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HERITAGE FOOD AND IMPROVISED PERFORMANCE — ECO-GASTRONOMY PROJECT PUTS ON A 'RECIPE SLAM' IN PDX

From October 21 to 26, 2016, the **Eco-Gastronomy Project** will be in the U.S. city of Portland, Oregon for a unique event focused on heritage recipes and multi-sensory improvisation. This constitutes the tenth phase of the project and the fifteenth city to be visited.

On October 25, the **Old Salt Marketplace** will host the project's first-ever 'heritage recipe slam.' The event comprises a mash-up of spoken word, gastronomic culture, and artistic expression. As members of the public recount traditional familial recipes, two cooks and one painter will draw inspiration to carry out their own improvisational performances using selected 'ingredients' (food and latex paint, respectively).

"Portland is the perfect place to bring together great American food and artistic innovation," says Eco-Gastronomy Project director, **Dr. David Szanto**. "There is a spirit of invention and experimentation to the city, a willingness to try things out and be playful. Combined with the high-quality food and wine produced in Oregon, it makes for a rich setting to be extemporaneous with eco-gastronomy."

Old Salt chef/owner **Ben Meyer** offered up their Carver Room event space for the slam, because of the synergy with the Project's ethos of creating value within a community. Meyer also takes on the role of improv cook, alongside Sonoran and Indian-inspired **chef/owner of Ruchikala, Kusuma Rao**. Together, the two will riff on the recipe-narratives to cook up spur-of-the-moment dishes for all to enjoy. At the same time, local cityscape artist **Ursula Barton** will paint a large-scale 'foodscape mural' in the Old Salt space, creating a lasting imprint of the night. Participants will then be able to taste the food, admire the art, and sample some Willamette Riesling and Pinot Noir from **Brooks Winery**.

"I'm excited to have the opportunity to find inspiration in something as personal as the food we choose to put in our bodies," says Barton, an alumna of the Pacific Northwest College of Art. "In my mural career I have depicted Portland in different ways, and this is a great way to bring food and the city together."

A collaboration between UNISG and local partners, the Eco-Gastronomy project aims to develop an ecological-philosophical vision of food, gathering success stories and best practices from multiple regions around the world. For more information, see the attached backgrounder or go to www.unisg.it/ecogastronomy.

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For event details, see the attached poster.

For additional details, see: www.oldsaltpdx.com | www.ursulabarton.com | www.brookswine.com

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BACKGROUND

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WHAT IS ECO-GASTRONOMY?

Eco-gastronomy is a concept that views food systems through an ecological-philosophical perspective. It is an approach that merges the 'thinking-doing' of food (gastronomy) with an acknowledgement that when we think and do things with food, many different effects are produced. Sometimes these effects happen in real time, and sometimes later; sometimes they happen close to home, and sometimes further away.

Importantly, eco-gastronomy recognizes that food and food systems are made up of material elements, language and representation, and interactive processes. This means that any interaction with food can produce political transformations, environmental and social change, shifts in symbolic and conceptual meaning, as well combinations of all of these.

Eco-gastronomy is not limited to industry, or agriculture, or academia—it encompasses all food realms. It indelibly links food and humans, while bringing attention to the responsibility that all people have for the health and well-being of our food ways—producers, activists, cooks, academics, artists, politicians, and industrialists alike.

To date, the Eco-Gastronomy Project has visited Seoul, Mexico City, Singapore, Dili (Timor-Leste), Edinburgh, Wrocław (Poland), Oslo, Copenhagen, Dublin, Toronto, Quito, and Torino. The final destination for 2016 is Melbourne, Australia.

UNISG AND DAVID SZANTO

The University of Gastronomic Sciences was founded in Italy in 2004 by Slow Food International. It offers undergraduate and graduate programs involving multi-experiential learning in classrooms, workshops, and in the field. The university's aim is to build academic credibility for gastronomy while acknowledging that learning about food takes place through the mind and body, the heart and gut, as well as through all of our senses. To date, nearly 2000 students from 75 countries have attended.

Dr. David Szanto was one of the first English-language master students at UNISG in 2005, going on to work for the school in communications and outreach, as an instructor and program director, and now as UNISG's professor-at-large. In 2015, he earned a PhD in gastronomy from Concordia University in Montreal (Canada), the first of its kind.