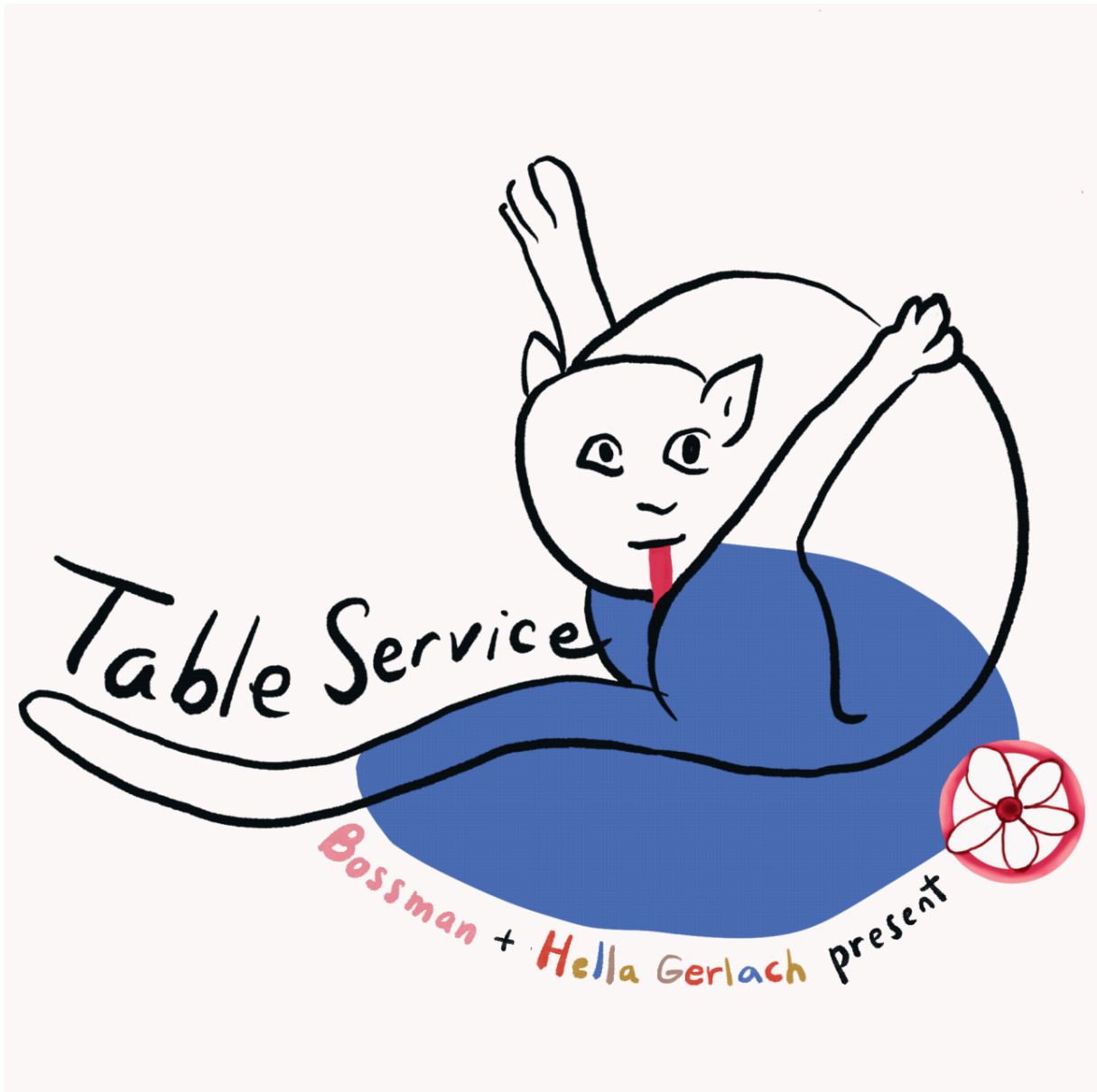


**Bossman and Hella Gerlach pop up:**

***Table Service !***



**opening:**

Sunday August 8, 2021, 3:00 to 6:00

machnaloci space, 1721 63rd Street, Berkeley CA

**public conversation:**

Sunday August 22, 2021, 10:00 to 12:00

in person outside machinaloci space, 1721 63rd Street, Berkeley

OR ZOOM (contact [carol@machinloci.com](mailto:carol@machinloci.com) for link)

Bossman is a parasitic brand that inhabits other vessels. It is a surprise gift for the world, irreverently, irately, and intuitively resisting adulating in cities starting with the letter “B”.

For its cohabitation with machinaloci space, Bossman is pleased to present **Table Service**.

**On your plate:**

What could be less remarkable than eating a meal on a plate while seated at a table? Yet both plates and tables have a history that belies their current ubiquity. It was during the so-called Renaissance that plates, as we know them today, came into common use in Europe. It was even later that the dining room – and dining table – emerged as a specialized site for eating with a small group of friends and family. Prior to that, most eating was done on tables that could be set up and then dismantled after a meal. This flexibility was important because most rooms in a home served multiple functions. Large dining areas, for example, were also used for dancing and other ways of assembling not related to eating. It was therefore important to have furniture that could be easily whisked in and out of the way: tables could be assembled and taken apart, and benches could be moved quickly the side of the room so they would not be in the way. Chairs were an

unnecessary encumbrance. The flexible nature of these spaces, and the diverse array of classed bodies within them, found a material and metaphorical iteration in the objects that people ate from: communal troughs or trenchers and spoons that dripped as diners reached into shared bowls and pots. Juices flowed and dribbled; bodies conjoined in the consumption of liquidy, stewy sauces and potages.

By the sixteenth century, these practices had begun to change. Communal dining platters were replaced by individual plates with clearly demarcated borders. In the late seventeenth century, forks would come into general usage. These objects pierced pieces of food and lifted them cleanly out of a sauce or soup, minimizing shared trickle. Plates reflected a new interest in clearly defining bodies: instead of overflowing into one's neighbor's space, each individual at the table had a delineated individual zone. This space was embodied by the round plate, which mirrored the "rational" head of the person at the table. It was like a symbolic portrait of that person. The table's top separated the head, removing the rational, thinking part of the body from its base, which was hidden under the table. The polite diner was no longer corporeally linked to others at the table. Instead, manners and etiquette bound the diners together through an internalized set of rules. Don't belch, don't drip, don't spit, don't reach into the pot with your piece of bread. Use your head! Use a fork, not your fingers!

For machinaloci space, Bossman stages a pop-up featuring Carol Mancke's Table 15 and a series of plates that Bossman is producing for the occasion. Each plate displays a cat licking its private parts. These preening pussies are what would be revealed after a diner has licked their plate clean. A frisson of naughty voyeuristic delight flickers into view. The cats are derived from medieval manuscript marginalia, which frequently featured felines cleaning themselves. These kitties, once hidden in flurries of border ornamentation, have now crawled out of the margins and taken center-stage, hanging on the wall like portraits in a gallery.