



EULOGIES FOR THE HUMAN SPECIES

Northern Lights.mn, Minneapolis MN (2017)

in collaboration with Valentine Cadieux, Aaron Marx, Sarah Libertus, Jim Bovino, The Good Acre, Cornercopia Student Organic Farm

Nimble foods for climate chaos.



Making the Best of It



Northern Spark is a yearly all-night arts festival held in June in Minneapolis. Over 20,000 visitors attend. The 2016-17 festivals were dedicated to the theme of climate chaos.

Over those two years, we workshopped and presented projects in collaboration with dandelions, under the umbrella name *Making the Best of It*.

Dandelions have long been a human companion species, only in recent times of lawns are they so despised. They offer a variety of nutrients with animal bodies, soils, and other plants.

Nimble foods for climate chaos.



Making the Best of It



For the first festival in 2016, we earnestly took on the ways in which dandelions offer the macrobiome *and* the microbiome a generous variety of benefits.

We created an encampment reminiscent of a Wes Anderson set, and offered dandelion-centric tours of our weedy meadow, culminating in a food tasting.

Nimble foods for climate chaos.



Making the Best of It



These tours were led by scientists, chefs, farmers, and artists, each of whom brought a unique perspective through which to get to know the oft-disparaged dandelion.

Nimble foods for climate chaos.



Making the Best of It



In 2017, we decided to hold a funeral for the human species, hosted by dandelions.

It was a celebratory memorial party for everybody...
all night long.



The invitation:

“Join us in a ritual festivity that invites you to become more dandelion. From trans-species oration to cow eulogies to intimate ocean tributes, this is the party of Making the Best of It, a communal service compressed into the space of a toast – to how all of us are making the best of it, now and in the future.”



Participants were invited to create a brief eulogy and present it in our intimate setting:

A triangular “parlor” made of greenhouse panels.

The interior was lined with sod— on the floor, the pews, and speaker’s platform.

People would enter, eight at a time.

We took advantage of the long waits.
Waiting in line allowed people time to compose
their thoughts and prepare their toast—





We asked each person to assume a unique role, someone or something not of the human species...

These roles were dispensed at random.





AN EAR OF
CORN

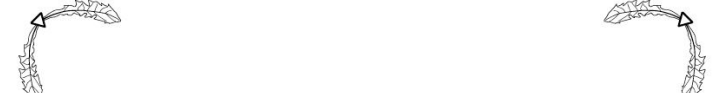




A MOSQUITO



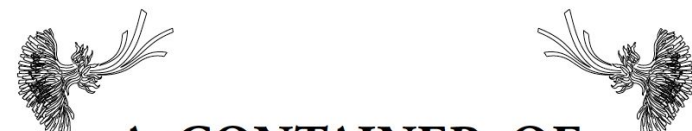
A BAT



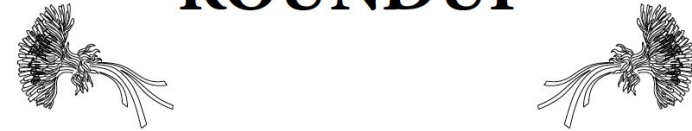
**A PONDFUL OF
BLUE GREEN ALGAE**



A SQUIRREL



**A CONTAINER OF
ROUNDUP**



A SPIDER



A PIGEON



AN APPLE TREE



A HOUSE CAT



There were hundreds of roles to assume



AN AMANITA MUSCARIA
MUSHROOM



A ZIKA VIRUS



A POTATO



A NAKED
MOLE-RAT



A VAT OF BEER



A TICK



A YEAST



BUCKTHORN



A TURKEY

There were hundreds of roles to assume



⇒ SPEAKING NOTES ⇐⇒

Dandelions invite you to contribute to a celebratory memorial to the human species – from the point of view of your assigned non-human identity.

Your tribute is a dedication – it may take the form of an acknowledgement, a eulogy, or similar brief reflection on your relationship to humans.

Please aim for something more than 10 seconds and less than a minute. It may be helpful to think about an opening, a middle, and a closing.

The assembled will then respond with a toast!

We offered some suggestions for composing a eulogy



Each of the eight assembled participants received a cup of dandelion *kvass*: a fermented salty drink made from dandelion root and petal (plus the more traditionally Slavic yellow beet). This was created by Minneapolis fermenter Jim Bovino.



At the end of each eulogy, the drink would be used to make a toast to the now-gone humans.





Mosquito: Well I am bzzzz the mosquito and I have to commiserate with some of my fellow sisters and brothers that have been up here--the dandelion, the portabello mushroom, and the squirrel. I am very happy that the humans are not here anymore. They were trying to eradicate me because I sucked their blood. And you know, although I want to commiserate and say that I miss them, I also have to say I'm conflicted in that I enjoyed their blood, They had the best blood but we're going to be a more popular species now... all the mosquitos. So all in all I think I'm more on your side: A toast to the humans that are gone.

Audience: To the humans that are gone!



Cheese: Hello I am cheese. And I would like to say that I really appreciated hanging out in your house. You may know me from such places as Cub foods and Trader Joes and maybe even a Millennial's refrigerators somewhere. But i would also like to say we've had very good times. We've paired very well with different foods, including the tostito chip. The tostito chip was amazing but we may have overdone some things together. And we may have probably put ourselves out there in too many different foods and maybe we should have just kept things simple and maybe just enjoyed me as myself. But I would like to say there is always room for cheese, and if there is a pairing, keep it simple.

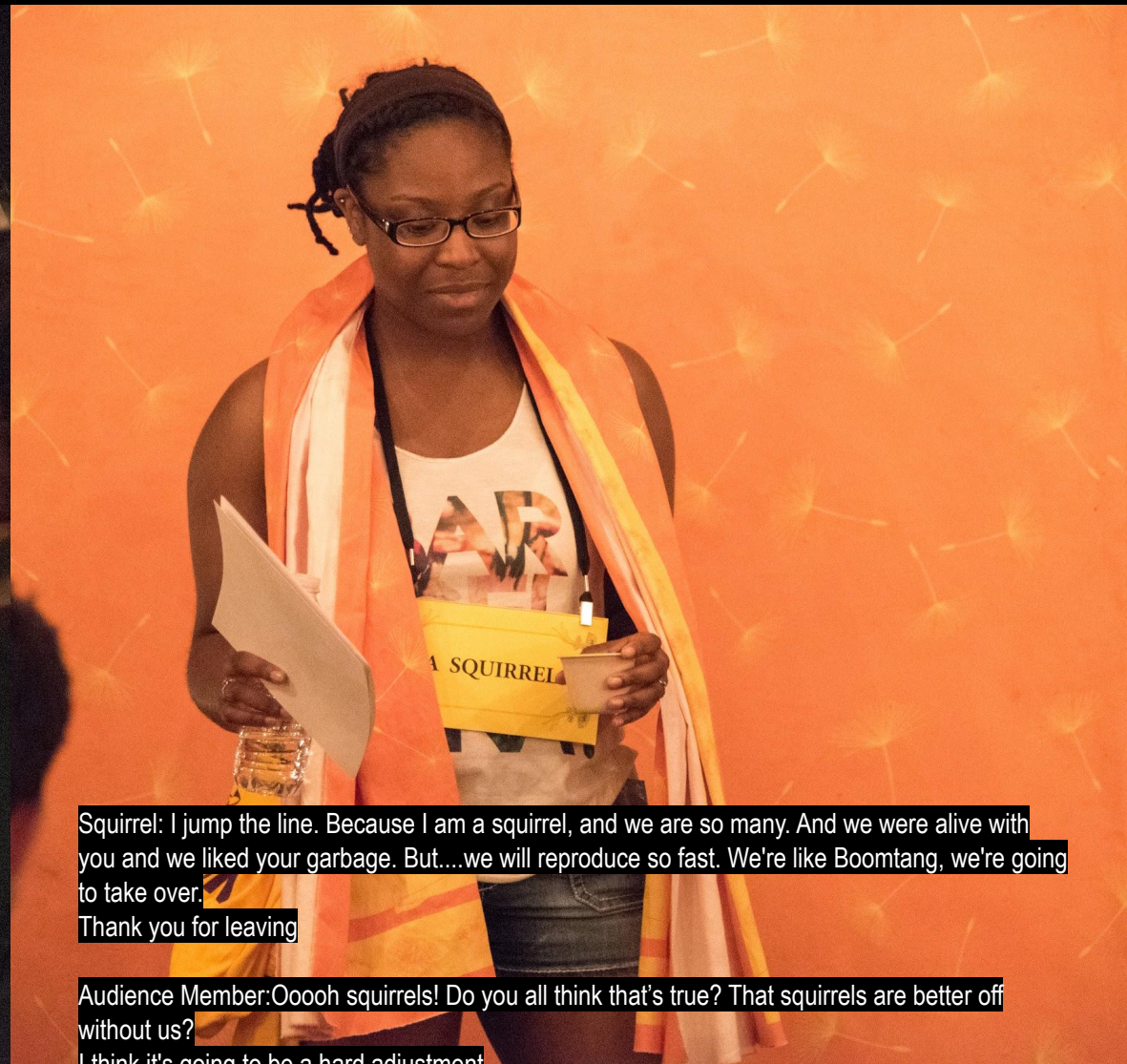
Dandelion: : To simple cheese!



Bumblebee: I'm glad your gone, 'cause now I get to eat more flowers.
And sweet, sweet nectar, and all those delicious sweet dandelions especially,
Audience Member: Damn, those dandelions
Bumblebee: Go get it. Pollen on my legs. Spread it all around.

Dandelion Host: To pollen on your legs
Audience: To pollen on your legs

Dandelion Host: What do you think of the dandelion flower juice?
Bumblebee: It's pretty good
Audience Member: It tastes like bagels
Dandelion Host: It's all dandelion, we are not bagels. We are not cucumbers. Squirrel has just jumped the line!



Squirrel: I jump the line. Because I am a squirrel, and we are so many. And we were alive with you and we liked your garbage. But....we will reproduce so fast. We're like Boomtang, we're going to take over.
Thank you for leaving

Audience Member: Ooooh squirrels! Do you all think that's true? That squirrels are better off without us?
I think it's going to be a hard adjustment
Squirrel: It will--but they will persevere. They're so many
Audience Member: They're pretty clever, they'll figure it out
Squirrel: They wore out,...like birds do. I have two pines trees in my backyard--
Audience Member: Wait you're not a human...Nope. Nope. Not a human., Can't hear you
Audience Member: Squirrels have a backyard?
Audience Member: Yeah, the humans are running around, jumping in the birdeeders



On the way out, after all eight attendees had spoken and toasts were made, they filled a compostable cup with soil and planted a new dandelion seed.

SSSSHHHHHHssshhhhhssh.
You're dead, now. Gone. Hush. Hush.
You can finally enjoy what this planet
was about: beautiful sounds. Birds.
Waves. Wind. Thunder. Ripples.
Splashing. All the sounds your
WORDS, your endless words,
drowned out. Can you hear it? Yes:
Silence.

– Una Chaudhuri

They came,
They grazed
They went away,
the fuckers.

– Curtis Fox