

Martha Friedman

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By Colin Darke, *Hyperallergic.com*, November 24, 2011

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Sensitive to Art & its Discontents

Martha’s Tongue or Our Pseudo-Sexual Relationship With Food

by **Colin Darke** on November 24, 2011

DETROIT — This Thanksgiving you should pay attention to the texture of your food, how you use your tongue to lash out and taste your food, and how you digest your food. Why? Isn’t that kind of creepy? Um, yes, it is kind of creepy, and lusting over your food may upset your family members’ stomachs. But Brooklyn-based sculptor Martha Friedman is preoccupied with food and digestion, and she creates awesome food art, proving there is some real artistic value in food lust. Maybe you should leave it to the experts though.



Martha’s tongues.

Friedman creates sculptures that are jovial, yet with her sculptures she is still able to explore a deeper subtext that challenges and delights the viewer. She explores her personal narrative of everyday objects and everyday perceptions having a different, sometimes surprising and alternative meaning.

Here’s a good example — she may create a large half eaten waffle to start a dialogue about the viewer’s relationship with the food. She highlights the viewer’s internal digestive process by making the viewer come face to face with it. She also adds a sexual element to some of her work. We all eat, and at times people have a strange pseudo-sexual relationship with their food — pay attention to the groans and sweat during Thanksgiving dinner followed by the post-coital triumphant nap.

Martha’s imagery captivates viewers because of its size and its novel context and arrangement. Her most successful works (and probably most disquieting) employ an enlarged cow tongue. You see all of the details of a protruding tongue as it delicately balances an olive or as it peeks under a black tarp. With this work she escapes criticism that her work merely pays homage to Claes Oldenburg. There is nothing pop about

So here is a selection of her sculptures for you to enjoy – this is your foreplay before you attack that sexy Turkey.