



Dinner is served.

THE **SANDBOX** BLOG

Supper: A Gathering at the Exquisite Trough

Scott Francisco — October 16, 2013

Pilot Projects partnered with the International Arts Movement to bring “Supper: A Gathering at the Exquisite Trough” to fruition. “Supper” was essentially that — dinner! — but we sought to deliver the meal in a way that broke routine and heightened everyone's sense of sharing and participation.

We were especially excited about this project because, in addition to exquisite locally sourced food and wine, it let us experiment with spatial choreography.



As with any supper, the main focus is always the food. The Pixie and the Scout's custom menu used a bounty of local ingredients to celebrate sustainable eating and New York state's rich food culture. Dishes heaped with seasonal vegetables, lamb, simple grains, fruits, and artisanal cheese were served family-style.



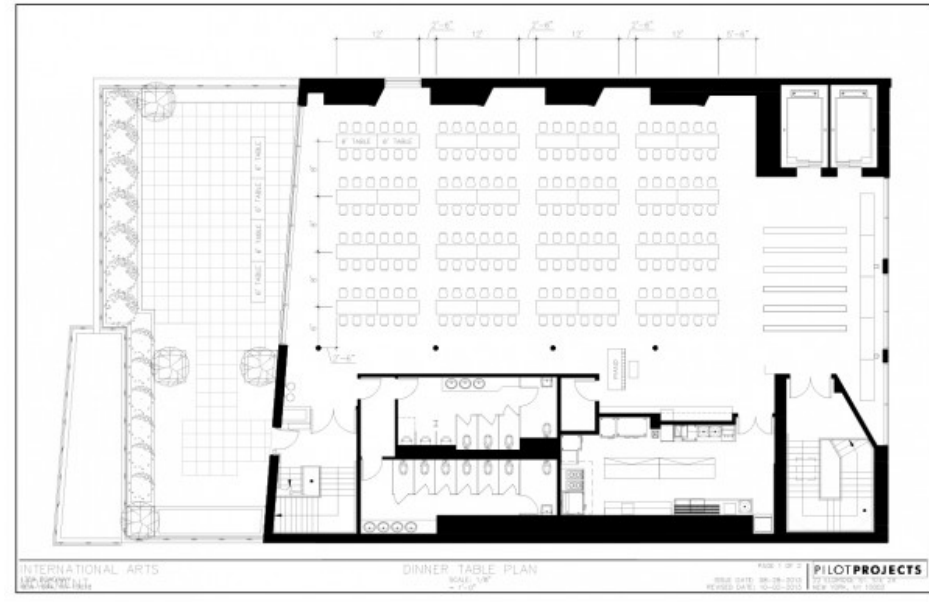
Menu and graphics design by the talented Mikaela Fuchs



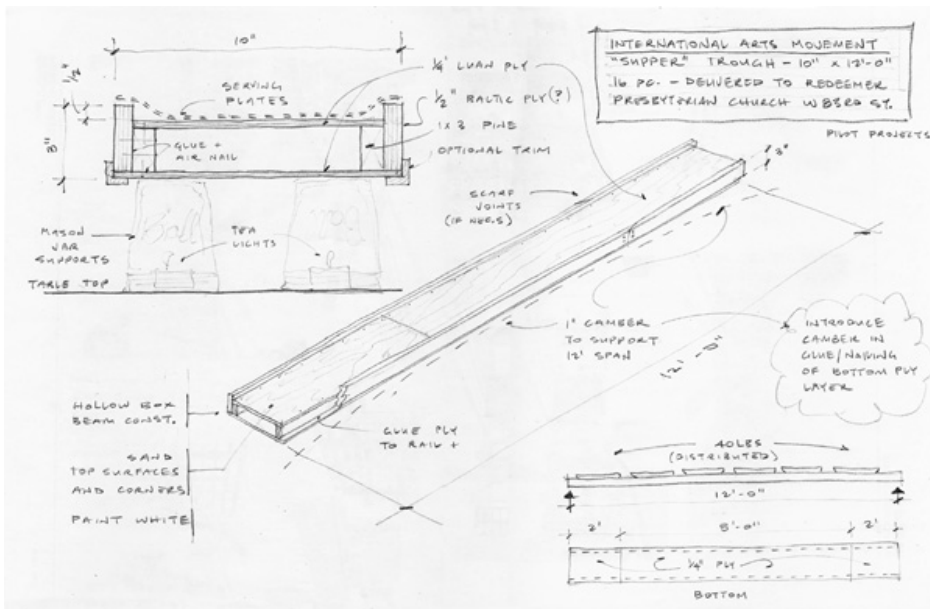
One guest's plate

Banquets in which everyone waits for a server to bring plates and remove them can be alienating; this way, we hoped, participants could interact more with one another — not to mention easily reach for seconds.

How the space was used was also important. We chose narrow tables, so that people would literally sit closer together. How to fit all that food, the place settings, water and wine glasses on such slim tables? Out of that dilemma the idea for a "trough" was born. By elevating the food onto a center platform, we increased table real estate. It also allowed for the meal to be presented dramatically — again, literally descending from above.



The next step was to design troughs with the capacity to carry the weight of several serving plates, span 12', and be light enough to carry and present over the heads of diners, all while still being inexpensive to manufacture locally.



Trough concept sketch

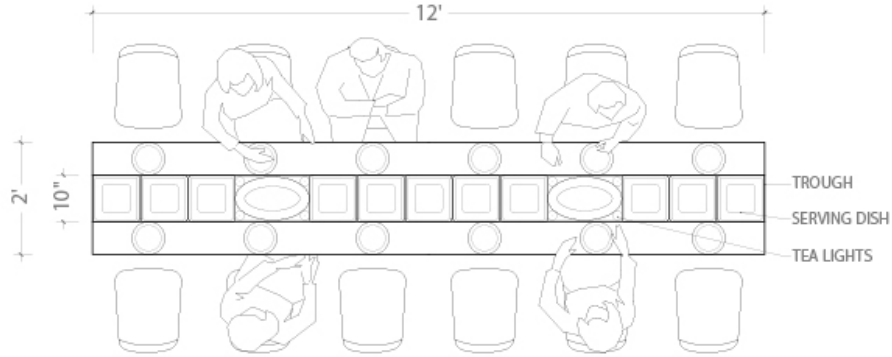


TABLE PLAN
1/2" = 1'-0"

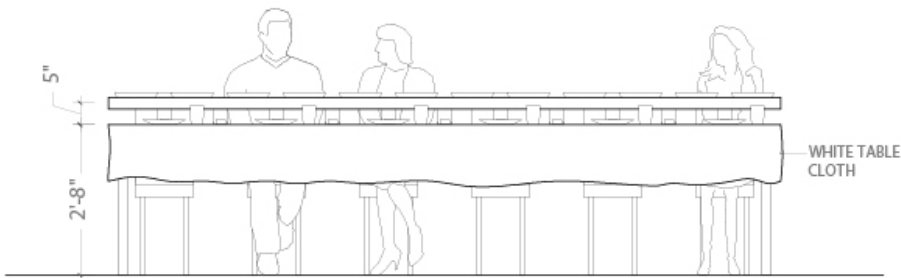


TABLE ELEVATION
1/2" = 1'-0"



And it worked. Food-laden troughs were delivered to each table as live piano music played in the background. Once placed on the tables, the troughs rested on Mason jars filled with twinkling lights and created an architectural anchor at guests' chest level. Outside the windows, the lights of Manhattan's Upper West Side added to the room's glow.



By evening's end, 200+ artists had been extremely well-fed, and many more 100s of photos taken.

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