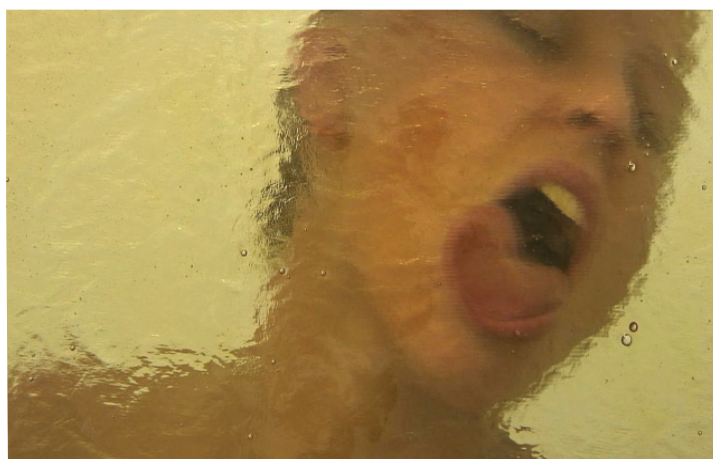


MOUTHFEEL



Elizabeth Willing, 'Lick' 2009, film still detail

Black Box Projects
curated by Megan Fizell

Mouthfeel is defined as the physical sensations in the mouth created by food or drink. The objective of this exhibition is to stimulate a synaesthetic response in the viewer through the observation of these films. The mouth is used by these artists to trigger the sense of taste and touch by the ingestion of edible and non-edible substances. The five films selected for this exhibition are performative actions by four female artists and one male/female collaborative work.

The exhibition opens with Elizabeth Willing's 'Lick', a film recording the monotonous task of licking through a pane of cast sugar. Not only is the soreness of her jaw and tongue visible, but her growing resistance towards eating the sugar speaks to the physical discomfort she would have felt through ingesting so much of the substance. The second film, 'Coffee & Milk' by husband-wife duo Hillerbrand+Magsamen, is a relatively light-hearted piece in which the mouths of the artists are visible blowing milk and coffee together into swirling patterns. With only the lips and sometimes their hair visible in the frame, the action of blowing and expelling air into milk sexualises the artists and the viewer is placed into the position of a voyeur watching an exchange between husband and wife.

Hannah Raisin's, 'Rose Garden', depicts the artist ingesting a bouquet of roses. The soft petals are roughly ripped from their thorny stems by Raisin's teeth, the flowers are chewed until she retches and expels the blossom. The next film, 'Chocolate' by Martynka Wawrzyniak (courtesy of Envoy Enterprises, New York City), begins with a headshot of the artist on her back as a stream of liquid chocolate begins to pour over her face, filling her mouth and causing her to cough and sputter to expel the substance. The area occupied by Wawrzyniak slowly fills with chocolate and the stream repeatedly fills her mouth causing an involuntary gag reflex, an action that correlates with Raisin's preceding film.

Closing the sequence is 'The Foreignness of language' by Nina Ross, a meditation on language and learning. As the artist reads Norwegian words inscribed on a small slips of paper, she crumples the notes and inserts them into her mouth. As the film progresses, her recitation of the text becomes increasingly difficult due to the numerous papers filling her mouth, which crackle with every movement of her jaw.