



EVERYBODY EATS LUNCH: A COMMUNITY PROJECT IN OMAHA

Have lunch with a stranger.
Record it.
Inspire others to do the same.

Why lunch? Why now?

As we live in an age of social media, some critics suggest we're now all living in our own echo chambers, surrounded by people only like ourselves.

In an ideal world, however, you would be able to meet and talk to anyone. Sometimes we just need the excuse.

Meet **Everybody Eats Lunch**, a community art experiment that encourages strangers to get together for a one-on-one meal. Why? Because no matter how we live or what we believe, food is conversation and conversation is food.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE - OMAHA

1. **Invite** a stranger to lunch (*or email us to be paired with a stranger*)
2. **Eat** lunch donated by one of the project's restaurant participants (*or make a home-made lunch if you prefer to cook*)
3. If you're comfortable, **record** the conversation as a living audio story. This can be low-tech, on your phone.
4. Email the story to us, so that an excerpt can be shared on the Everybody Eats Lunch website. (we will edit all audio to 2 - 10 minute clips)
- 4b. **Inspire** others to have lunch too.

The project is launching in multiple locations: New York, San Francisco, Omaha, the Washington DC area and Puerto Rico.

*The website itself launches in February. We are working with our talented designer friends in San Francisco to create this. Current participants and early adaptors will be considered our "First Eaters" and get central presence and honorable mentions on the site when it launches. There's plenty of surprises along the way!

**Our Facebook page is up.

TIPS

TIP 1:

The experiment surrounding Everybody Eats Lunch is connection: Intimate, analog, emotionally risky, possibly uncomfortable connection. There's no guarantee how it's going to go, and it's just an opportunity to make space for our natural curiosity.

The thing all the lunches have going for them: The act of eating is a universal human ritual, and food itself is a gateway to new experiences. No matter who you eat with, you know they will be hungry for lunch, just like you.

TIP 2:

Make this what you want it to be. We have people on the ground who can be as involved as much or as little as you'd like. Some people are choosing to do this on their own, cooking in their own homes and offices, and then sending us audio. Some people taking us up on the sponsored lunch and asking for help on audio. We have film production volunteers who can come set up professional audio recording before your lunch starts. It's all up to you.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Everybody Eats Lunch was started by Christy Chan, a California-based artist currently in residency at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha. Chan's work examines race, class and power issues in America, often through a lens of nuance and empathy.

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"I believe we are all hungry. Hungry to get past polarizing political conversations and get more personal.....I come from a restaurant background. My family, first generation Chinese immigrants living in Washington, D.C., had a mom and pop restaurant which welcomed all. This was before Chinese restaurants were on every corner, and many people were still scared of food that seemed foreign. I saw first-hand the way food breaks down walls, and how a conversation over food is a gateway to another world or a person's life, their stories and their sense of humor. I believe in those conversations and I believe that despite the constant hum of social media and our so-called connected lives, we are hungry for more connection and perhaps hungry for the conversations that aren't happening." - Christy Chan