

Synopsis

Kitchen Sink Drama was conceived by Natalie Kaye as a site-specific performance in the Betsy Swift Community Kitchen in the Ralph Thornton Centre at 765 Queen Street East Toronto ON, M4M 1H3 in Leslieville. The production features four short plays that were commissioned for the project and given certain guidelines. Playwrights of these plays were each assigned a unique flavour, a type of food, a limitation on cast size and runtime, a knowledge of the site-specific venue, a request for the inclusion of direct address with the audience, and a suggestion that characters should not be given descriptions based on gender, ethnicity, appearance or age.

No thematic links were suggested, but common themes emerged in the writing and the directorial choices: queerness, love, betrayal, loss, alienation, connection, and of course food. The performance consists of these short plays bridged by the introductions of the Waiter character, who acts as a Master of Ceremonies and serves snacks to the audience. Audience members with sensitivities should be advised that the scent of cooking will be noticeable during the performance.

Siren by award-winning playwright Natalie Kaye is the first piece to be performed, an appetizer that is a solo performance by Maggie Cheung. An overworked and abused scullery maid turns to piracy in a thirst for revenge and a hunger for love. The play was inspired by the flavour, salty. Descriptions of physical and sexual violence are featured in this piece. The show is directed by Natalie Kaye.

Bitter Hearts by Laurence Braun-Woodbury is the second piece, the salad course inspired by a bitter flavour. The sole performer, Naseem Reesha, bemoans lost love and agonizes over past betrayals while considering the abandonment of dearly held vegan principles. Discussion of mental illness, suggestions of alcohol abuse, emotional distress and extreme nausea and depicted in this piece. The show is directed by Nina Kaye.

Savour by Aaliya Alibhai is the third piece, a main course inspired by the flavour Umami or Savory. Savour features the performers Andrea Irwin (performing with the permission of CAEA) Kelly Marie McKenna and Mladen Obradović. Two fairies meddle in the life of a mortal woman who is recently divorced and restless. Romance and onions sizzle in this show directed by Sandra Cardinal.

A Trifle by Nina Kaye is the final play, a dessert inspired by the flavour Sweet. Lovers Peach and Plum, played by Jess Wareing and Maggie Cook, overload on saccharine endearments until they fall into a sugar crash with tantrums and moody accusations. The silly fun of this piece is nicely balances with the inclusion of more serious themes. The performance is directed by Collette Radau.

The Waiter, performed by Evan Boutsov, serves snacks and makes comments throughout the play. The Waiter's commentary was written by Sandra Cardinal and directed by Natalie Kaye.