other based on personal relations with food. Making a combination between these two starting points, the chosen scenario can result in both factual and relatable scenarios, making it easier to interact with it.

When the general problems and relations with food have been chosen, the procedure of imagining a speculative future begins with the What-If question, comparable with *SlaveCity*. The speculative question is answered in an immersive fictional world expressed in text, drawing and model.

The text introduces the fictional world by using the classic rhetoric Pathos, Logos and Ethos, loosely translated into a subjective impression, the objective logic and the ethical values of this fictional world.

The drawing is an impression of my subjective experience and adds to the words of the text. It is likely that the text raises another image than the one presented; which is fine. The drawing can guide the audience even further into this world, giving the option to interact with it within the boundaries expressed.

The architectural model provides a contextual element which is determinative for our relation with food expressed in the scenario. It creates a context which enables the exaggerated food relation to be expressed in action. Therefore, stating that architecture gives us a limitation of our behaviour.

The scenarios are presented first by food related problems, then by the incentive title of the scenario, followed by the What-If question.

Invisible processes - Process Making - What if you see how your food gets produced?
Instant food - Preservation - What if we can only produce food the natural way?
Meat consumption - The Golden Cow - What if we eat meat only once every 4 years?
Energy only - Carbs, Fats, Proteins - What if we only eat what we need?
Addiction - Sugar Rush Camp - What if we treat addiction to sugar the same way as addiction to hard drugs?
Obesity - Obese Restaurant - What if food is proportioned to your weight?
Modern availability - Hearth - What if you only used fire to cook?
Meat discrimination - Edible Everything - What if we forget where meat comes from?
Food waste - Compost - What if all organic waste gets reused?

The research will be presented as an exhibition of 9 scenarios to provoke attention to the possible future of our relation with food.

5.4. who
To use the method of phenomenology in combination with speculative design, I can not ignore subjectivity. Phenomenology is rooted in the direct and intuitive experience of phenomena, trying to extract the essential properties and experiences of the individual. It is not meant to start with certain presumptions about other peoples experiences; it is stated from the perception of one person, in this case me. Therefore it would be ridiculous to presume that this would be a scientific method which can be repeated and the results can be measured and compared with each other, to come to a certain 'truth'.

My food experiences as fascination has been the motor behind this research and therefore will be unequivocally myopic. Moreover, to make a subjective experience of food

clear it is not possible to not emphasize my personal subjective experience. But more importantly, how do I explain my subjective experience to someone else? Because I know that if I only list the objective facts, this will not produce the same subjective experience. During this research it has become clear how to approach such questions.

6. Results

6.1 Addressing main research question: How can speculative design help architecture enable a meaningful relation between us and food?

When researching the relation between us and food; it is critical to understand the specific term used in the research question. The sub-questions all introduce a way of thinking and understanding our problem in the frame of phenomenology.

First the distinction between the subject and object needs to be researched in order to understand the relation between us and food.

Secondly, this needs to be connected to architecture; not in tools but means. Storytelling will be introduced as a way to invite meaningful experiences with food

Thirdly, the research focuses on the authenticity of the story and the importance of using these terms as parameters.

6.2 How can the phenomenological distinction between subject and object help us understand our relations with food?

In the scenario *Compost*[3] a home is described that very explicitly functions interdependent with the life that occupies it. In the morning, the occupant has to wring the night sweat out of its mattress and filter it, in order to drink it and use a little bit for cleaning later on. If this chore is not carried out in a dry period, there will be no water that day and the house' cleanliness will be neglected as well. Maintenance of both residence and resident are linked in a direct chain of causation, demanding that they function as two cogs in one machine. The relation one has with this home is like the stomach has with the brain. They have their own needs and workings, neither can be said to be subordinate to the other. Yet they cannot exist without each other. Their meaning is principally found in the organism. They are, in fact, the organism. Understanding the behaviour of the occupant regardless of its residence would be starting off on the wrong foot. Similarly, in the case of *Compost*, understanding the house as solely a means for certain human needs is inaccurate still. The home has needs too, and therefore it demands a relation based on quid pro quo. In the case of *Compost*, a quite compulsory one.

The heart's blood vessels and the brain's nervous system are so interwoven with each other and the rest of the body, that understanding their being, apart from the organism will give a terribly superficial explanation. Such as considering the heart as a pump or the brain as a control room. These explanations are not wrong, but manifested for instance as the sole understanding of surgeons, they become a problem. Note that such a surgeon could never improve his practice while sticking to certain superficial beliefs. With regard to distorted relations with food, we are looking for similar explanations. Explanations that are not exactly wrong, yet potentially harmful.

In his works *Phenomenology of perception*, Maurice Merleau-Ponty exposes a superficial explanation in his critique of the mental and the physical, the mind and the body. Our bodies

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[3] See Appendix for whole scenario.

are not outside ourselves but '[o]ne's own body is in the world just as the heart is in the organism'(Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 245)[4]. He systematically blurs the line between the realm of subjective consciousness and that of the object. At the same time, he keeps a distance intact between us and the appearances we encounter. Just as we can always, for instance, find commonalities in another person, and at the same time we can never completely know the other. As Merleau-Ponty puts it:

'Whether it is a question of my body, the natural world, the past, birth or death, the question is always to know how I can be open to phenomena that transcend me and that, nevertheless, only exist to the extent that I take them up and live them.'(Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. 422)[5]

For most, it is far easier to accept that you are your mind, than the notion that you are your body. In Western history, the body is often seen as the cage in which an eternal soul houses. In other cultures, for instance in the case of Buddhism, the body is not a vessel but is one with the mind, constituting an individual.(Wilson, 2004) These ideas are expressed in the scenario *Compost*[6], where the house and the occupant are mutually dependent. In this dependency, the house can become a cage for the life residing in it. At the same time, in maintaining each other, house and human can become one.

More and more people nowadays understand the mind as the workings of our body, i.e. the brain[7]. The mind, then, becomes at most the end result of a chain of interactions, not the source.

If, however, we assume that humans are incorporated souls, something spiritual that has taken form in materiality, then what does this mean for our understanding of food? Eating, defined as the act of incorporating food, would mean that food is taking form in our body. Food becomes our body. Rejecting the notion of our body as a vessel, and assuming mind and body as mutually dependent, also changes our perception of food. It now transforms into our body and our mind. Food feeds both the body and the mind.

Marcel Proust, in his novel *Remembrance of lost time*, famously tells the scene of the madeleines.(Proust, 1954) While in a small town called Combray, Proust takes a bite of a madeleine dipped in tea, the sensation of which makes him remember that same activity in Combray, during his childhood. It is such a vivid flashback, opening a portal to an almost forgotten moment and connecting his surroundings and state of mind at that moment with a completely different time. In the scene of the madeleines, Proust expresses the occurrence of involuntary memory: a sensory experience triggers a memory that otherwise may have never been remembered. Here a meaningful relation with food manifests itself. Moreover, the meaning is evoked through the body, inspiring the mind and not the other way around. That is not to say it could not be the other way around, voluntary memories can of course occur as well.

The meaning of the madeleine for Proust emerges as a link between past and present identity. In the scenario *Preservation*[8], a link to the past is made by addressing Rotterdam as

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[4] Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of perception, 245/209
[5] Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of perception, 422/381
[6] See Appendix for whole scenario.
[7] For example the popularity of Dick Swaab, "Wij zijn ons brein".
[8] See Appendix for whole scenario.

a proud fisherman's village. The current image of the city is presented as a young and vibrant entrepreneurial Rotterdam in constant motion. While retaining the festive, optimistic character, *Preservation* is oriented towards a forgotten identity, opening up a new way of seeing Rotterdam. Nowadays, only a few historical sites in the city are reminiscent of this past.[9] Central to *Preservation* is a route with towers in which fish is preserved, signifying the importance of remembering the past while being practical storage space. Both the preservation towers and Proust's madeleines function as a salient detail of a bigger whole. The effect of involuntary memory is a story told by one detail. Yet, since memory has such a subjective nature, the story is as much told by the object as the subject. Moreover, they interpret each other anew. The madeleine, if it were not eaten by Proust, would not have had its meaning for him as it did in *Remembrance of lost time*. By the same token, Proust would not have perceived himself the same way either. Arguably he would not be the same person. In *Preservation* the identity of Rotterdam is linked with its lost fisherman's past.

Understanding our relation with food as something that nourishes the body would not be a wrong one. However, as we have seen with the madeleine of Proust, food also nourishes the mind in a direct sense[10]. Moreover, the deliberate mind here is not in control of the role food plays in the act of eating. In other words, our relation with food is a dual carriageway, making the act of eating an interaction, changing both subject and object. Food changes who you are. With Merleau-Ponty in mind, we can add to this that what food is and can be for us, by definition transcends our understanding of it. It is in their encounter with each other that the meaning of subject and object alter. The encounter adds to the story they both tell through time. With a fixed understanding of either ourselves or what food is, any alteration is frustrated, effectively limiting who we are and can be; it is our framework of phenomenology that provides an alternative from such frustration. The fixation of meaning namely, also hints towards an incorrect understanding of subject and object as 'definable entities', existing as such before their encounter with one another. Our search for a meaningful relation with food now points towards the encounter in which this relation emerges.

6.3 How can the architect invite meaningful experiences with food?
The experience in which a meaningful relation with food emerges has been focused thus far on ourselves and food. Their meaning is, as we have seen, derived from a series of meaningful events, that together tell a story. In the next subquestion we are interested in the architectural context within which these stories are set. What role does architecture play in the encounters we have and the meaningful relations we partake in? More specifically, we are in search of architectural means, understandings for the architect that provide the opportunity to make a place in which the manifestation of a meaningful relation with food is enabled.

'Architecture should not specify emotion, but should invite emotion'(Pallasmaa, 2013, p. 43). This is a statement of Juhani Pallasmaa, Finnish architect and thinker on architecture through Phenomenology. He elaborates by mentioning the Laurentian library of Michelangelo, which evokes emotions of melancholia in him. '[T]hey are my tears, my own tears. Not Michelangelo's, although his architecture authorises me to expose these

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[9] Old harbours of Delfshaven in Rotterdam.
[10] Indirectly and in the superficial understanding of food, the madeleine nourishes the mind of Proust simply by providing energy for the brain.

emotions.'(Pallasmaa, 2013, p. 43) Here, the architect opens a door, without closing off alternative paths. We have seen in the previous question, that a fixed understanding of what an object is to me not only frustrates the manifestation of a new meaning, but also of a meaningful experience altogether, regarding the object. Specifying emotion does something similar. Not only do I not feel what is meant for me, I am cut off from relating in a meaningful way. A spell is broken and I am not invested anymore. On the other hand, Pallasmaa speaks of an 'authorisation' that is needed for him to expose what would otherwise be suppressed. We find ourselves with three modes of interaction: specifying, inviting, authorizing.

The geographer Yi-Fu Tuan speaks in this regard of two categories, space and place. 'Place is security, space is freedom.'(Tuan, 2001, p. ....) In the case of specifying emotion, Pallasmaa argues that the architect is not providing enough freedom. Then again, if the architecture does not authorize emotion, he or she fails in providing enough security. A fixed relation can fall in both categories as well. The relation in this regard becomes harmful by being too narrow or too open. Whether you eat the same meals everyday, or everyday something else, in the end both have become meaningless relations.

When we focus on the matrix, we can project the balance of security and freedom separately in the notions of survival, routine and festivity. Survival can be an expression of freedom and growth as much as the expression of extinction and a need for security. Routine can be a freedom of flow as much as a secure rhythmic structure. Festivity can both be a celebration of what has been secured and an expression of freefall and decadence.[11] The meaning of survival, routine and festivity is of course not set in stone. Moreover, their potential meanings span the whole range from pessimistic to optimistic. Specifying emotion has the severe disadvantage of determining an outcome that may not be suited. The question remains how to invite emotion, without striking a false note. Certainly an architect cannot dress a space for every occasion, nor for just one.

In designing the scenario *Religious fasting*[12], the golden calf is a central source of inspiration. It is the biblical symbol of a false idol, something that is celebrated but should not be celebrated. The scenario is centered around the counterfactual reality that only once every 4 years meat will be prepared and eaten during a week long festive event. The monument that centers the celebration is in the shape of an *aleph*, a phoenician letter which derives its meaning from the ox and is the precursor of the letter 'A'. In reflecting on the scenario in its final form, a series of associations come to mind. It is made of steel beams with no decorations, like a giant empty meat rack. Only in times of the festive meat-eating event will it be dressed in colorful banners like a cactus's rare bloom. This way, the monument is designed to invite different emotions, depending on the moment of the encounter.

Where a golden calf would only be celebrating times of luxury and abundance, the monument in *Religious fasting* also functions as a site that reflects lean years and functions as a harbinger of better times. Furthermore, while in its celebratory form, the monument can be understood as a meat rack that is not empty anymore. In this light the monument

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[11] The fall of the Roman Empire had its primary cause, it is said, in decadence.
[12] See Appendix for whole scenario.

becomes a kind of festive guillotine.[13] The scenario is an exploration of the paradoxical bittersweetness that often permeates religious storytelling. In encounters with the monument, the aim is to invite several emotions that alternate or refer to each other through time, and emotions that are contradictory in one experience. By authorizing a multiplicity of emotions, specifying only one emotion is avoided.

In the previous chapter we have seen the power of details. The entrance of vast imaginative worlds is often shaped as a closet, an oil lamp, key-hole, escape-pod, rabbithole or, in the case of Proust, a madeleine. There is a striking discrepancy between the world-building capacity of human imagination and remembrance, and the single subtle nudge triggering it. It seems that leaving out information is of key importance here and vital for the architect that aspires to design for new meanings to arise. If we look more closely to the spatial context in which Proust's involuntary memory occurs, we see that the surroundings of his childhood were already there. He takes a bite just as he used to do as a child in Combray, just where he grew up as a child. Yet, the place he is in before the bite does not have the deeply felt meaning it has for him after the bite.

All at once he is in the here and now and in the past, but still here. It is the sameness of the place that enables him to be two people at the same time, growing up and grown up, but all the while he remains himself. In a way the spatial context stays the same. However, the context's meaning has become entirely different. Within our framework of phenomenology, we now cannot uphold the position that the spatial context is the same. After all, what something is, reveals itself in the subject's encounter with it and in Proust's encounter what is revealed changes. Any differences between the place now and during his childhood could stand out, whereas they would go unnoticed if the madeleine never had confronted him with his youth. Perhaps all of Combray had changed, except for one building, or the other way around. Either way, the saliency of a detail is dependent on the difference it makes for the subject that encounters it. For instance, if Proust would have eaten madeleines dipped in tea and visited Combray on a regular basis, that particular bite in that particular madeleine described in *Remembrance of lost time* would not have been any different from most experiences.

Differences in designed objects communicate their meaning for us, enabling us to express ourselves. Our societal culture is reflected in them, creating a dialogue between us and the objects we use through time. Exploring this material culture not only lets us develop a design literacy, it also hints at architectural ways of partaking in a meaningful dialogue. In one of his lectures, Mark Pimlott, uses the example of a Gio Ponti chair that is mostly traditional in form and mostly future oriented in material. (Pimlott, 2017) It is a 1950s italian chair, a wicker seat with very little mass and weight, made with what was at the time innovative technology. Yet in its design it had residues of artefacts of older production techniques, artefacts that did not have to appear with the new technology. The chair, Pimlott suggests, was intended to be a sign for the working class that their future was bright: their burden would lighten (thanks to technology) without having to change their way of life. The chair was a hit. Furthermore, the design was successful in providing both security in addressing the past and freedom in addressing the future.

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[13] Connection with Sartre, the presence of absence.

The chair's "artefacts" of a production technique that was never used points us to the way in which past and future are addressed. In his design, Ponti also stayed with the traditional wicker material. He could have kept the form traditional and the material innovative, combining the future and the past. However, by having a little of the past in the wicker material and a little of the future in the thinness of the form, past and future meet each other. In their mutual reference lies a message that the past will never be the same, nor will the future be entirely new. Regarding security and freedom, Ponti's design does not invite two separate emotions, but he links them and in doing so he lets the consumer resonate with both in the same space. Moreover, he allows the experience of an exchange between both, freedom at the cost of a little bit of security and the other way around.

Pallasmaa mentions the cellar and the attic in Bachelard's 'Poetics of space' as essential spaces for a home. The cellar typically is the storage space for all kinds of junk and the attic for old photo albums, diaries and such. They are also needed, however in the 'house of the mind', the bad and the good memories. Just as with the chair, the meaning of architecture goes far beyond its primary functional role. There is also a role of storytelling, or perhaps story composition. The story of a home is told by its residents, the architect's role is to authorize in advance what can be told. For instance, having separate spaces for pleasant and unpleasant memories, allows for the avoidance of conflating very different ideas. For the architect, the basic functionality of spaces need to be specified. Without necessarily already having categorized such functionalities, choices have to be made in the composition of the design. It is a matter of what is linked together, what is kept separate and what is authorized to be in the same space. Moreover, in the design, (signs of) artefacts and other details can be used to invite certain encounters.

6.4 How can architecture change our perception of food?
Trying to make people conscious of their food choices is not what this thesis explores. Instead, how can the built environment enable certain encounters that change the way we see food? This question about change of perception is regardless of whether it manifests itself on the conscious or subconscious level. There could very well occur a change in our views without us being aware of it. In any case, what makes people open up to a change in their views?

Inviting certain encounters through architectural design means signalling without fixating on the outcome. Thus, signalling directly towards the intended meaning is no solution. As we have seen, meaning emerges as an encounter of subject and object, within a spatiotemporal context. The architect's act of designing influences the spatial context, while the individual of the encounter is unknown, as is the temporal aspect. Because of these unknown variables, the specific meaning of the encounter is not knowable. This might cause an inclination to keep the design away from specificity altogether, trying to keep it accessible to most situations and allowing for various encounters. Deduction of what is specific into something general while leaving out any specificity, however, has a different effect.

In Genius Loci, Norberg-Schulz criticizes a certain abstraction found in post-war architecture.(Norberg-Schulz, 1980) 'Most modern buildings exist in a "nowhere"; they are not related to a landscape and not to a coherent, urban whole, but live their abstract life in a kind of mathematical-technological space which hardly distinguishes between up and down.'(Norberg-Schulz, 1980, p.190) Instead of becoming more accessible, abstracting the

specificity away, makes the design inaccessible altogether. The building is not part of a coherent whole anymore, effectively telling no story, or at best an inhuman mathematical-technological one. Being part of a coherent whole, means positioning in both time and space. A design that does not refer to past and future, that does not signal an intentionality, and does not specify its spatial identity in the context of its surroundings, will not be relatable. So how can the architect enable an encounter between object and subject that is relatable?

Edward Charles Relph describes in *Place and Placelessness* that '[t]o be inside a place is to belong to it and identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are the stronger is the identity with the place'.(Relph, 1973, p. 49) To identify with the place, in the strict sense, is to become one with it. To be outside a place, then, is to be somewhere else, but nowhere in particular. Effectively, you are in no place. '[I]t is merely an attitude which is socially convenient and acceptable, a stereotype ... it can be adopted without real involvement.'(Relph, 1973, p. 82) In this regard, Relph points towards authenticity, which corresponds with our previous mentioning of the Gio Ponti chair, and how it refers to its spatial and temporal surroundings. To be authentic corresponds with being inside, inauthenticity is to be outside. Or to not really be there and then.
That chair, however, shows a detail that appears to be an artefact, yet isn't. It could be assumed that this pseudo-artefact is an instance of inauthenticity. It is fake. Yet, the chair's design clearly does not pretend to be a real authentic wicker seat. If it did, the design would fail hopelessly and the pseudo-artefact would in fact come over as inauthentic.

The chair draws its identity not merely from the past, but from the future as well, making use of the opportunities in the here and now. Making an 'old' chair would by definition be inauthentic, as it would be made to appear older than it was. It is a trap a lot of restaurants and pubs fall in: destressing materials. The pseudo-artefact is meant to be seen as something familiar and unknown. This way, Ponti plays with insideness and outsideness, and he does so in a very authentic way. Perhaps, being authentic is not just about being an 'insider'. Being outside can also be authentic, as long as it is not intended as an inside. With regard to inauthenticity and placelessness, the term 'disneyfication' comes to mind. It is a place that has no special relationship to the places in which it is located, it could be anywhere. The particular history and traditions of the site are irrelevant; but is placed there because of mobility. Disneyfication is outsideness pur sang, and is immersive in letting you forget who and where you are.

It can be a very pleasant state of being, especially in those moments when you want to break free from mediocre experiences of everyday life. You can be somewhere else altogether, be given a sensational experience, a what-if that remains out there. A visit to Disneyworld, or a blockbuster movie for that matter, is a pleasant disruption from the dreariness of your own life. This is harmless, as long as you don't try to live in Disneyworld or expect your life to be like the ones in movies. The scenarios used in speculative design are similar in that they are other-worldly. Furthermore, they are intended as disruptions as well. However, not to let you comfortably escape the pressures of everyday life. They are designed as links to the here and now, from outside to inside. The stories the scenarios tell are hopefully not stand-alone, but allow for an encounter of outside and inside. It is an invitation of what was outside to come inside. Moreover, what appears to be authentic, but is

in fact not, is tried to be unmasked. In the scenario *Carbs, Proteins, Fats*[14], the offer is made to eat only what your body needs. With supplements tailored to your bodily characteristics you do not need to worry anymore about getting fat or not having enough energy. It is never intended to be a serious offer, but as a blatantly simplistic and narrow view of food. The supplements do not stimulate the senses, but are technological-mathematical in nature. Moreover, it resembles the act of eating, transferring what is outside your body to the inside.

7. Conclusion

My fascination with our relations with food and combining that with architecture led me to the idea of provoking an interpretation that is different, changing one's perception and understanding of food. In answering the sub-questions we found that aiming at a certain interpretation can cause fixation on one understanding, effectively not changing any perception at all. Perception of oneself and the other can, however, change in an existential way. Boundaries of where you end and the other begins start to shift, blurr or even fade away entirely. We saw this with the example of Merleau-Ponty: comparing the heart being in the organism as our body being in the world. This theme is central in the scenario *Compost* where the inhabitant is part of its house. There is always already a way of perceiving things, unnoticed until a different way of looking at things shows itself. The phenomenological structure of a relation between subject and object is thus one that is preceded by a certain perception, yet it can change perception. My body in the world as part of it and being it, plays with the shift in perception of ourselves. Not changing this perception, can lead to simplistic explanations that become harmful.

What changes the perception is often a small trigger, a salient detail that can be highlighted in design. For instance in the scenario *Preservation*, with the towers of preservation, that make preserving the fisherman's identity of Rotterdam of monumental importance, giving the city back some of its past. A salient detail of the city is given a stage through architecture. It is the detail of the madeleine in Proust's famous scene that changes the perception and in doing so, changes the meaning of both subject and object. Using any fixed definition of object or subject frustrates this dynamic. Any change towards a meaningful relation with food thus contains an encounter with a salient detail, by which not only the meaning of the object for the subject changes, but the subject sees itself anew as well.

We have seen Pallasmaa in this regard with the role of the architect of inviting emotion. Opposed to specifying it, which would be fixating, inviting can only be done by giving more than one way of interpreting the design. There has to be an authorization in the design to allow for these different interpretations to happen. Otherwise, the architect risks designing a non-place lacking specificity, hence no way of orientation or relating.
Three modes of interaction with the design can be categorized for the architect, namely specifying, authorizing and inviting. Adding to this Tuan's notions of freedom and security, we come to an understanding of architectural design that provides security through authorization and freedom through invitation. With regard to *Religious Fasting*, we can add to this that the meaning of freedom or security changes depending on the story that precedes it. A festive monument that expresses abundance and freedom strikes a false note in lean years. Designing the monument so that it can be an expression of absence of abundance, authorizes the feeling of suffering, when longing for freedom.

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[14] See Appendix for whole scenario.

The meaning of an encounter can only be understood by addressing what preceded the encounter. In the case of Proust's scene of the madeleines, the preceding is personal and subjective in nature, as the madeleine and Proust's spatial surroundings stay the same. Regarding the Ponti chair, it is a material history, showing a material culture that is both objective and subjective in nature. The design of the chair refers to its material culture, linking past and future, consequently changing the meaning of both. It is an example of connecting freedom and security, inviting both emotions of tradition and novelty. In the 'house of the mind' a concept coined by Bachelard, the attic and cellar are separate spaces, as a means to avoid conflating bad and good memories. Here, the architect deliberately does not authorize certain encounters, keeping the meaning of certain objects apart. This way, the architect can specify what is not to be experienced. In linking certain spaces with each other, a new relating is authorized. Inviting is done by letting different ways of relating refer to each other.

Our aim is not only to allow for several ways of interpreting, but also to effectuate a change in interpretation. Thus, what the design appears to be should not be the end of it. An identification needs to take place, which is connected by Relph to the notion of being inside and the feeling of authenticity. Something that is not what it appears to be, typically is inauthentic. Disneyfication in this regard is the place that can not be identified with, Disney World being the place where you can be someone else, but not yourself. It is because of this that the inauthenticity of disneyfication renders it impossible to identify with it as yourself. The question rises how to go beyond appearances, without becoming inauthentic. Yet, our goal is not to make someone feel inside, in the sense of coinciding with a place. A person can identify with a disneyficated place, as long as he perceives himself in the narrow sense disneyfication allows for: a happy childish lightness. In order to effectuate a change in perception, either identification needs to take place with what was considered alien, or with a detachment from what appeared to be known is required. In other words, an interplay of inside and outside, authenticity and inauthenticity, will allow for a change in perceiving and understanding both food and ourselves. That is how a fixed and frustrating relation with food can be abandoned, and how a meaningful relation is enabled.

8. Discussion
8.1. unanswered questions
This thesis is written as an exploration, an interpretation of how a space can alter perception, changing the meaning of both perceiver and what is perceived. Furthermore, it explores the role and position of the architect in designing a space that allows for this change of meaning. This does not mean I take position in what the role of the architect should be. Nor do I try to provide a complete image of possible positions and roles. The same counts for the examples of altering perception. Without a doubt there are more ways of understanding these changes.
As an exploration, this thesis provides a selection of stances that certain architects and thinkers took, in order to formulate an understanding of how architecture can contribute to a change in the perception of something. It does not provide a description of the current scientific discourse on the matter, nor does it try to contribute to such a discourse.

That is not to say that I entirely agree with the several standpoints I have referred to. They caught my attention and I chose them as paths of further exploration. Whether you, the reader, agree with their standpoints or mine is, in my opinion, not that important. I do however hope they caught your attention and gave you an appetite for further reading.

The 9 scenarios that are part of this thesis tell a possible future within which a particular problem concerning food has manifested itself. In addition, in the built environment a solution is presented. These scenarios are not meant as forecasts of what is about to happen, but as possibilities that might be alarming for those who do not prefer living in such a world.

8.2. Reflective advice

If I would do it all over again, I would limit myself more. I knew in my gut that making 9 scenarios would be a tough challenge, but I was eager to test myself and my surroundings. After all, this would be my magnum opus, the cherry on top of all the years studying architecture. I thankfully had someone around who could straighten my thoughts in numerous conversations, heated discussions and desperate moments. Without exaggerating, it took me months to have a clear understanding of the function of dystopian elements in my scenarios. It was meant to spike attention and change perspective, but I couldn't seem to grasp how that would come about. Every time trying out different analogies, finding another possibly relevant article, searching for the social principle that would make my thinking valid, but without success. Eventually, I got it right. In a dystopian world, after a certain disruption life is just a shimmer of what it once was, knowing it would never be the same. Therefore making it the perfect warning to change your habits and alter your needs; it would change your thinking and behavior. The moment I was able to clearly describe the effect I was basing my whole idea on, was unequivocally fundamental in finding the courage to stick to my method.

Although, in the end of my research period it all came together, I would like to recommend my former self to find a manageable balance between broadness and depth. I am, however, very happen with the inclination I started and ended with: not being afraid to make it personal. It has given my research an urgency and made me eager to understand.

While researching this topic the entanglement of the methods, phenomenology and speculative scenarios, caused a search for understanding, rather than making. One of the aims of this research was to better understand speculative design; which resulted in nine scenarios and this paper. During the observations of these results it became more clear that the scenarios were also a means to better understand the phenomenology of speculative design. However, my field of expertise does not lie in philosophy. Although it made me eventually more creative and insightful, it also made the process hard and full of doubt. I know that normally you can't predict where your research will end up, but I had a clear vision before starting my first speculative scenario, not knowing it would give me much more than an overview of intriguing relations towards food.

8.3p. Special thanks

While I've seen the struggles of my friends during graduation, you only truly understand it while you're in it. Designing is an iterative process, much like this research; that's why during the writing of this report most of the pieces fell into place, but a number of them are still wandering through my mind. Although the process is still active I'd like to thank a few

supporters who have been rooting for me and without whom I would not have been able to rise to the occasion.

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10. Appendix

Alle scenario's, tekst, tekening en foto van model.

<u>Slave city.</u>
From 2005 until 2008 Atelier Van Lieshout worked on the project *SlaveCity* which included plans, drawings, sculptures, models and installations. This is an example of the What-If scenario method balancing between design and architecture, which stirred up my interest for speculative design. It allows the maker to explore an idea by diving into the basics of a narrative or plot. This idea reveals what might happen in a social system in intense circumstances. Focussing on one event or theme, this 'new world' follows through on unambiguous implications.(Dunne & Raby, 2013, p. 86)
SlaveCity is eminently provocative and balances on the morals of history and present day problems; how to maintain an increasing demand of products, energy and resources.
What if we use humans as our main energy supplier? The project addresses what size city humans could support if we use them to produce energy, by movement and embodied energy. There is no doubt that Van Lieshout has this whole city figured out, every detail designed to make this world valid, but he chooses to never show the viewer the whole system. The drawings of various scenes, architectural models and prototype machinery are just the tip of the iceberg, but give enough away to make it credible. The Business Plan of the Call Centre, where eventually the energy of this whole systems is used, describes in much detail how and how much this operation will cost and finally produce.(Van Lieshout, 2008) Such elements make the project profoundly intriguing, the thought 'this is a solution, although not a desired one' captivates my mind.

Although many critics describe *SlaceCity* as a manifesto against slavery, which is even expressed in the two readers on his own site, Van Lieshout clearly states that the project "doesn't deal in a indirect sense with the subject "slavery". The aim isn't to indict or enlighten, but to artistically formulate the serf-like working conditions of a large number of exploited people. Slavery is an enormous problem, but it is not the subject of my work." (Van Lieshout, 2008, p. 74)

Later in his comment on his own work he mentions that he doesn't like explaining his work. "Everyone should interpret my work in his or her own way, and that is the beauty, freedom and power of art."(Van Lieshout, 2008, p. 75) He is not concerned with filling in the experiences of the other, his intent is to initiate discussion and discourse. This is a key element in speculative design, it is meant to stir up, to provoke attention and stimulate thinking. It is not guiding you towards one idea or solution or 'truth', which would be too directive and to be honest, ridiculous and completely missing the point.

His project always consists of works relating to each other and forming a gesamt-kunstwerk, which can be loosely translated into a scenario as defined by Dunne and Raby. "Big changes do not happen on their own. No one wants to take a step back. But are people still deciding on the changes? In our democratic Western societies much is still being achieved via the ballot box and free speech. But people's behaviour undergoes serious changes if they no longer own a house, can't feed their children and live in constant fear for their lives." (Van Lieshout, 2008, p. 75)