

# TONGUE TOWN



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FOR B&P'S TOP 5  
MOMENTS IN  
JELLY HISTORY

Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo

FROM 5<sup>TH</sup> OF JUNE

TO 3<sup>RD</sup> OF SEPTEMBER

#CIDADEDALINGUA #TONGUETOWN

## TONGUE TOWN BRINGS TO BRAZIL THE BRITISH DUO SAM BOMPAS AND HARRY PARR

INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN FOR THEIR GASTRONOMICAL INNOVATIONS

Their work goes beyond the kitchen, challenging our understanding of flavour and taste through immersive flavour-based experiences.

In the setting of an olde English market town Sam Bompas & Harry Parr have recreated some of their most captivating installations and installed new work.

This multi-sensory experience explores contemporaneous research into flavour perception and the body, plus trends and forecasts affecting our relationship with food, inviting you to engage with flavour from an unusual perspective.

*Tongue Town* exists in its own dimension away from the regular world. Beyond the threshold of the town gate you must prepare to forget and relearn everything you know about flavour and taste. The exhibition is spatially designed to allow you to create a unique journey through the town, coming to your own conclusions.

You will be taken on a physical and mental journey, tasting in all manner of ways, and will go on to learn Bompas & Parr's theory about environment and flavour which will form the inspiration for anyone to go on to create the extraordinary.



Sam Bompas (left) and Harry Parr: existing in their own dimension; photography: Nathan Pask

## FROM THE CURATOR

TONGUE TOWN  
Felipe Chaimovich

What is the future of food? As we face growing ecological challenges, the debate about the strategies for feeding humanity must involve artists, industrial designers, and scientists in a creative collaboration. The British team Bompas & Parr took this initiative ten years ago, and they bring to Brazil for the first time the world they invented.

Sam Bompas and Harry Parr are both the partners behind the company with their name, and the two characters that perform banquets, films, museums, books, and flamboyant events all around the world. In order to develop their poetics, they have been working with different professionals, such as musicians, food historians, academic scientists, contemporary artists, food and beverage experts, industrial designers, and graphic designers. The result is a unique set of works that are redefining the relationship between art and food.

*Tongue Town* is composed by a series of installations that address the past, the present, and the future of food. The installations are displayed as parts of an English town with a typical architecture from the 15th century. The atmosphere evokes dusk, with all the mysterious appearances brought by the approaching night. Food is experienced in several ways: through palate, smell, touch, vision, and hearing. The past of food is presented by means of a collection of objects and images. The present appears as the world of Bompas and Parr. The future is explored in the "Pharmacy", with works that look at the realm of science fiction.

All the issues in *Tongue Town* are treated in a characteristic style: fantasy, party, and the typical British sense of humour. Thus we address art and gastronomy celebrating a decade of Bompas & Parr.

### Your journey into Tongue Town

## BEGINNINGS OF BOMPAS & PARR

BOMPAS & PARR'S JOURNEY STARTED WITH JELLY, AS SOMETHING FUN TO DO AT THE WEEKEND

### IT COULD HAVE BEEN ANYTHING

THE INSPIRATION CAME FROM TWO THINGS – CHILDHOOD NOSTALGIA AND THE KNOWLEDGE THAT ENGLAND USED TO BE FAMOUS IN THE CULINARY WORLD FOR TWO THINGS: JELLY AND ROASTING

JELLY BECAME A VEHICLE TO ENGAGE WITH HISTORY, INCITE A FEELING OF NOSTALGIA AND PLAY WITH FORM, COLOUR AND WILD FLAVOURS

Jelly was exciting people but could only reach a certain scale

SO SAM AND HARRY LOOKED AT THE ENVIRONMENT THAT COULD BE CREATED AROUND JELLY

FOR CIRCUMSTANCE AND ENVIRONMENT TRANSFORM THE ACT OF EATING

THEIR FIRST EVENT WAS A CHOREOGRAPHED 12-COURSE VICTORIAN BREAKFAST AT WARWICK CASTLE IN 2007 WITH OVER 100 PIECES OF CUTLERY PER PERSON



Victorian Breakfast press image; photography: Greta Illieva

Harry did what architects do and planned the entire thing through drawing. Every piece of crockery, food and every person had their movements mapped out in minute detail

### JELLY ONLY FEATURED AT COURSE 8

THEY SERVED IT IN A GRAND, HIGHLY DECORATED ROOM IN A CASTLE. WITH HIGH ENERGY FRIENDS AS THE SERVING STAFF

GUESTS SAID THEY'D HAD THE BEST EXPERIENCE

Next, never shy of a jelly challenge they invited architects to design jelly buildings

TWO BIG NAMES IN ARCHITECTURE – LORD ROGERS AND LORD FOSTER – SIGNED UP

SAM WORKED UP A GRAND STORY AROUND THIS AND GOT IT IN ALL THE PAPERS

IT WAS CALLED THE ARCHITECTURAL JELLY DESIGN COMPETITION AND IT BECAME ONE OF 2008'S STORIES OF THE SUMMER. EVERYONE WAS GOING JELLY CRAZY

ORIGINALLY THEY WANTED TO MAKE CLASSIC MOULDED JELLIES BUT COULDN'T AFFORD THE ANTIQUE COPPER MOULDS

### THEY WERE FORCED TO WORK OUT HOW TO MAKE JELLY MOULDS

Using the same programmes that architects use to design buildings, Harry modelled the jelly and translated it to a physical 3D-printed models

EACH MODEL WAS VACUUM-FORMED WITH PLASTIC TO CREATE A FUNCTIONAL MOULD

2,000 people were due to attend so they needed more than jelly to entertain

THEY MADE A 14M LONG TABLE WITH HUNDREDS OF INDIVIDUALLY ILLUMINATED JELLIES, AND DRIVEN BY A 'WAGGLE ENGINE' THAT MADE EVERYTHING MYSTERIOUSLY WOBBLE.

They commissioned a choreographer and sound artist to create a jelly ballet to be performed

HARRY MADE GIANT PLASTIC SPOONS FOR THE DANCERS TO USE TO INTERPRET THE MUSIC

AT 11PM ONE OF THE BIGGEST FOOD FIGHTS IN CENTRAL LONDON BROKE OUT

A second culinary experience intensified by the environment around the food

Another realisation that food, apart from being nourishing, should be **FOREMOST ENJOYABLE**



Jelly fight at Architectural Jelly Banquet; photography: Bompas & Parr



## MUSEUM: FOOD WITH CONTEXT

Bompas & Parr takes inspiration from revolutionary culinary thinking of the past. The studio has spent much time poring through London libraries and building its own collection of books and artefacts. There is a wealth of forgotten knowledge that can be used to re-enchant what people put in their mouths.

The same subjects still delight us today, be it feasts and wild animals or magic and mixology. So the studio creates experiences with context by studying the greatest spectacles and culinary moments of yesteryear, from Medieval, Renaissance and Victorian periods to more contemporary times.

Here Bompas & Parr share some of their most treasured material.

## DOCTORS: BEING FOOD

Food depicted on the TV and in magazines is flawless. But that is only half the picture. What happens when it goes beyond the mouth?

This installation glorifies the inner mysteries of our most sensitive organ: the gut. The gut is referred to as the 'second brain'. It contains over 100 million neurons and has its own reflexes and senses. It can control gut behaviour independently of the brain.

To study the symbiotic gut/brain relationship, the studio worked with gastroenterologist Dr Simon Anderson on *Journey to the Centre of the Gut*, sending a pill camera down the digestive tract of TV chef Gizzi Erskine.

With this installation Bompas & Parr asks you to consider the reality of what's on the end of your fork as it enters inner space.

## SCHOOL ROOM: THEORY OF FOOD

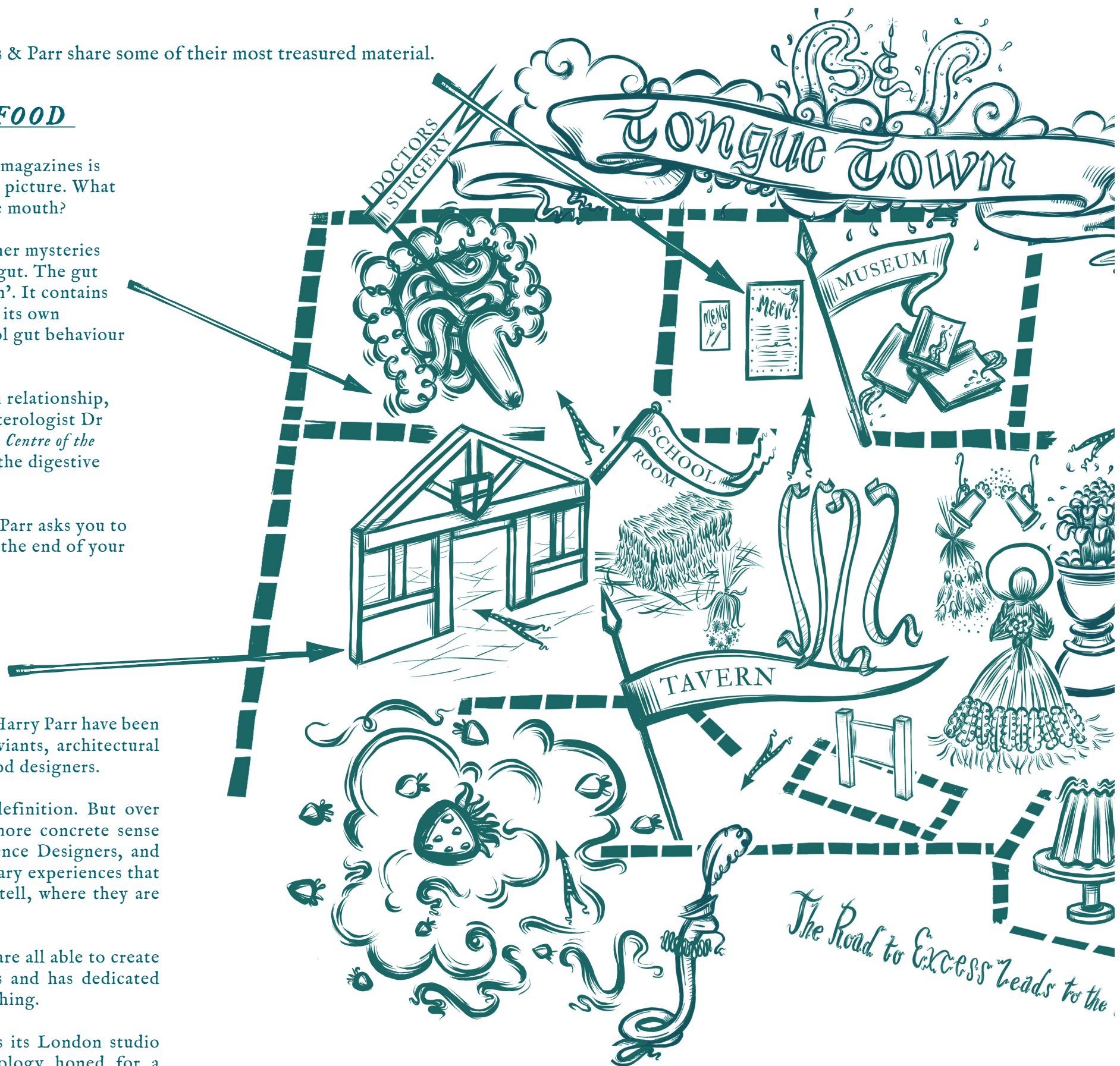
Over the years Sam Bompas and Harry Parr have been called many things: culinary deviants, architectural foodsmiths, chefs, artists and food designers.

Initially it was easier to defy definition. But over time the studio has defined a more concrete sense of identity: the term is Experience Designers, and the focus on creating extraordinary experiences that give people powerful stories to tell, where they are the hero of their own adventure.

Bompas & Parr believes that we are all able to create compelling culinary experiences and has dedicated the Town's School Room to teaching.

Here Bompas & Parr introduces its London studio and presents a design methodology honed for a decade, from rousing creativity and celebrating the multisensory to creating a narrative arc.

# TONGUE



Map illustrated by long-time collaborator and friend of Bompas & Parr, Emma Rios

## TAVERN: SPATIALIZING FOOD

When Bompas & Parr started making jelly in the shape of buildings people commented on how small they were. To compensate, they amplified the experience of flavour, taking it to an architectural scale.

The studio first created Alcoholic Architecture in 2009, fusing meteorology with mixology to create an inhalable cloud of alcohol using powerful humidification technology that saturates the air and intoxicates through the lungs and eyeballs.

Last year the studio opened Alcoholic Architecture on the site of an ancient monastery, collaborating with doctors and scientists to calculate the safe proportion of alcohol that could be spatialised in the air.

Here Bompas & Parr present an alcohol-free fruit weather system for the tongue, exploding natural fruit flavour to an architectural scale to subvert the conventions of how we normally 'drink'.



## THEATRE: PLAYING FOOD

Bompas & Parr presents a selection of films from the last decade.

# TOWN

A show-reel presents a rapid run-through of some of the studio's most epic experiments, experiences and commercial activations that leverage food, drink and the senses to create the utmost spectacle.

Three artistic filmic interpretations showcase Bompas & Parr's interpretive perspective of food as a medium for play and entertainment that can provoke, charm, delight and even heal:

*The Gherkin Chandelier*: a foray into food-based light features created in association with food and culture magazine *The Gourmand*, 2012

*Jelly In Motion*: a celebration of the anthropomorphic nature of jellies created with Jenny Van Sommers, 2013

*Egg Healing*: made by the studio to mark Easter 2017

*Man vs. Gut*: a Bompas & Parr studio film exploring the relationship between human and hunger, 2017

## PHARMACY: FUTURE OF FOOD

Throughout the 20th century, futurologists, space experts, writers and even government agencies have looked to science fiction and the stars for inspiration and a deeper conversation about science, food, technology and our future. Bompas & Parr is no exception.

Food plays a significant role in science fiction as one of the clearest measures of how far we have journeyed from the present. Predictions from science fiction offer areas for culinary speculation, innovation, imagination and improvement.

Taking food instances from science fiction, this installation articulates some of the studio's futuristic escapades and asks how we might be eating in 10, 20 or 30 years' time.

## MOUTH: INTERNALIZING FOOD

We all experience food in different ways, partly because of our genetics and partly because of the environment in which we consume it.

The PTC (Phenylthio Carbamide)-soaked strips represent a simple genetics test that serve to distinguish super and non-tasters: sensitivity to PTC is one of many factors that makes the palate individual. In addition to genetic differences, environment affects how we taste.

A study by Bournemouth University (UK) in 2003 showed the same dish, Chicken à la King, tasted different depending on where it was consumed. Diners rated the identical dish as bad when tasted in a care home and delicious in four-star restaurant.

Tongue Town invites you to reassess your relationship with food - from tongue to digestive tract - exploring how our understanding is conditioned by history, evolution, science, art, sociology and contemporary trends.



## SWEET SHOP: UNMOULDING FOOD

Harry and Sam met in the school orchestra. The music was bad, but they were bound by food.

After school Harry trained as an architect and Sam went into public relations.

In June 2007 Harry and Sam left sensible jobs to pursue a career in jelly, forming jellymongers Bompas & Parr. Jelly was an interesting place to examine the relationship between food and architecture due to the scope for experimentation in form, colour and flavour.

The initial plan was to open a jelly stall at London's Borough Market but the market refused their application for a stall.

This set-back liberated them to realise their wildest food dreams and start on a culinary adventure exploring all aspects of mankind's relationship with food.

The Sweet Shop tells the tale of Bompas & Parr's Jelly Period.



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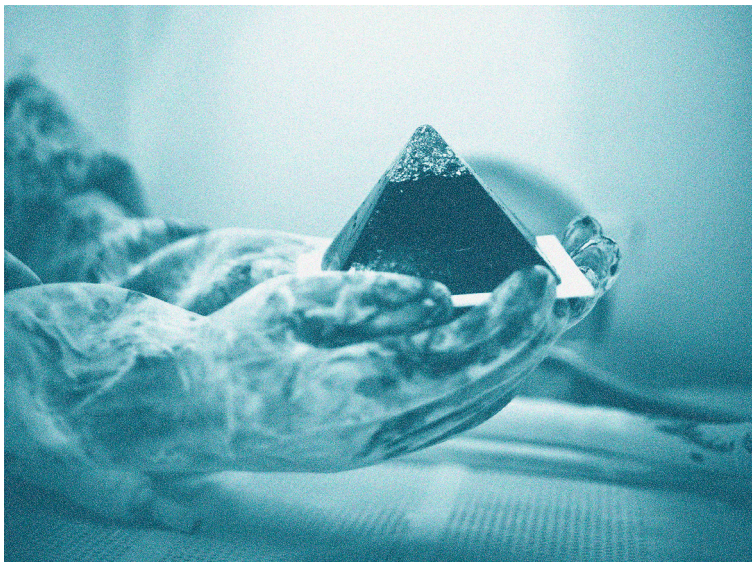




# B & P'S TOP FIVE MOMENTS IN JELLY HISTORY

## • EGYPTIAN JELLY (2686 BC)

Jelly has an incredible history: it pre-dates Christ. Heat any meat-based, collagen-rich tissue, let the juices cool and they will start to gel. The ancients used these savoury jellies to preserve food. Apparently the Egyptians were so fond of jelly it was reserved for royalty.



Black cherry and prosecco funeral jelly; photography: Chris Terry

## • HENRY VIII (1521)

Along with roasting, jelling was historically Britain's greatest culinary offering. The interesting point is when jelly switched from a meaty to a sweet dish. During the Renaissance sugar was seen as the finest sculptural material. Sculptures of exploding castles, wrathful gods and squirrels adorned the best tables in the land. The most discerning served sweet jellies. Henry VIII was such a fan he served up an alcoholic 'jelly hippocras' for both the first and second course of his 1521 Garter Feast.

## • THE GOLDEN AGE OF JELLY (1861)

With jelly at the zenith of fashion and only available to the extremely wealthy (due to the expensive ingredients, laborious cooking methods and scarcity of ice), they would be laid along the centre of dining tables to wobble suggestively throughout a meal. Jellies were so highly prized that they would frequently be covered in gold leaf before being served.

During the industrial revolution copper jelly moulds became more affordable and leaf gelatine was available from local grocers, everyone enjoyed jelly. Mrs Beeton's legendary 1861 tome *Household Management* lists 55 jelly recipes ranging from cactus fruit to guava, rhubarb and champagne.



Original Copper jelly mould

## • PRINCESS DIANA (1997)

This is one of the most macabre stories to come out of Diana's tragic death. Apparently the funeral technicians working on Princess Diana's death mask used it to make a vodka jelly of her face. Interestingly, moulded and figurative food has played an important role in funerals of the past. Historically, funeral cakes were made using metal, wood and ceramic moulds with motifs including the three plumes and decorated hearses and Masonic symbols.

## • BOMPAS & PARR'S GLOW IN THE DARK GIN 'N' ROSES JELLY (2009)

In 2009, Bompas & Parr was commissioned to create an outlandish menu for Hendrick's Gin. So the studio worked with Dr Andrea Sella, an explosives expert at University College London, to develop glow-in-the-dark jellies. To make the jelly glow in the dark, food-safe quinine is included and the jellies are served with UV blacklights which cause them to fluoresce. The UV light is absorbed by the quinine, which then re-emits bluish light at the edge of the visible spectrum, making the jellies appear to glow in the dark.

# THINKING OF THEMING BY Sam Bompas

"Anxiety is the handmaiden of creativity." (T. S. Eliot)

Harry's hair turned grey before he was even 30. We spend weeks and months not sleeping, the next event closing in, creeping terror rising. Fear is the goad to creativity and helps us put in the hours of work needed to achieve the extraordinary.

Feasting is all about impressing your guests. Spectacle is just as important as the food itself. Don't get us wrong - what people put in their mouths has to be good. It's just that most folk are far more visually literate than they are in terms of the odours, textures and tastes that compose a mouthful of food. This is well illustrated by truffles. Physicist and flavour expert Dr Len Fisher points out that "a full 40 percent of the population are 'tone deaf' to the core odours in truffles that gourmets rave about." But most people go wild for a truffled dish.

These days we typically only spend 20 per cent of project time on the food. The rest is used to engineer other ways to impress. A good strong theme is an excellent place to begin.

Choosing a theme can be tricky. The wrong creative direction will leave you looking infantile, puerile or perverse. Handily there are a few methods that deliver hot results. Though the golden age of feasting is over, history provides a rich seam of inspiration to mine. The elements and ideas that rocked the best parties, orgies and bacchanals of earlier civilizations will probably still be effective today. The application of powerful modern techniques and technologies to these ancient practices will yield results that delight and amaze.

One example that we found partially inspiring, and which we re-created for our culinary adventure, *The Complete History of Food*, took place on New Year's Eve 1853.

You should take all opportunities to impress and amaze, and this meal did so from the start by printing invitations on replica pterodactyl wings. Enough information was given to intrigue guests, get them to the right place, and leave them hungry to find out more. They read:

Mr. B. Waterhouse Hawkins solicits the honour  
of Professor (insert name)'s company at dinner,  
in the Iguanodon,  
on the 31st of December, 1853, at 4 p.m.

When the guests arrived, they were not disappointed. Anatomist Richard Owen, an expert on dinosaurs (he invented the word itself), had teamed up with sculptor Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins to create 33 life-size model dinosaurs at Crystal Palace. This was the first time in the history of mankind that anyone had attempted to build scale models of dinosaurs, neatly combining showmanship, art and science. In celebration, Hawkins invited Owen and 20 other top scientists to dine inside the giant model iguanodon.

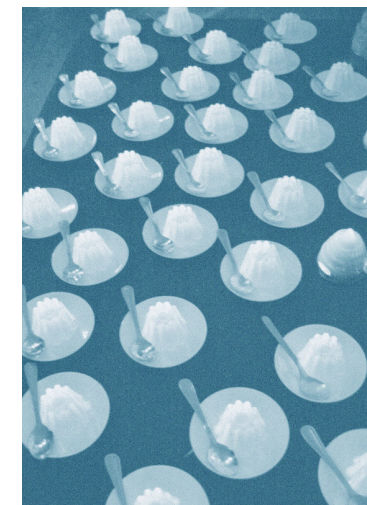
The feast followed seven formidable courses, all served by a team of waiters who had to clamber over scaffolding-supported platforms to reach the diners. It started with a choice of mock turtle, Julien or hare soup and finished with a bountiful array of fruits and nuts, going through fish, game and sweet courses in between, all washed down with large quantities of alcohol.

According to the *Illustrated London News*, the party left "well pleased with the modern hospitality of the iguanodon", their raucous singing was comparable to a herd of bellowing iguanodons. The next day, the papers noted that if the diners had been born in ancient times, they would have been the meal in the creature's belly.

You could trust your instincts and go with the first thing that comes into your head. To ensure that you have an original idea you can always combine themes employing a random "dot cricket" method to produce more unusual titles like "Renaissance Swamp" or "Noah's Ark in Space". Note down a load of places, objects, emotions, eras you think will be fun and randomly put a few together. The results can be grand. One of our more successful parties was held at Harry's house with the theme Halloween Harrods. Harry's stairwell is still gold and covered in our hand-painted hieroglyphics. One guest wore nothing but a small Harrods bag from the perfume counter. It was so tight he brought a spare in case he needed the loo.

When you've chosen a theme, explore all the sensory implications using visuals, sounds and smells for a full frontal sensory assault. This is what we did for the Jelly Banquet in University College London's (UCL's) neoclassical quad. You could say that the theme was architecture meets jelly. For multisensory stimulation hundreds of architectural jellies quivered in a synchronized jelly dance to a soundscape of wobbling jelly recorded in UCL's anechoic chamber by sound artist Douglas Murphy and Professor of Biophysics Jonathan Ashmore. Jelly dancers pranced around with massive spoons in costumes from a lingerie designer and non-stop strawberry aroma wafted through the buildings. The night culminated in jelly wrestling and London's greatest jelly fight.

The key is to choose something you and your friends will enjoy, and to commit to the hilt, missing no opportunity to amaze, inspire and delight.



Neon jelly banquet; photography: Ann-Charlott Ommedal

## GLOW IN THE DARK JELLY RECIPE

- 200ml/7fl oz or generous ¾ cup Gin
- 300ml/10fl oz/1¼ cups Indian tonic water
- a splash of rose water
- 5 leaves gelatine
- For the Glow, UV blacklight

For a more sensible version, make this without gin

- Combine the gin, tonic water and rose water in a jug (pitcher) and set aside. Cut the leaf gelatine into fine pieces and place in a heat-proof bowl with enough of the G&T mix to submerge. Leave until soft.

- When the gelatine has softened, melt it by placing it over a pan of simmering water. Then add the remainder of the gin and tonic and pour through a sieve (strainer) and back into the jug (cup). Now fill your mould.

- Unmould the jelly by briefly immersing in a bowl of hot water and inverting over your chosen plates. For maximum effect, turn off all lights to achieve total darkness. Switch on your blacklight and serve the glowing jelly to thrilled diners.

- Turn the blacklight on and watch it fluoresce.

Taken from *Jelly with Bompas & Parr*, published by Anova Books



Eternal dusk in Tongue Town

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Bompas & Parr** is globally recognised as the leading expert in multi-sensory experience design. The studio works with commercial brands, artistic institutions, private clients and governments to deliver emotionally compelling experiences to a wide variety of audiences.

Sam Bompas and Harry Parr first came to prominence through their expertise in jelly-making, but the business rapidly grew into a fully fledged creative studio offering food and drink design, brand consultancy and immersive experiences across a diverse number of industries.

Backgrounds in marketing and architecture play a key role in the positioning and nature of the studio's output and, along with a diverse spread of talents among the 20-strong team, Bompas & Parr activations boast a bold ambition, distinct

aesthetic style and interpretive vigour that's unrivalled among creative agencies. The studio works to experiment, develop and produce projects and experiences as well as provide strategy, analysis and advice for brands to increase consumer engagement through experience design.

Genre-defining projects include *Alcoholic Architecture*, an inhabitable cloud of gin and tonic; the world's first Multi-Sensory Fireworks display for London New Year's Eve 2013; and the Taste Experience for the Guinness Storehouse in Dublin. Bompas & Parr also founded the British

Museum of Food, the world's first cultural institution exclusively dedicated to food and drink, and has published six books that explore humankind's relationship with food.

Bompas & Parr works with brands such as Coca-Cola, Johnnie Walker, Mercedes, Vodafone, and LVMH as well as cultural institutions such as The Barbican, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow.

The studio is based in south London but in the past year has realised projects on every continent