

FEAST ON THIS, ORTOLAN



Ah, yes, the moment of truth, so to speak. The moment when you sit down to formulate (or understand) what it is that you made and why. At its simplest, I really wanted to tell a story; and I think I found a compelling story to tell. So the next question would be how to tell it. I chose to do it through a visual narrative, or rather a series of narrative spaces. I tried to understand what is required to successfully tell a visual story.

What appealed to me about this particular story is that while I felt empathy for the bird I also found myself wishing I could indulge in the experience of eating it. This duality is what I tried to explore while working on this piece. How important is it to know the back story? What thoughts does the viewer leave with after seeing the work? Did I say all that I wanted to say? Probably not, but I made an attempt to.

CHICKEN BREASTS, WITH ORTOLANS "SARAH BERNHARDT" STYLE WITH A JELLY

"Poach a pullet (fattened chicken) in a white veal stock... ; remove the breasts and let cool. Divide each breast into 4 slices, trim them into an oval shape, and coat them with a white chaud-froid sauce. Place a large sliver of truffle on each breast. Keep cold. Separately, choose 12 very fresh and fattened ortolans, pluck them, clean them carefully, and poach them 6-7 minutes in a brown veal stock au champagne. Let them cool in the stock... . With the cooking juices of the fowl, prepare an aspic jelly flavored with Frontignan wine. To serve: Embed a large square platter in a block of ice and pour a thin layer of jelly on the bottom. As soon as the jelly has set, place on the platter 8 slices of perfect foie gras cut to the same size as the slices of pullet; add 1 slice of pullet on top of each slice of foie gras and arrange the ortolans in between the pullet-foie gras slices. Cover the entire dish with the rest of the aspic. To bring to the table, place the block of ice on a silver tray protected by a folded napkin. Note: The square silver platter could be replaced by a crystal bowl."

"Memories of My Life", Georges Auguste Escoffier