



T H E
O B F U S C A T I O N M I S D I R E C T I O N & D E C E I T
F R A U D
I S S U E

Faux Food

Why What You Thought You Were Eating Is Not What You Are Eating

by Dr. Susan Medlin

Faux

Contemporary Photography by Alexis Pike and Jacinda Russell

Finding the Forger

In Search of an Unknown Artist

by David H. Leroy

Faux Food:

Why What You Thought You Were Eating Is Not What You Are Eating

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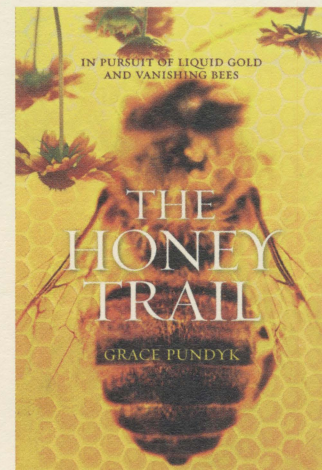
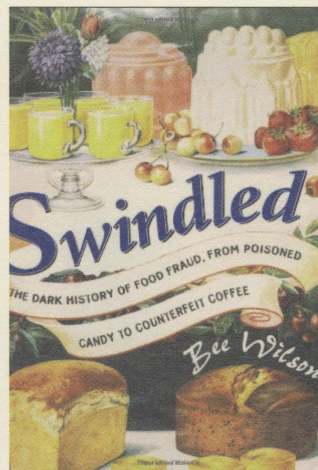
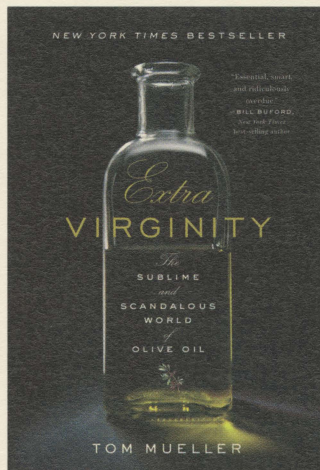
* Enterprising, small-scale producers of chili in Italy realized that if their chili powder looked redder, consumers would pay more. Their solution: add Sudan 1, a red industrial floor dye. (*The Observer (UK)* May 2014.) Sudan 1 is a known carcinogen.

* Honey requires time, effort and money to bring to market; it is much easier to make a sweet syrup from any one of a dozen sweetening agents. A 2011 *Food Safety News* study revealed that more than seventy-five percent of the honey sold in US grocery stores “wasn't what the bees produced.” Most honey sold in the US is imported and ultra-filtered, which means the pollen has been removed and its origin is thus unknown. Also removed is its flavor and nutritional value.

* Expensive ground coffee is being cut with maize, soybeans, and sugar. When ground and roasted together, the adulteration is not possible to see. More recently, leaves and twigs have been detected, as well as parchment. (*Scientific American*, August 12, 2014.)

* Italian Extra Virgin Olive Oil is an expensive, premium product. According to several sources, 70% of extra virgin olive oil sold in the US is fraudulent, cut with cheap alternatives such as pomace, hazelnut or cottonseed oil; in some cases, no olive oil has been found in “extra virgin olive oil.” And “Italian Extra Virgin Olive Oil” is likely to be a cheaper product from Greece or Tunisia. (Tom Mueller, *Extra Virginity*, 2013.)

Prevention Magazine (Jan. 2013) compiled a list of the top eleven most frequently adulterated foods we eat every day: olive oil, milk, honey, saffron, orange juice, coffee, apple juice, tea, fish, black pepper, and other processed “fresh” juices. Fraudulent olive oil, number one on the list, has been around for a very long time. The European Parliament's food safety committee says it is the product most at risk of food fraud: the rewards to the counterfeiters are substantial, supply chains (the distance from farmer to consumer) are long and links can be very obscure, and demand for extra virgin olive oil is strong and growing. But fraud across a wide range of foods is growing and increasingly lucrative.



According to the United States Pharmacopeial Convention, common foods are filled with ingredients that are not supposed to be there—unlabeled, undetected, and unknowable to consumers. The fact that products now listed by the Pharmacopeial Convention as subject to serious fraud include turmeric, chili powder, cooking oil, shrimp, lemon juice, and maple syrup, is a reflection of the expanding scope of fraudsters: none of these products was listed in the top 25 between 1980 and 2010. The UK Food Standards Agency began keeping a database in 2007, when they received 49 reports of food fraud. In 2013, the agency received 1,538 reports.

Many factors are contributing to this fraudulent flowering. Certainly, the globalization of food has had an enormous impact. It is impossible for US consumers (or consumers anywhere) to verify information on an import label, and large wholesale international buyers can be both willfully and accidentally ignorant; the US Food and Drug Administration is not interested unless the adulteration will kill you. In the case of honey, after charges of both exporting harmful fraudulent product and dumping cheap watered-down honey in the US market, ruining US honey prices, Chinese honey imports were severely curtailed. However, Chinese exports were relabeled then rerouted through India which has no import limits. US honey producers say in almost all cases, foreign honey is actually from China, and the US National Honey Board says over 60% of imported honey disappears into the food industry to be used in processed foods where it is much more difficult to test. According to people in the honey industry, the FDA checks no more than five percent of all foreign honey shipments.

Highly processed foods themselves are a huge part of food fraud because ingredient lists are long, arcane, and filled with other processed ingredients and chemicals. It's a counterfeiters' playground. (Unsurprisingly, Americans lead the world in consumption of processed food, and consumed 31% more packaged food than fresh food per

person in 2010, accounting for over 50% of the average daily calorie intake. What are we eating?)

Counterfeiters today have sophisticated help from food technologists. The addition of melamine, an industrial chemical, to Chinese baby formula powder to increase protein, was not the work of amateurs. The effects on infants were disastrous, and the fraud was detected. But science has shown the way for increasingly complex adulterations that are undetectable even to very discerning consumers. Of course, food detectives are also able to use modern techniques to discover these frauds. But detection is costly, and absent observable negative outcomes, randomly choosing which products to evaluate is not a robust way to approach the problem. Stuart Shotten, consultancy services director at Foodchain Europe, commented that people in the food industry are going to have to think like criminals, asking where an opportunity for fraud exists, and mimicking the ways other industries have foiled criminal activity, e.g. holograms or watermarks. (*The Guardian*, May 3, 2014.)

What does criminal opportunity look like? A big factor is increasing food prices, a result of everything from crop failures to steadily increasing demand from newly middle class economies (e.g. China.) When prices are rising, if production costs can be cheapened, the profit potential goes way up. Similarly, if a low price/high volume product can be adulterated to reduce production costs even by a very small amount, there is a lot of money to be made. Currently, coffee scarcity due in part to crop decimation in Latin America from coffee rust fungus, has led to steep price increases; ground coffee quickly became an opportunity for fraud as producers began reducing production costs by substituting cheap alternatives in the roast.

Such opportunities attract organized crime and criminal gangs, although there is no organized data collection to point to the amount of food fraud from criminal networks as opposed to private producers. But ironically, as global drug use has started to decline, organized crime appears to be looking to food for profit—it is a much less risky

business, and detection is highly unlikely. (Grist, February 26, 2014.)

The solution for American consumers flies in the face of our recent food history, our eating habits and preferences. To protect against fraudulent food, we must shorten the supply chain to one that is knowable (buy local), eat single ingredient foods (buy fresh), and remember "caveat emptor" applies to food. As Andrew Schneider, the author of the **Food Safety News** article on honey, remarks, "The fact is, unless you're buying [honey] from a beekeeper, you're at risk."

And what about those products for which there is no local producer, or even a domestic producer? For those of us who live in Idaho where there are neither coffee plantations nor olive oil producers, shortening the supply chain for coffee means buying whole beans; for olive oil it means abandoning our love affair with Italy. California is an emerging extra virgin olive oil production site with oil certified by their trade association; a new state certification process was approved in 2014. There is even some limited (and delicious!) olive oil production in Oregon.

Buy what you can know.

Dr. Susan Medlin is a political economist, teacher, local food sourceress, gardener, and cook who is passionate about good food and good health.

For Further Reading

Extra Virginity: The Sublime and Scandalous World of Olive Oil by Tom Mueller. W.W. Norton & Company, 2013

Swindled: The Dark History of Food Fraud by Bee Wilson. Princeton University Press, 2008

The Honey Trail: In Pursuit of Liquid Gold and Vanishing Bees by Grace Pundyk. St. Martin's Griffin, 2010

Online Resources

Oceana (Oceana.org)

Food Safety News (www.foodsafetynews.com)

Journal of Food Science ([http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1750-3841](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1750-3841))

Michigan State University Food Fraud Initiative (foodfraud.msu.edu)

Prevention Magazine (www.prevention.com)

Environmental Health News Magazine, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, UK (www.ehn-online.com)

US Pharmacopeial Convention Food Fraud Database (www.foodfraud.org/)

See Back Page for details on the **Truth in Olive Oil Tasting Seminar.**

Faux: Alexis Pike and Jacinda Russell

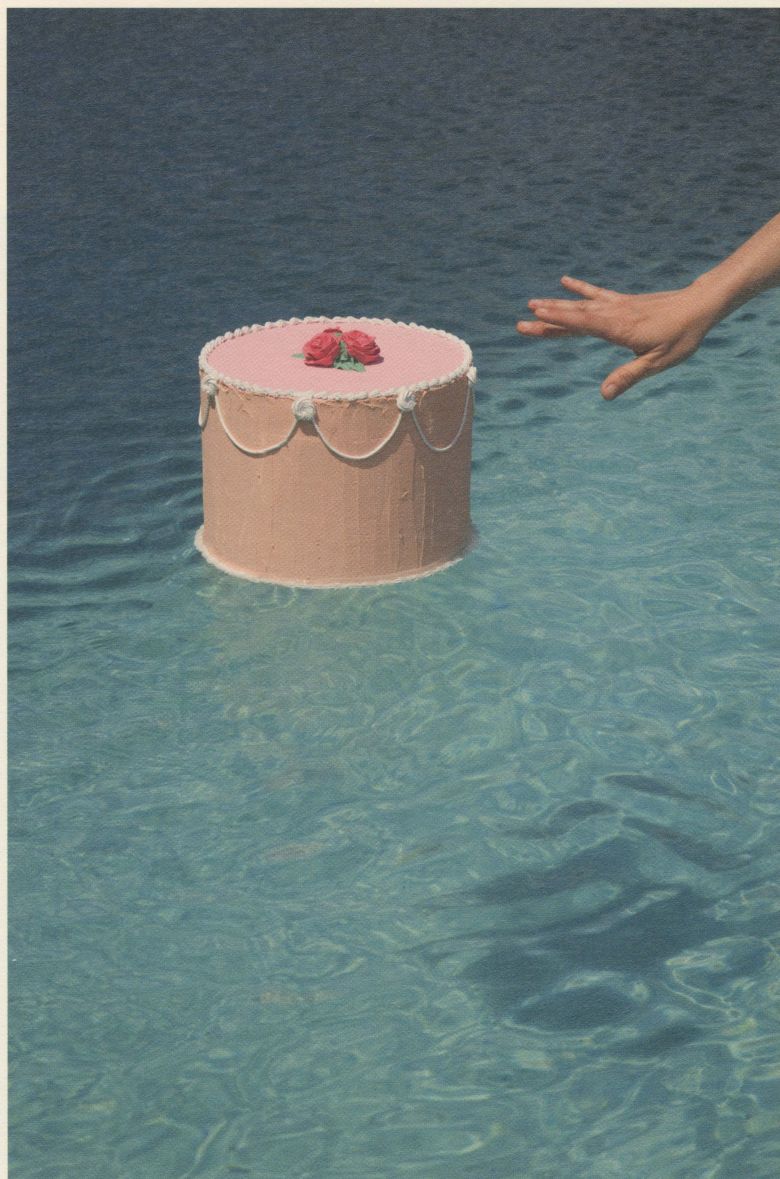
Photographers Alexis Pike and Jacinda Russell each present a series of photographs considered collectively as **Faux**. Russell's series *Nine Fake Cakes and Nine Bodies of Water* comments on the illusion of what is fake and what is real, what is happy and what is sad, and what is desirous but unattainable. Pike's series *Claimed: Landscape* questions the manner in which the Western landscape has been defined through photography and uses her own work to claim an identity and perception of the American West.

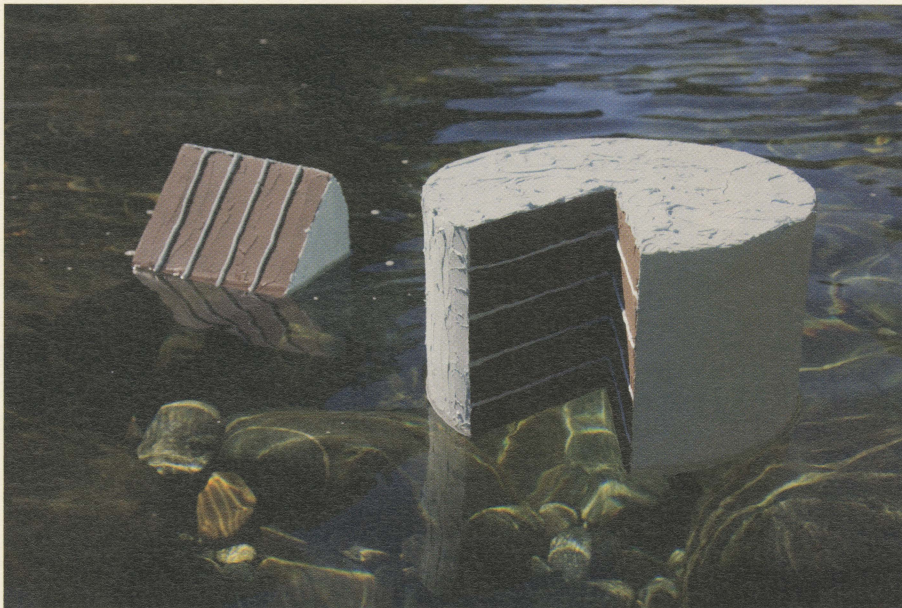
Exhibit continues through October 23rd, 2014

Visual Arts Center Gallery Two

Hemingway Center, Boise State University

Hours: Monday - Thursday 10am - 5pm, Friday 10am - 3pm





Images

JACINDA RUSSELL

Lower Left:

Galt House Hotel, Louisville, Kentucky
(Archival Inkjet Print, 2010)

Left:

Sooke Potholes Provincial Park, Vancouver Island, British Columbia (Archival Inkjet Print, 2010)

Below:

Lake Erie: Evangola State Park, New York
(Archival Inkjet Print, 2010)

ALEXIS PIKE

Upper Right:

Propane Tank—Dubois, Idaho (Chromogenic Print, 2007)

Lower Right:

A Teton—St. Anthony, Idaho (Chromogenic Print, 2005)

Back Page:

Snow Pile—Ashton, Idaho (Chromogenic Print, 2008)



Nine Fake Cakes & Nine Bodies of Water

JACINDA RUSSELL

Spring 2010 featured several personal and career related disappointments and for the first time in my artistic life, I was devoted to a project that's main premise is beauty, escapism and desire. Complete immersion—in finding inviting bodies of water in which to float Styrofoam and acrylic-tinted caulk cakes—was a coping mechanism to come to terms with loneliness and unhappiness with place. Cakes, both real and fake, appeared to make people happy, and I wondered, most simply, if they could make me happy too.

Two of the most desirous objects in 20th century art are Wayne Thiebaud's thickly textured paintings of desserts and Ed Ruscha's photographs of azure swimming pools. They were my biggest inspirations as I created a mixed media spectacle. The cakes, displaying the effects of their initial floats (cracks, bleeding paint, missing decor) are displayed on glass plates accompanying the photographs. An artist's book documenting all aspects of the process is forthcoming. Despite its beauty, *Nine Fake Cakes and Nine Bodies of Water* comes from a dark place—one that was momentarily forgotten as I traveled across the country searching for pristine water. I returned with a reflection on what is fake and what is real, what is happy and what is sad, and what is desirous but unattainable. <http://jacindaruscell.com>

Claimed: Landscape

ALEXIS PIKE

As a sixth generation Idahoan, the landscape of the West influences my work, it's a part of my personal and cultural history, it is the geography of my genes. I grew up in two distinct areas of Idaho: the scenic area of Stanley Basin, Idaho—which sits at the base of the Sawtooth Mountain Range—and the town of Idaho Falls—a community that revolves around agriculture and nuclear research. Living in these two regions gave me the perspective to appreciate the delicate balance of the scenic and the mundane and recognize how they overlap. I am exploring in this work the way communities and individuals stake claims on the picturesque landscape and place it within the conventional structures of the community. By making photographs of these claimed territories, I am staking my own claim to my heritage, the western landscape. The manner in which we depict this scenery has become the identity and perception of the American West, symbolized by wilderness, mountain peaks, crystal clear rivers, and big game animals. www.alexispike.com





LEFT: AN ILLUMINATION BY THE SO-CALLED SPANISH FORGER; RIGHT: THE REVERSE SIDE OF THE IMAGE, SHOWING THE ORIGINAL SPANISH ANTIPHONAL PAGE THAT WAS APPROPRIATED FOR THE FORGERY. IMAGES APPEAR COURTESY OF OWNERS DAVID AND NANCY LEROY.

Finding the Forger: In Search of an Unknown Artist

BY DAVID H. LEROY

When invading French troops sacked great libraries, monasteries, churches and noble manors during the Napoleonic Wars in nineteenth century Europe, among the most frequently taken prizes were pages torn from ancient books. The beautiful, fanciful medieval paintings on those pages were cut out and collected by the soldiers, destroying the book, but encouraging a collector craze in France and later England. Once the demand was developed, such cuttings began to be commercially bought and sold.

For the past six years, my wife Nancy and I have been stalking the identity of a man or woman who became the world's most prolific manufacturer of counterfeit illuminated manuscripts. At the Morgan Library in New York, with a book dealer in San Francisco, in the back streets of the Left Bank in Paris we have tried, unsuccessfully as yet, to complete the story of the "Spanish Forger."

Using pages from a sixteenth century Spanish antiphonal book or fourteenth and fifteenth century Italian choir books, someone in the period between 1890 and about 1910 executed beautiful and romantic medieval images by scraping off the original latin lettering and painting over the original vellum. Many of the compositions were based on illustrations found in a multivolume Middle Ages art history printed in Paris during the 1870's. All of the illuminations showed the skill of a trained lithographer or an artist with fine lines, exquisite detail and vigorous coloration. Over two hundred such works were

sold to eager collectors through Parisian book and art dealers for a decade until 1905. Some even appeared in juried manuscript exhibitions of national prominence, certified by leading experts as worthy and correct examples of ancient art.

Yet no expert, no collector, no one for a period detected and reported the fraud until 1904, when French art critic Paul Durrieu warned that numerous forgeries were coming into the market. That opinion was confirmed in 1930 when Belle da Costa Green, the Director of the Morgan Library, revealed her doubts and described the questionable features of the Forger's works. Thereafter, the museum and collecting community became appropriately skeptical.

Some of the "errors" were subtle. A unique palette, "sugary" faces, excessive décolletage, unusual postures and stage-set architecture became apparent upon a careful comparison to known and true aged works. Other features were so obvious that they should have been detected at first inspection. Antiphonals were rarely illustrated, but never painted with a mixed iconography which blended secular and religious images. Many figures were out of time and context. Often the pictures were patently inconsistent with the surrounding latin text. In short, Forger images suffer from both "presentism," the practice of viewing the past from the prism of the modern day, and a lack of scholarship.

Yet in recent years, collectors willingly paid and museums throughout the world eagerly displayed the beautiful, dramatic illuminations of the forger

called "Spanish." He or she was so named because among the works da Costa Green debunked was a panel painting previously attributed to Maestro Jorge Ingles depicting the Betrothal of St. Ursula. In fact, the "Spanish Forger" was probably French.

Scientific tests have now confirmed that the Forger paintings contain post-1814 pigments. A pioneering book which collected and analyzed over two hundred of the illuminations was published by William Voelke of the Morgan in 1978. He updates his files annually. Studies, exhibitions, scholarly articles and speculations about the Forger have emerged in Britain, France, Germany, Italy and the United States in recent years.

Even so, the identity of the Forger has never been established. Suspects abound. Leads exist. More paintings emerge with each European auction season. Someday, someone, perhaps us, will put the clues together and identify, at long last, the medieval faker.

Although debunked, Spanish Forger illuminations have become highly collectible and quite pricey in today's art and manuscript market. Framed cuttings commonly sell for \$2,000 to \$5,000 and at auction a manuscript with four miniatures made \$28,000 and a gradual (a book containing the music of the Mass) sold at \$30,000. After all, they reflect everyone's modern view of how the Middle Ages should have looked!

David H. Leroy is an attorney, book collector and Lincoln scholar, who is the former Lieutenant Governor and former Attorney General of Idaho.

De falsatiis & fraudulentia.
 Alchimia docet fallax: corruptio vini! &
 Quas fraudes hominū perfidus orbis agat.
 Omnibus in rebus fraudis falsiq;/doliq;
 Cuncta scatent vitio: tuta nec villa fides.

De falsa
 riis rerum oim

Valeant alchimi
 ste quoniam spes
 reru transmutari
 non pnt. Quisq;
 ergo credit posse
 fieri aliq creatu-
 ra: aut in melius:
 aut in deterio im-
 mutari/aut trans-
 formari in aliam
 specie vel in aliaz
 similitudine nisi ab
 ipso creatore qui
 oia fecit & p que
 oia facta sunt: p-
 cul dubio infidel-
 est & pagano de-
 terior.



Found in a Book:
The Hazards of Fraudulent Alchemy

Alchemy and Authority in the Holy Roman Empire by Tara Nummedal.
 University of Chicago Press, 2007.

The ability to distinguish between a fraudulent alchemist and a real one was an important skill for sixteenth-century patrons to possess. In the high-stakes business of alchemy, practitioners who made fraudulent claims about their powers of transmutation risked not only a patron's reputation, but often their own lives. In this woodcut from Sebastian Brant's *Stultifera nevis* (Basel, 1498), the artist presents an unscrupulous winemaker doctoring or watering down his wine, along with an alchemist in a fool's cap in an untidy laboratory. The third figure, a scholar alchemist, reflects the ambiguity associated with alchemy, which many well-educated people of the time felt held great promise, but only if practiced by honest and knowledgeable adepts. —Janice Neri

For more archival imagery relating to alchemy, see
http://www.alchemywebsite.com/brandt_ship_of_fools.html

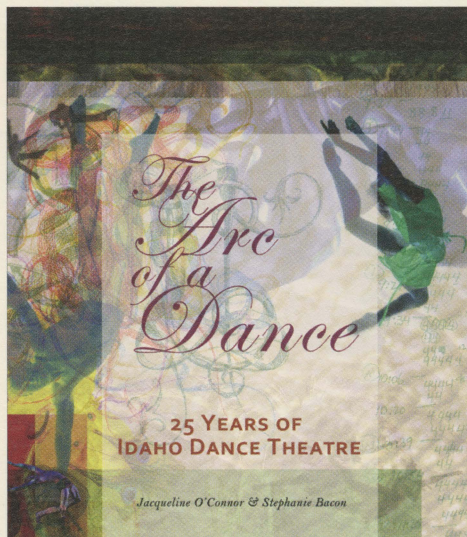
IMAGE COURTESY OF BROWN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

paper blog

We are happy to announce the publication of a new ICB project, **The Arc of a Dance: 25 Years of Idaho Dance Theatre**. For 25 years, Idaho Dance Theatre has created and performed original contemporary choreography in Boise, the Treasure Valley, and beyond, promoting the art of the dance in a regular season of performances and in educational programming throughout the year. This book documents this professional company in action, recording its legacy and its contributions to Boise's rich history of performance art. In a layered design that combines narrative with rich images and textures, the book celebrates the vitality and versatility of a dance company whose dedication to collaboration and commitment to accessibility affirm its position as Idaho's Dance Theatre.

The book is a joint project of Idaho Dance Theatre and ICB, and is authored by Jacqueline O'Connor and Stephanie Bacon. The project was also supported by the Boise City Department of Arts and History (which enabled the free distribution of the book to schools and libraries) as well as the Arts and Humanities Institute, Hemingway Center, the College of Arts and Sciences, and Departments of Art and English at Boise State.

The book is available in Boise at Rediscovered Books, the Hyde Park Book Store, and Trip Taylor;



or by contacting Marla Hansen of IDT (mhansen@boisestate.edu) or through the IDT website (idahodancetheatre.org). \$15. covers mailing, and proceeds benefit the amazing and unstoppable Idaho Dance Theatre.

Book Signing

A book signing for **The Arc of a Dance** will be held on Tuesday October 21 from 6-8 pm, at Rediscovered Books, 180 N 8th St, Boise (Tel (208) 376-4229). IDT founder Marla Hansen and the authors will be present, as well as special guest IDT dancers and other surprises. Join us if you can.



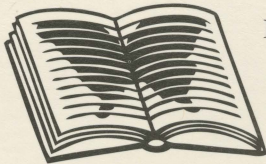
Idaho Booker's Dozen 2015 Updates: It's a festive time of year at ICB, as the submissions for Idaho Booker's Dozen 2015 have arrived, and jurying and preparations for the exhibit are underway. If you would like Booker's Dozen to visit your town or venue, drop us a line at idahocenterforthebook@boisestate.edu. The full itinerary will be announced in our next issue, along with a complete catalog of the winning books.

Acknowledgements: *Genuine (not fraudulent) thanks to this issue's special contributors: Kirsten Furlong, David Leroy, Susan Medlin, Janice Neri, Jacky O'Connor, Alexis Pike, and Jacinda Russell.*

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Director: Stephanie Bacon

** Book, construed to include
all forms of written language.*

The TREASURE VALLEY FOOD COALITION presents

Truth in Olive Oil
Tasting Seminar

a fabulous evening of extra virgin olive oil

Monday October 6th from 6 to 9 pm

Visual Arts Collective, 3638 Osage, Garden City

- ◊ Taste five different extra virgin olive oils
- ◊ Learn how to know real extra virgin olive oil from adulterated or rancid oil
- ◊ Experience the different tastes of oils based on olive type and growing conditions
- ◊ Enjoy pairing foods with different oils
- ◊ Appreciate the similarities of olive oil tasting to wine tasting, as you sip Three Horse wine

This delicious and informative experience will be orchestrated by Dewey Lucero, the most-awarded US producer of extra virgin olive oil, and Patty Darragh and Lisa Pollack from the California Olive Oil Council.

Purchase your tickets now at

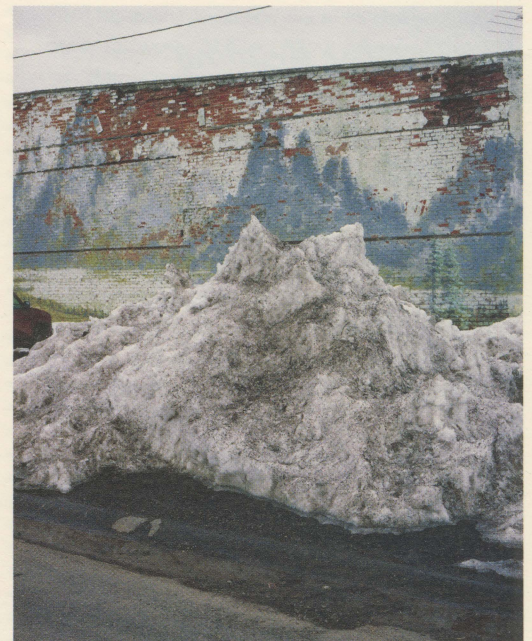
<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/686951>

Tickets are \$10, space is limited, reservations required.

Raffle tickets available at the door for \$5 each; bring your copy of *Extra Virginity* for a free chance to win a most delicious prize!

Sponsors:

Treasure Valley Food Coalition ◊ The Boise Coop ◊ Bitter Creek/Red Feather



Snow Pile—Ashton, Idaho (Chromogenic Print, 2008)
Alexis Pike

Faux: Alexis Pike and Jacinda Russell

Exhibition details inside