

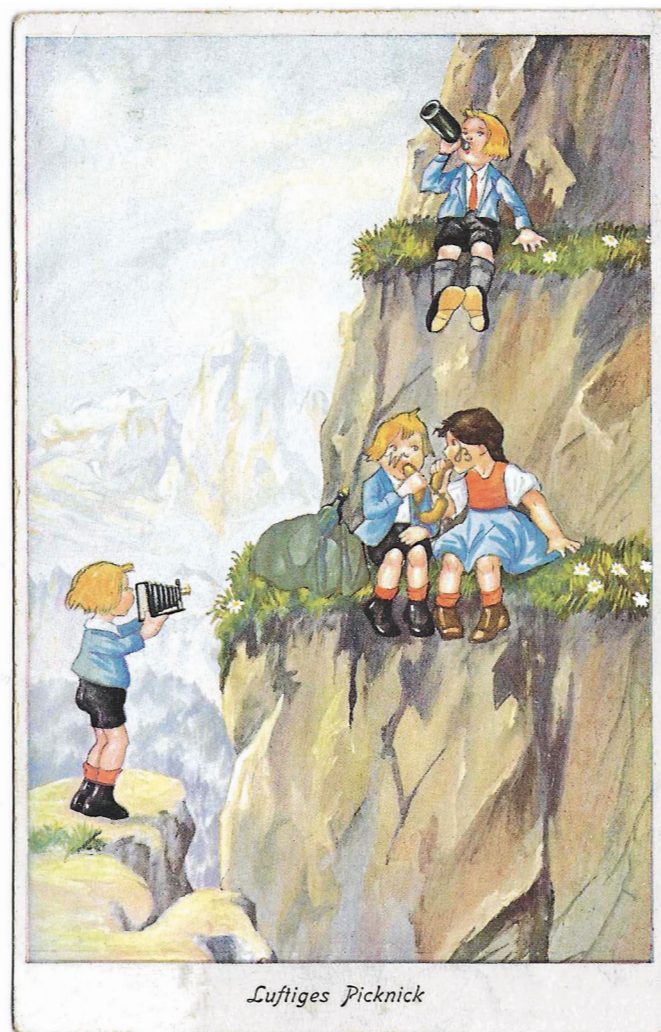
Julia Schäfer

Nur die Sehnsüchtigen

Only Those Who

**Only those who know the Longing
Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt**



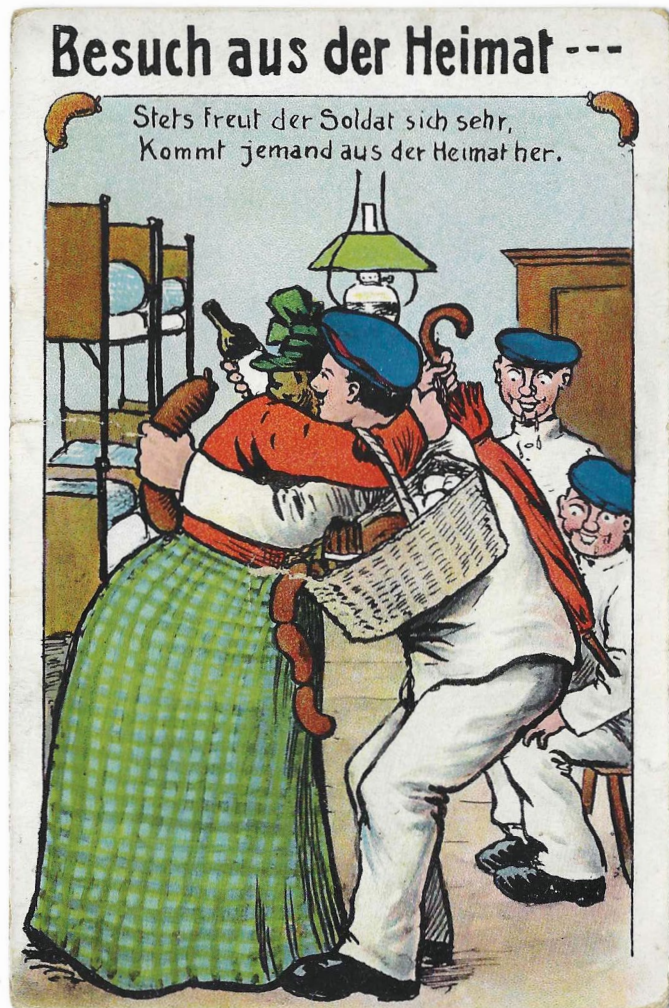




II. Butcher standing in front of a heart of sausages, hand-drawn postcard, 9 x 14 cm, 1906



III. Und wer ein treues Lieb' gefunden – / And those who have found true love –, postcard, 9 x 14 cm, 1899



IV. Besuch aus der Heimat / Visit from home, postcard sent as field post, 9 x 14 cm, 1917



V. Der erste Kuß! / The first kiss!, postcard sent as field post, 14 x 9 cm, 1916



Julia Schäfer: "Only those who know the Longing", Institut français Stuttgart, 2024, installation views



4-Channel Video, 5'40"
5-Channel Sound, 5'40"
Unimog Benches (c. 1950)
Tension Belts of the Bundeswehr (c. 1970–1990)
Vinyl Plot, 252 x 293 cm
Wood, Rough-Sawn

Only Those Who Know the Longing
Mélanie Scheiner

"Just as an explorer penetrates deeply into new and unknown lands, one makes discoveries in the everyday life, and the erstwhile mute surroundings begin to speak a language which becomes increasingly clear. In this way, the lifeless signs turn into living symbols and the dead is revived."
Wassily Kandinsky

Julia Schäfer was scouring online auctions for vintage photographs of German abattoirs and meat packing plants when she noticed something strange. Nestled among the monochrome snapshots of white-coated butchers and gleaming facilities was a postcard from the war. Romantic and even slightly humorous, its illustration cast a sausage as the object of longing and affection. Interest piqued, Schäfer continued to dig around different archives and auction sites, slowly amassing a collection of similar artifacts and uncovering a veritable phenomenon: what was this genre of sausages and soldiers?

In one postcard (IX.), a corpulent corporal sits angled in the corner of a room. On the table, an opened package; in his left hand, the letter that came with it. A cigarette hangs from his bemused lips as he looks down at the delivery's contents: a little flaccid sausage resting in his right palm.

Beneath the illustration it reads:
"True love this is not!"

Could it be that even in wartime, size matters? Or is it the substitution of something more (amorously) substantial with such a paltry snack¹ that disappoints? One thing is clear: the sausage is a symbol of deception. And that is possibly the truest thing one can say about this comestible pillar of our shared civilization²; that since entering the cultural lexicon in the plays of Ancient Greece³ (if not earlier), has continuously served across millennia as an aesthetic shorthand for inanity, absurdity, lechery, abjection, violence, decadence, as well as

plenitude, frugality, collective identity, industrial progress, and just about anything else you can stuff in its casing.

For the better part of a decade I've been consumed, one could say, by the presence of sausages in art. On a very basic level, this is because sausages are funny. But it's also, I think, because of their extreme obviousness, what the poet Ariana Reines ascribes to "subjects or phenomena that are so ubiquitous we think we know what they mean, and what we feel about them."⁴ The sausage – and by extension, processed meats (Aufschnitt) – is immediately legible, and presents to the lazy viewer several low-hanging fruits of meaning, which typically fall into the baskets of phallogocentric lust, scatology, or stupidity.

Yet this tired ubiquity has hardly stopped artists from continuing to employ the symbol in their work. And the vast spectrum of themes, subjects, and media broached within said works led me, in 2016, to begin amassing a personal archive provisionally titled The Sausage Museum of Modern Art. What happens to the signifier when a symbol is exhausted beyond meaning? When its contents have been so thoroughly expressed there remains nothing but its translucent husk? Much like the food item itself – which has historically made use of all the leftover, less palatable scraps of the animal, transforming them into a seasoned pulp bolstered by fillers and concealed within a handy form – the sausage-as-symbol is infinitely capacious and ambivalent. An emblem of heterogeneity itself; a metaphorical catch-all. It is precisely the obviousness of the sausage object, its undercutting silliness, that makes of the meat tube an object of deception, a Trojan horse.

"Ceci n'est pas un saucisson."

When Julia Schäfer invited me to contribute a text to accompany *Only Those Who Know the Longing*, her exhibition at the Institut français Stuttgart, I imagined it was because my passion for sausages preceded me. Yet as we exchanged over Kaffeeplatsch (and I spent more time with her works) it

became clear that our mutual investment in sausage art belied deeper shared interests, a certain sensibility. Our conversations quickly shifted to questions of family history, the transmission of memories, intergenerational trauma, and loss. The responsibility – as members of a so-called ‘hinge generation’ to which those born in the early 1990s, in respect to the events of World War II, belong – of preserving a past one is heir to, but didn’t experience first hand. These are subjects I feel stalked by, whose themes I find myself unable to escape in my writing⁹.

“To haunt” originally comes from the Old Norse heimta (“to bring home, to fetch”), from which the German Heimat is derived. For Schäfer, the sausage is nothing if not heimisch, because for the past four generations, her family has operated a butchery in a small village in Southern Germany. But to offer this as the primary reason for the presence of sausage in Schäfer’s oeuvre would be too obvious, too reductive. Her exploration of the above-mentioned themes (albeit in an externalized fashion, projected outward and away from the artist’s own life, from her working class background and premature losses) are prefigured by earlier, meatless, works. There are interventions like “bräh-ha” (2021)⁵, a site-specific installation that activated the bombarded ruins of Richard Döcker’s contributions to the Weissenhof Estate, destroyed in 1944, and “Surface Treatments – 150 Jahre Zeit” (2023)⁶, a collective “site-critical” intervention, using architecture and archival artifacts, into the Villa Merkel – Galerie der Stadt Esslingen, some 15 kilometers from Stuttgart. Concurrently, there is a draw towards the abject, erotic, and bodily⁷ throughout her practice. Take, for example, the photographic suite “Women Crying” (2020), or the more recent hand-stitched work “money shot” (2024) – which both feature screenshots of women’s faces taken from pornos and are cropped in such a way that the viscous fluid slicking their faces resembles tears – which explore “the desire for true sensations in the alienating age of cyber-erotica. In “The Aesthetics of Loss” (2024), these two lines of inquiry begin to

interlace. Printed on translucent pig intestines, otherwise used as sausage casing, the series features sensuous self-portraits with a whiff of kink, focusing on close-up body parts clad in chainmail aprons and gloves (like the ones worn by meat handlers to prevent cutting injuries), evoking the dialectic relationship between pleasure and pain, violence and sustenance, the vulnerability of flesh. Indeed, it seems that we can never run too far away from the contexts that shape us, the ghosts that haunt us. They always find a way back in, only we can decide whether that’s through the rear window or the front door⁸.

In 11 minute video, “Cling Film”, was Schäfer opening that door. In its first iteration at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design MFA degree show in Tel Aviv, the film was presented in an immersive installation comprising clinical, white-tiled walls, swine-colored flooring, and an industrial metal bench upholstered in the same fleshy pink fabric. On a single monitor, a sausage carefully wrapped in plastic and secured at both ends with tape slowly comes into focus against a white screen. This is how Schäfer’s mom used to pack them up for her when she was a little girl. The artist’s voice, delivered in an hushed ASMR-like rasp, channels Roland Barthes’ “Camera Lucida”, a meditation on grief and memory in relation to the photographic medium. Like Barthes, Schäfer is searching for traces of her mother. Like Barthes, the images in question that flash before us in “Cling Film” are familial in nature. Unlike Barthes, they came from a family album, rediscovered by the artist following her grandmother’s passing, which contained photographs, not of children, grandchildren, aunts, cousins, etc. but of sausages – tons and tons of various sausages in myriad displays and arrangements – from the family’s butcher⁹.

The video is an assiduous index of specific dates and facts, infused with the kind of fantastical filling-in that characterizes post-memory⁸: the day her grandfather, suffering from dementia, could no longer remember how to make sausage. The day

her once-teenaged mother danced to her favorite ABBA song for the first time. The period when the artist began to unlearn her Swabian dialect. As though by ascribing specific dates to events either unknowable to the artist or that unfolded along an imprecise durational stretch, paired with clips of home videos from Schäfer’s childhood – evidentiary examples of Barthes’ “ça a été”, the “that which was here” (and that which is no longer here)⁹ – she might arrest her family’s recession into a historical past (“Is History not simply that time when we were not born?”¹⁰). Or, at the very least, temper the inevitable process by which the umbilical cord of memories that ties us to our forebears, the smells, sounds, and stories that nourish our first notions of self, distends into a gossamer thread. Reflecting on the piece, Schäfer (a vegetarian) describes how in her uncle’s unwillingness – or inability – to discuss the past, he only talks about the family trade. She evokes the image of a long chain of sausages passing along a production line, across generations, as a metaphor for the transmission of family history, but also its obfuscation. The passing along of omissions and secrets like embolisms of mystery. The “missing link”¹¹.



In Ken McMullen’s 1983 film “Ghost Dance”, the evergreen Pascale Ogier interviews the philosopher of phantoms, Jacques Derrida. He meditates on an idea

borrowed from the psychoanalysts Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, that posits the theories of ghosts and mourning as two sides of the same coin. “Normally, in mourning one internalizes the dead. One takes the dead within themselves and assimilates them... Whereas in mourning which doesn’t develop normally, that is to say a mourning that goes wrong, there is no true internalization. There is what Abraham and Torok call ‘incorporation’ Meaning, the dead are taken within us but they do not become part of us. They just occupy a particular place in our bodies.” Mourning as indigestion. Ghosts who sit heavy on the stomach, or lodge in our teeth, drawing all our waking (and dreaming) attention towards these individual part¹².

I like thinking of ghosts this way, as foreign agents of nebulous pain. Food is always getting stuck in my teeth. Such was the case one evening at an Argentinian steakhouse in Paris when I was twenty years old. I had an older posh French boyfriend, whose corporate law career and bespoke suits lent him an air of worldliness and savoir-faire that impressed me. One of the few people whose approval he desperately craved was his older brother, who was better looking and supposedly favored by their parents. The night of our introduction, the brother had come in on the Eurostar for a double date, and had been stood-up by his model girlfriend du jour before even pulling into Gare du Nord. From our little corner table in the cove-like cantina, the brother directed all of his attention to me, and my boyfriend all of his attention to his brother, and I, all of my attention to the inflamed gums behind my right incisor, discreetly trying to liberate a morsel of meat that had wedged itself between my teeth while still appearing engaged. “Tell me about yourself,” he prompted. I abandoned my gingival enterprise and unthinkingly began telling the story of how my parents wound up in New York from Paris, and in Paris from Algiers and Germany and Ukraine before that. How my father was adopted by another Jewish family during the war with false papers, who hid and raised him until his real parents returned, and so on¹³.

“I asked about you, not your family.”

I felt embarrassed, like a ventriloquist's dummy with no essential identity or mind of my own. I didn't have the words then to articulate the extent to which the family events that transpired before my birth, and intersected with major historical and political events, indelibly shaped my interests, character, and way of being in the world years after. How by virtue of my distance from these people and events in time and place, the experiences transmitted to me through their stories and behaviors were so deep and affective "as to seem to constitute memories in their own right."

The opening of André Breton's "Nadja" (1928) – which starts with a simple question: who am I? – turns on the French proverb: "Dis-moi qui tu hantes, je te dirai qui tu es." The verb is employed in its original sense: "to visit often" and "to continually seek the company of." Though, as the narrator continues, "...this last word [haunt] is misleading, tending to establish between certain beings and myself relations that are stranger, more inescapable, more disturbing than I intended. Such a word means more than it says, makes me, still alive, play a ghostly part." As Derrida pinpoints in his theory of hauntology, haunting is above all a temporal disturbance, a scrambling of the linear past-present-future by which History and reason abide.

"If I am who I am haunted by, then those doing the haunting are also haunted by me. The space that the that-which-haunts-us occupies in our lives constitutes a form of obsession in the haunted, which is in a sense also a way of haunting: obsession understood as the mind frequenting, or continually seeking the company of, certain events, people, emotions, etc."

Like the two ends of a sausage, haunting is bidirectional, in that the living can haunt the past just as much as they can be haunted by it. And so Schäfer was scouring online auctions for vintage photographs of German abattoirs, once again searching for traces of her own family's history.

What to make of this strange phenomenon she uncovered, the prevalence of wartime postcards that conflate desire and

longing with the phallic crudeness and inherent brutality of sausage? These artifacts resemble a case study one would expect to find in "Male Fantasies", the sociologist Klaus Theweleit's seminal study of the psychological and social underpinnings of fascism pertaining to gender and sexuality. Blending psychoanalysis, literature, and cultural theory, Theweleit focuses on the fantasies of the Freikorps, paramilitary units who operated in the period between World War I and the rise of Nazi Germany, to illuminate the construction of male identity within this context. Theweleit describes how these men developed an armored sense of masculinity, rooted in discipline, violence, and the suppression of vulnerability. This "soldierly" identity was seen as a defense against perceived threats from both external enemies and internal emotions, which to the proto-fascists were symbolized by the female body and the flood.

The overwriting of the feminine with sausage in the postcards mirrors the events of "Cling Film": where any possible trace of the artist's mother is supplanted by photographs of sausage, and discussions of her family's history and trauma are eschewed in lieu of talk about the meat plant. Theweleit writes: "As the woman fades out of sight, the contours of the male sharpen." Only those who know the longing seizes these contours, extrapolating archival morsels of text, graphic design, and objects – tangible, material pieces of a real historical past – and projects them into the three-dimensional space of the present. Griselda Pollock refers to this as aesthetic wit(h)nessing, "a means of being with and remembering for the other through the artistic act and through an aesthetic encounter." The resulting exhibition thus unfolds like a seance in which Schäfer plays the "ghostly part", muddling the distinction between artist and (spirit) medium.

A polyptych of four vertical monitors loop a selection of postcards the artist has had digitally animated, like a cartoon flip book. Sound infiltrates the gallery three-dimensionally, through more channels than there are screens, impishly pinging around the

visitor. The space is illuminated by natural light and as the short winter days draw to a close, the gallery becomes trench-like. The piece begins:

"It is now exactly 3pm
and the sun has already set.
In an hour and a half
it will be completely dark."

Perpendicular to the wall, a platform of roughly laid wooden planks has been erected, echoing the box of cargo seen in the leftmost postcard/monitor (X.) out of which a cartoon soldier retrieves a throbbing sausage. Two antique Unimog benches, designed in 1948 to transport soldiers on the military vehicle's flatbeds, have been placed on the stage facing the monitors, inviting visitors to step into this bizarre and bawdy resurrection of artifacts. There's something uncanny about the way these static images have been brought to life. The closely cropped framing creates a frieze of simultaneously breathing near-abstractions: cigarette smoke engulfs our corporal's face, while an alpine landscape gives onto a pair of children sucking down beer and sausage in a lady-and-the-tramp fellatory fashion (I.), and so on. There is no camera, of course, but the gaze of whatever "eye" is guiding our attention roves across the postcards' surfaces in a continuous, hovering motion, lulling the viewer into a disorienting trance. Luckily, the benches' seatbelts are still intact, anchoring the objects to the set. Contrary to the playful vignettes, with their exaggerated plops, creaks, and scratches – comically heightened sound effects all handcrafted by a Foley artist – the accompanying narration is intimate, despairing, lustful, and resigned. The gravelly narrator – voiced by Hector, an actor and content creator in the growing sphere of audio erotica – starts and stops, scratching out words and rephrasing thoughts as he addresses the listener directly.

"Can you tell me how to stop obsessing
over somebody who is –"

The text coalesces found field post (letters sent by soldiers on the front back to their loved ones) from both World Wars, more

Barthesian extracts, and the artist's autobiographical musings into one seemingly coherent, but ultimately pseudo first person narration. The cut-up, as a literary technique, is notable here. With its roots in Dadaism and Surrealism (which emerged alongside the period of the postcards in question), it is a method of destabilizing the literary 'self', of subverting the assertion of the Authorial I into a subjective one that is uncertain, tentative and speculative. Who am I? asks Breton. The cut-up, in its heterogeneity of source material and unified appearance, also bears resemblance to the sausage.

Photographs, videos, postcards, and sausages are all mediums of memory, necromantic objects, in that they preserve the shelf life of the dead and gone, extemporally extending our ability to taste, smell, see, hear, and touch them. In a note to his lover, Kafka says: "Writing letters is actually an intercourse with ghosts, and by no means just the ghost of the addressee but also with one's own ghost, which secretly evolves inside the letter one is writing." One of the animations in the exhibition features a black Dachshund salivating before a steaming brick of a blood sausage. On the original postcard (VII.), an accompanying caption quotes the first stanza of a Goethe poem, from which the installation takes its name:

Only those who know the longing
Know what I suffer
Alone and cut off
From every joy,
I search the sky
In that direction.
Ah! He who loves and knows me
Is far away.
My head reels,
My body blazes.
Only those who know the longing
Know what I suffer

The bookended structure of this lugubrious lament, that speaks from the personal to the universal, recalls another German aphorism:

Everything has an end,
only a sausage has two.

1 It should be noted that during World War I, even the smallest of Wieners would've been nothing to sneeze at. The German military relied on "Goldbeater's skins", a.k.a bovine guts, for the hydrogen balloons required in the production of Zeppelins. Each aircraft demanded the intestines of about 250,000 cows, and so a ban on sausage-making was enacted in the Fatherland as well as in allied or occupied parts of Poland, Austria, and northern France.

2 Sausage, as a food item and as a means of conservation by salting and drying, is believed to have been invented approximately 5,000 years ago in Ancient Mesopotamia, and is found in cuisines the world over.

3 Eg. Epicharmus of Kos' comedy Orya ("The Sausage", ca. 500 BC); or Aristophanes' political satire "The Knights" (424 BC), about a sausage vendor who is elected leader of Athens.

4 Ariana Reines, Ann Craven: Twelve Moons. SCAD Museum of Art, 2024. Ed. Daniel S. Palmer, Karma, New York.

5 Julia Schäfer & Ann-Kathrin Müller, CURRENT Festival for Art and Urban Space, Stuttgart, 2021.

6 Ann-Kathrin Müller, Julia Schäfer and Judith Engel, "Surface Treatments – 150 Jahr Zeit", Villa Merkel, Esslingen, 2023.

7 For Freud, the original "Heimat" was the mother's womb, the ultimate home to which no person may return.

8 A term coined by Holocaust historian Marianne Hirsch to describe "the relationship that the 'generation after' bears to the personal, collective, and cultural trauma of those who came before – to experiences they 'remember' only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up...experiences transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to seem to constitute memories in their own right." in "Marianne Hirsch, The Generation of Post-memory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust." Columbia University Press, 2016. p.5

9 Roland Barthes, Camera Lucida.

10 Ibid., p.64

11 See Footnote 8.

12 Literally: tell me who you haunt, and I'll tell you who you are. More commonly, 'you are the company you keep'. Akin to the English maxim, 'you are what you eat', derived from the 19th Century French gastronome Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's "dis-moi ce que tu mange, et je te dirai qui tu es", which alludes less to one's nutritional makeup than to a signifier of one's occupation or class.

13 André Breton, Nadja, 1928. Trans. Richard Howard. Grove Press, New York, 1960. p.7

14 Himself a child of the war, born to a Jewish mother and a "good fascist" father.

15 Klaus Theweleit, Male Fantasies, 1977-78, p.35

16 Let's look again at the postcard of our soldier (IX.). Beneath the printed caption, a hand-scrawled rejoinder reads "Sonst würdest du mir öfter schreiben" ("Otherwise you would write me more often"). It is written in Sütterlin, a loopy scripted typeface developed in 1911 and taught in schools between 1915-41, when the Nazis banned it for being too "chaotic". Despite this, many people of a certain generation, such as Schäfer's grandfather, still write in this way that at a glance is recognizable, but upon closer inspection somewhat cryptic, ungraspable. In the spirit of resurrection that courses through *Only Those Who Know the Longing*, Schäfer worked with the graphic designer Federico Trevisan to render a contemporary view of Sütterlin font that serves as the graphic identity for the artwork and all its supporting materials.

17 Griselda Pollock, Aesthetic Wit(h)nessing in the Era of Trauma, in EurAmerica 40 (2010) 4, pp. 829-86, 831.

18 Julia Schäfer, Only Those Who Know the Longing (2024), at Institut français Stuttgart, DE.

19 Ibid.

20 Franz Kafka, Letters to Milena. Ed. by Willy Haas, translated by Philip Boehm. Schocken Books, 1990.

Meat and Herbs
Ido Nahari

Packages arrived at the war fronts. Dozens of billions of them. Most contained love letters from those left behind. Perhaps photographs of delighted children that have since grown up or recruited to the national cause were sent too. Warm regards from Hildegard. Best wishes from Helmut and Greta. Glass containers with the village marmalade and astronomical, pathological amounts of sausages. Yellow sausages and white sausages. Liver sausages and Frankfurt ones too. Thuringian beef and Bavarian pork. Westphalian veal and Saxonian chicken. Hacked and ground, stuffed and shipped off.

Beginning with the Franco-Prussian War and reaching titanic proportions with the First and Second World Wars, German militaristic culture has erected an improbable patriotic totem. Famed consumable goods that encased longing, violence and affluence. During periods of international conflict, German sausages have become an unspoken national currency. Expressing devotion and a taste of home for the soldiers sent to expand its boundaries, gifting sausages to the storming troopers has developed an entire visual language. Posters and poems, pamphlets and postcards. Blending high culture with the most basic sustenance, sausages elevated the spirits and expanded all appetites. Posed next to the table, a little dog gazes upon a thick, rounded black sausage in one such postcard (VII.). Faced with hunger, an animal becomes no different from a poet. "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt", jokes the text right next to him. Referring to "Only those who know the Longing", a poem written by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, as well as the title of Julia Schäfer's exhibition on the subject. Like the starving hound, Schäfer collected additional postcards featuring soldiers regarding sausages as objects of admiration, love and blatant homoeroticism that emerged in the first few decades of the previous century. Dangling the lavish meat tube in front of him, one postcard that Schäfer presents in her exhibition is of an illustrated soldier who regards his relation to the sau-

sage as one who has "found a faithful lover" (III.). For another animated soldier struck by the miracle of sausage, he must have understood with his stomach full that "love is not an empty delusion after all" (X.). Next to this graceful reunion, a love letter situated in the corner remains sealed. Back then as much as now, Schäfer points out how men depended on the approval of women to engage with phallic objects.

Reasons for packing and dispatching sausages are obvious enough. Containing much-necessitated protein was one such reason. Their preservation methods were another. With letters taking weeks to reach their destination during times of international disputes, sending fresh and rottable products made little sense. What was crucial for those lingering on the homefront was serving the servicemen. Providing for their needs. Responding to his loved one from blistering Russian terrains during the beginning of winter, one appetised soldier, Alfred Brandau was his name, confessed that the "old sausage I've kept has served me well".¹ Nourished, an additional fighter, Karl August Schöler, replied to his loved ones in springtime how he was "most pleased with the package with the sausage, it tasted delicious."²

How the gifted meat was introduced in the letters sent to Alfred and Karl, as well as millions of other soldiers, will forever remain a secret. Fragile blots of ink on thin paper must have been degraded and melted in the Russian snowfields, Belgian rains and Libyan sand dunes. Fascist embraces and little-scribed concerns are forever unretrievable. Together with an entire language of love, care and longing that is just as lost. Because of this, the words of the homesteading women became once again passive, scattered remains. What remains as historical evidence, which Schäfer reintroduces to sight, are letters from men responding to women whose existence is evermore obscured. Fieldpost letters and packages contained all sorts of memories; retrievable and otherwise. Promises. Jokes. Gossip. But unlike words and images that remained out there, it was the sausage that could enter the soldier in a digestive tract. Chewed

and swallowed. Becoming an integral part of them. Blurring the lines between what is inside and what is left outside, this form of wartime grotesque was meant to obscure private parts with public service. Confusing the difference between meat from factories with human flesh exposed in the battlefield. Fodder eating fodder. Distant battlegrounds containing coated corpses and cold sausages. But before their bitter end, what mattered most was for disposable soldiers to get a little special treatment – eine Extrawurst kriegen. Kriegen, a German word meaning both war and receiving, is what binds gifted foodstuffs with absolute carnage and conflict. Krieg, meaning war, evolved into the act of kriegen, the conduct of war or waging it against someone. Forgotten since, the word had an additional derivation, etwas erkriegen, meaning obtaining something in fight. The word was since generalized to all forms of acquisition gained with struggle. Within such a worldview, struggling for a little bite of meat is no different than fighting for additional land.

But Schäfer insists that sausages were not just digestible or poetic. For those in the high castle, sausages remained arbiters of political ambitions and devices of propaganda. Entire world wars were lost and won for the control of sustenance and material. During the First World War, around five billion postcards were produced and sent to German soldiers situated in France. Their hunger demanded a mass slaughter of swine to build up reserves of canned white and red meat. But there was a problem with this form of pork politics. Feeding soldiers resulted in a radical shortage of supplies for civilians and an immense rise in prices across the Fatherland. Large portions of the German population were excluded from meat intake. During that conflict, all those soldiers consumed almost half of all meat available in the Reich. This absolute decimation of livestock, and the subordination of the entire living world to bloating soldiers, starved those forsaken at home. Reporting from Berlin amidst the First World War, one correspondent wrote that amongst the hundreds of “applicants for food, there was not one who had enough to eat for

weeks”. He reported in shock that in the case of “women and children the skin was drawn hard to the bones and bloodless”.³ Interested in retribution but terrified of a similar repetition, the subsequent war was about resources. During one secret speech, the Führer himself explained that the battle was “a battle for food, a battle for the basis for life, for the raw materials the earth offers, the natural resources that lie under the soil and the fruits that it offers to the one who cultivates it.”⁴ Despite the fact that, by the evening of the subsequent World War, Germany was over eighty percent self-sufficient when it came to important matters such as meat, bread and potatoes, those numbers were not good enough for political officials. For the Reich Food Corporation, the sole solution to the impasse was geographical expansion. Germany required millions more hectares of farmland. Forcing farmers to migrate eastwards was planned, desiring to provide goods that the imperial power needed to import, the borders of the national sausage were expanded.⁵

But now, just think about the animals killed too. Guts and intestines suffocated into narrow metal pipes; herbs plucked from the earth. Sausages are, in other words, nothing but blood and soil.

1. Feldpostbriefe aus Stalingrad, Jens Ebert, 2003. „Die erhaltene alte Wurst hat mir dabei prima Dienste geleistet.“, 38.
2. Briefe von der Front, Thomas Bartsch et al, 2020. „Am meisten freute mich das Päckchen mit der Wurst, hat ausgeizent [sic] geschmeckt.“, 29.
3. The Taste of War: World War II and the Battle for Food, Lizzie Collingham, 2011, 31.
4. Ibid, 64.
5. Ibid, 61.

Julia Schäfer: “Only those who know the Longing”, Institut français Stuttgart, 2024, installation views



Animation: Rachel Gutgarts, Maxmilian Trausenecker
 Sound Design: Timo Kleinemeier
 Foley Artist: Alexandre Gneouchev
 Foley Recordist: James Willms
 Voice Actor: Hector Mitchell-Turner
 Construction: Ivan Syrov, Vitaly Schmuck



VI. Hurra, die Feldpost war da! / Hurray, field post arrived!, postcard sent as field post, 9 x 14 cm, 1915



VII. Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt / Only those who know the longing, 14 x 9 cm, ca.1934



VIII. Gestatten sie, sie süße Puppe [...] / Allow me, you sweet doll [...], postcard, 9 x 14 cm, 1905



IX. Die wahre Liebe ist das nicht! / True love this is not!, with handwritten comment: "Sonst würdest du mir öfter schreiben" / "Otherwise you'd write me more often", postcard sent as field post, 9 x 14 cm, 1916





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**INSTITUT
FRANÇAIS**
Stuttgart

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