





The making of bread, etc x



Sarah Hudson <@
to Zoe Thompson-Moore ▾

Sun 21/07/2019 2:28pm

Kia ora Zoe,

I hope all is well with you and your whānau. In light of your ongoing Enjoy project *The making of bread, etc.*, can we have some bread chats?

We have had a great celebratory and nostalgic birthday week for Te Pō's fourth time around the sun. I bought some bagels to eat on her birthday as that was the first thing I ate after seven hours of labour, and probably more importantly, ten looong months of hyperemesis. Bagels with Sweet Chilli Philly was the first thing that tasted good for the entirety of my pregnancy. This week, when I had bagels for breakfast I felt really, deeply, appreciative. This particular iteration of bagels almost taste like *relief* for me now: relief—my kid is in the world; relief—my body did the thing I needed it to; relief—I've got someone to deliver toasted goodness to me after a long night; relief.

These really strong feelings about bagels got me thinking about other bread-based memories. Do you have a particularly bready memory, and was that a catalyst to *The making of bread, etc.*?

Ngā mihi mahana,
Sarah



Zoe Thompson-Moore <@
to Sarah Hudson ▾

Tue 23/07/2019 7:47pm

Kia ora Sarah,

I love hearing this story about bread from you! It's something I'm really enjoying about this project—bread is symbolic and evocative and people love talking about it. Last night I took some bread along to share with our te reo Māori class. Someone else happened to bring soup, which was a very happy coincidence. On our whakatā, we were sitting around eating and then the stories started coming out. Someone remembered their Nan's rēwena, another person talked about their Polish friend who uses fermented milk to make bread and yet another taura is now planning to bring along the bread they make to share with us all next week!





It feels good to take bread along to class because it was a friend from the wānanga who shared a portion of their sourdough “mother” with me last year, and which got me back into baking bread. A couple of years prior to this, my first sourdough mother had died a slow, quiet death in the back of the fridge. The demands of simultaneously breastfeeding my youngest while attempting to build Lego with my four-year-old soon got the better of my best-laid plans to regularly bake bread. At the time I was gifted the new mother, my *motherload-motherlode* compost project was drawing towards completion.^[1] Throughout this project I had been meditating on *labour, maintenance, attention, care, interdependence, generosity, time, fermentation, decay, transformation, reproduction, proliferation* — there was a resonance here. Suddenly I couldn’t stop thinking about making bread.

Here are a handful of my childhood bread memories: homemade potato-bread rolls in my lunchbox at school; Dad making Stollen (representing the swaddling clothes of Jesus) at Christmas and Hot Cross Buns at Easter; if we were lucky, the occasional raspberry-filled pink icing bun from the local dairy on Sunday after church (you had to order ahead); getting a free bread roll from Woolworths Church Corner while dragging our heels around the supermarket with Mum; a family friend from the US making cornbread and chilli...

I have more bread memories from other times of my life, but perhaps I have shared enough for now.

Looking forward to hearing from you again soon,

Ngā mihi nui,
Zoe

P.S. As I am writing this email a small person is using my leg as a jungle gym, typical eh ;-)



Sarah Hudson <[redacted]@[redacted]>

to Zoe Thompson-Moore ▼

Wed 24/07/2019 11:09am

Hmmm that computer + kid juggle that I know all too well. In our whare, it’s my lap that becomes the most alluring whenever my hands hit the keyboard. Which results in parts of my brain having to separate to write an email and to manage an extra pair of small hands trying to contribute. In saying that, I am trying to type quietly because I can hear happy blocks tapping on the wooden floor in the next room. Fingers-crossed for swift and silent correspondence ha ha.

Thank you for the bread-memory feast! It’s such a treat to reflect on some of the more ubiquitous elements of life — I think that’s where *The making of bread, etc.* is really

[1]. Zoe Thompson-Moore’s project *motherload-motherlode* took place over six months between the autumn equinox and Beltane 2018. The project was undertaken as part of Zoe’s year-long participation in an Artist Residency in Motherhood. It involved the gathering of household materials for a compost heap built in the artist’s garden, which was subsequently distributed at an open studio held to mark the end of her participation in the residency.



powerful. The output of this project is a communicative gesture: centring the seemingly universal understanding of bread, and its associated labour, touching on all of the elements of *motherload-motherlode*, and more, taking into consideration the participants' (audiences? viewers? eaters?) own interpretations of *The making of bread, etc.*

Through following *motherload-motherlode* on Instagram and as a part of the Artist Residency in Motherhood, I am in awe of your ability to develop visual language derived from “the domestic.” I point to a creepy, deep-rooted misogyny that I was exposed to at art school where notions of the domestic, if not all female artists making work about being female, were met with eye-rolls from under wiry eyebrows. So much so, when I was pregnant, I was scared of any aspect of motherhood proliferating in my art. It took a bit of unpacking, and perhaps I still am, but seeing work like yours being so unapologetically present and strong in turn gives me strength.

In 2014, I moved to Whakatāne as soon as I found out my dad was sick. It turns out we only had four months left together. I dedicated my days to cooking every meal he requested; lots of those were meals from his childhood. Boil up with doughboys, curried sausages, smoked fish, but the one thing I couldn't manoeuvre was rēwana. Quite a large pre-requisite here, I've never made bread before (or since!), but I tried to raise our own potato bug, which yielded something that looked and tasted like a sour rock. Then out of bloody-mindedness, I sliced that rock really thin and toasted it. It was kind of like biscotti?! With plenty of butter and golden syrup, my then quite-sick dad mustered up the acting skills to pretend that my “rēwana” was ok.

Bread is *maintenance, care, attention, interdependence, generosity, time, fermentation, decay, transformation, reproduction, proliferation.*

The making of bread, etc. is *maintenance, care, attention, interdependence, generosity, time, fermentation, decay, transformation, reproduction, proliferation.*

Ngā mihi maioha,
Sarah

P.S. I wrote this with two hands! The other, smaller, two hands are still making beach scenes out of blocks—win!



Zoe Thompson-Moore <[redacted]@[redacted]>
to Sarah Hudson ▾

Wed 31/07/2019 6:22pm

Kia ora anō,

How's your week going? Loved seeing your pics on Instagram of your hands with the strapping worn through as you get



stuck into this next round of Mata Aho mahi! I so admire all that you manage to achieve between you, with your four brains, eight hands!

Thinking more about the juggle, a key part of this project is about continuing to explore approaches to creative practice that are really integrated with my everyday life. It's grounded in an understanding of home as a critical, creative, re/productive space and the potential of the household as a learning community/community of practice. A place where cultures—as well as people—are made and remade. I also really value play and the potential it has as a transitional space. I love that while I've been mucking around with high hydration sourdough, the big kid has been equally absorbed as he experiments alongside me with making slime!

In *Queer Phenomenology*, theorist Sara Ahmed begins by unpacking what it takes for the writer to get to the writing table.^[2] This re-orientation of attention can help us consider how it is that worlds and people take shape, unpacking the apparent givenness of the everyday. I'm particularly interested in bringing things that are usually in the background and making them front and centre of my creative inquiry. Paying attention to those things that might otherwise be thought of as “barriers,” “distractions” or “interruptions” to practising.

By reconsidering something like bread in all its everyday ubiquity, it is possible to begin to trace paths to any number of very specific and particular locations in space/time. There are personal histories, cultural histories, economic histories and political histories of bread. I wonder about the traditions of my English, Manx, Irish and Scottish ancestors. Specifically, that of working-class culture, institutions, consciousness, customs and practices before and during the enclosures, the agricultural revolution and the colonisation of Aotearoa. Following the occupation at Ihumātao as it has intensified over this past week and appreciating the history of that place as a site of food production, I think about how wheat, flour and bread have shaped relations between Māori and Pākehā from the nineteenth century and beyond.

Back to this idea of what you pay attention to... the way you describe making food for your dad in the last months of his life, speaks so strongly to me of taking care. We show our care for people through repeated acts of attention, which in turn is how we develop and maintain attachment. As we only have a limited bandwidth of attention to give it reminds me that we direct it to what really counts.

Ngā mihi nui,
Zoe

[2]. Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).



Postscript

Sophie Davis

Capacity to host

The making of bread, etc. by artist Zoe Thompson-Moore focuses on the politics of food, labour, hospitality and collaboration. For almost a year, Zoe's been baking bread with others to share with Enjoy's community at certain events or occasions, a project that developed from ongoing discussion and recipe sharing with other home bakers.

From the outset, we discussed that each iteration of *The making of bread, etc.* would happen "as needed and as possible," with an open-ended timeline, working around the commitments and desires of those involved. We don't often get to work this way in a space like Enjoy, where most projects are tied to a specific time period and we'll labor—often with a frenzied sense of urgency—to pull something off, an exhibition perhaps being the ultimate example of this!

Hosting and being in conversation around *The making of bread, etc.* has facilitated a kind of slow-burning keeping in touch. We or Zoe might become busy for a few weeks (often longer), but there's still been a mutual commitment to keep things going. We'll get back in touch and jump on the phone to chat about when the next occasion for sharing bread could be, aligning her schedule with Enjoy's, and what she's been baking recently. To date, there have been six iterations of *The making of bread, etc.*

Image: Zoe Thompson-Moore, *The making of bread, etc.*, for knotting workshops with Wai Ching Chan, 4–5 May 2019.

May 2019



Four white sourdough loaves were baked over two days and made into sandwiches with cheese, lettuce, tomato and pesto for shared lunches at knotting workshops with artist Wai Ching Chan.

June 2019



Two brightly coloured turmeric and fennel seed loaves were served with peanut butter, coffee, tea and biscuits for a panel discussion on the future of the Enjoy library.

August 2019



For the opening of the Left Bank gallery space, two rustic spelt sourdough loaves were baked onsite. They were served with dukkah, butter and other condiments, alongside wine, beer and food from Enjoy's neighbours Viva Mexico.

October 2019



"Engineer's bread," described by Zoe as an easy yeasted wholemeal loaf made in a tin, was baked for a workshop with Ōtautahi Kōrerotia, exploring their methods of collaborating. Served with butter, the bread was also accompanied by roast vegies prepared by the ŌK crew.

November 2019



Zoe baked white bread rolls from her childhood and Hōhua Thompson made fry bread to share at *Tunu Parāoa*, a discussion about bread making and whakapapa. There was also golden syrup, butter, jam, coffee and tea.

February 2020



Sourdough baked by Zoe at home was shared with the Thorndon Trust at a welcome for Enjoy's summer resident Daegan Wells at the Rita Angus Cottage. It was served with olive oil for dipping, prosecco, kombucha and a watermelon salad made by one of the Trustees.



Images from the previous page:

Zoe Thompson-Moore, *The making of bread, etc.*, for knotting workshops with Wai Ching Chan, 4–5 May 2019.
 Zoe Thompson-Moore, *The making of bread, etc.*, for Common Knowledge: an open conversation on libraries learning and public space, 25 May 2019.
 Zoe Thompson-Moore, *The making of bread, etc.*, for openings of Wai Ching Chan *Wishing Well* and Matavai Taulangau *Ma'u Pe Kai*, 10 August 2019.
 Zoe Thompson-Moore, *The making of bread, etc.*, for Developing an emerging practice, an open kōrero with Māia Abraham, 16 October 2019.
 Zoe Thompson-Moore, *The making of bread, etc.*, for *Tunu Parāoa/Making bread*, 2 November 2019.
 Zoe Thompson-Moore, *The making of bread, etc.*, for Welcome for 2020 Summer Resident Daegan Wells, 8 February 2020.

Sharing bread is currently on hiatus for a little bit, but we've been continuing to talk about things as the interview with Sarah's been coming together.

When Zoe's project kicked off last year, we were in the midst of configuring the layout and design of Enjoy's new home in Left Bank arcade. At that time, a longstanding difficulty was our practical capacity to host people, due to a tiny kitchen and lack of any space to hold meetings on site during opening hours. There was enthusiasm that a kitchen/eating and drinking area could become the heart of Enjoy, a hangout zone where people could make a cup of coffee and feel at home. Thanks to plumbing and practicality, we couldn't find a way to make this work without having a weird, possibly nonsensical gallery space—or spending so much money putting in pipes we'd go broke!—so the kitchen ended up in its final resting place, tucked away in the back corner of the building.

There's a lot that I could go into thinking about relationships between art institutions and Zoe's area of interest. As someone working in a small organisation that prides itself on close, supportive relationships with artists, there are all sorts of cultural and power dynamics around the nature of work in this context and its relationship to hospitality and manaakitanga (and related concepts of "care," "love," "generosity," "responsibility" and "emotional labour" that are currently undergoing further interrogation in the field of cultural production). These dynamics exist in relatively small gestures such as the kind of food and drink supplied for an opening or artist talk, to much bigger questions around working relationships.

So far, Zoe's project has created social space and an attunement to food and hospitality, gently reaching out into a much bigger field of inquiry. When I look back on *The making of bread, etc.* there are a lot of joyful and delicious times. I think about being in the kitchen, smelling a loaf in the oven while watching Zoe knead dough and talking about things; tucking into warm white bread rolls and fry bread with golden syrup, sipping hot coffee on a really rainy Wellington afternoon; and delivering freshly baked and sliced bread to hungry and appreciative workshop participants. But I also think about the unresolvable tensions around the dynamics of hospitality and generosity in art and life, the source of both the feel-good aspects of Zoe's project and its grit and politics.



Image: Zoe Thompson-Moore, Research image, Siân Torrington, 2020.



Recipe

From Rhonda Whitehead
at Kotare Trust

Makes two loaves

600ml cold water
300ml boiling water
1 Tbsp treacle, golden syrup or honey
1 Tbsp surebake yeast
1 dessert spoon salt
7 cups wholemeal flour
(or substitute some flour with bran,
kibbled wheat or seeds)

No knead wholemeal bread

Put hot water in a bowl and dissolve the honey. Add the cold water and then the yeast. Leave in a warm place for 10–15 minutes.

Put all the dry ingredients in a large bowl. Grease two loaf tins. Scatter seeds on the bottom of the tins. Put aside in a warm place.

Add the yeast mixture to the dry mixture and mix by hand for three minutes.

Put half of the mix into each tin. Drizzle the top of each loaf with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Leave to rise in a warm place for 30–60 minutes. Don't over-rise. While the bread is rising, pre-heat the oven to 190°C.

Bake for 40–45 minutes. Remove the loaves from their tins and wrap in a damp tea towel until cool.

Keeps well in the fridge and freezes well.

Image: Zoe Thompson-Moore, Research image, Rhonda Whitehead, 2020.



Contributors



Based in Whakatāne, Sarah Hudson (Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe) is a visual artist, mother and is currently the curator of Te Kōputu a te whanga a Toi, the Whakatāne Library and Exhibition Centre.

Sarah has spent a year in the curator role at Te Kōputu, and is proud to have developed exhibitions such as *PUNA*, which showcased emerging contemporary Māori artists, *Pā Harakeke*, an exhibition of local raranga students at Te Wānganga o Aotearoa and *M/other*, an exploration of motherhood, mothering and the maternal by artists from around Aotearoa.

With an interest in exploring concepts of tino rangatiratanga, representation, Māori knowledge systems and social justice, Sarah has exhibited widely in her individual practice and with the Mata Aho Collective.



Zoe Thompson-Moore is a Pākehā artist based in Te Awakairangi Lower Hutt. Her practice is located at the intersection of art and the everyday; navigating the edges between creative practice and maintenance work; focusing on social fabric—in particular, sites and lived experiences of reproductive labour.

The artist would like to acknowledge the generosity of the following breadmakers: Kushla Mercer, Kirby Nicholas whānau, Marie Russell, Rhonda Whitehead, Siân Torrington, Hōhua Thompson, Raffaele Caroppo and Geoff and Helen Moore.