

Diagram for Lascaux Cave Banquet

A Feast of History (17,000 Before Present — 200 After Physics)

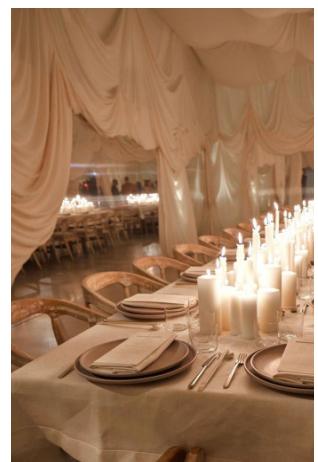
or Photos From Kim's 42nd Birthday Trip That Never Was

by *Olivia
Kam-Sperling*

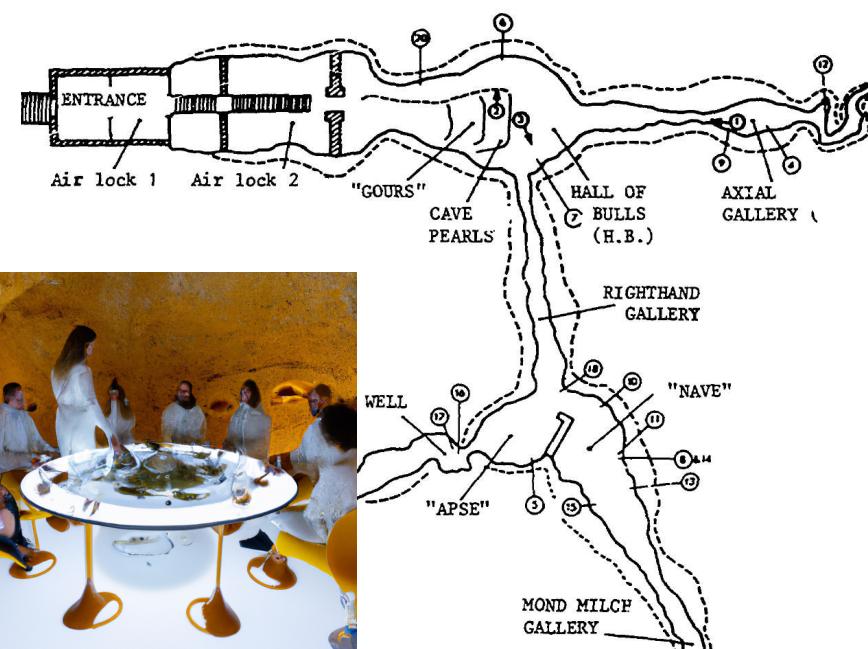
Act I. Prologue

Following a years-long journey, we will not have time to dress for dinner, so we will enter the caves in the clothes we are already wearing: hoodies, parkas, sunglasses, and evening gowns streaked with blood, sweat, and tears. Outside & above, there will be very hot winds and very cold winds at once. Perfect snowflakes the size of a Lamborghini and the intricacy of Venetian lace will have been falling & shattering around us during our trek through the southern French countryside. Once-tidy fields will have turned to meadows of bubbling black mud adorned, here and there, by patches of iridescent oil, shimmering puddles which will flower now and then into magenta-orange flames. There will be no sun, but lightning will flash over the empty sky in the forking structure of the most rapidly executed & complexly forking flowcharts, occurring periodically, like a strobe, or the Saks Christmas Lightshow. But inside & below, it will be warm & cozy. The Lascaux Caves were discovered in 1940, painted around 17,000 BP¹, and closed to the public in 1963 due to the dangers posed to the art by human airs. Kim's 42nd Birthday was supposed to take place in Las Vegas on October 22, 2022, but was cut short by hostile weather conditions. The intervening years will have been long & hard for all of us. Now, our party will pass through the two Air Lock Purification chambers—deactivated just for us—and into the Hall of the Bulls. It is so dark in the caves; we will take off our sunglasses and turn on flashlights, candles, and cigarette lighters. Then the paintings will leap & flicker 'round; and it will be as though thunder had sounded below the Earth & honey been poured in our eyes; and the future will pass into the present; and so will the past. We admire; we take a sharp right. We pass a Procession of Engraved Horses going the opposite way. We must be careful not to trip; thankfully, most of us are wearing sneakers.

Our squelching echoes as we file through the Passage-way. Animals, like horses, used to carry humans and their belongings on their backs; now, many of us are carrying our belongings bags in the shape of animals (mostly bears). We like these animal-shaped bags because they are warm against our bodies, can serve as pillows, and remind us of the comforts of childhood. In the Apse we see the Stag with Thirteen Arrows, a Great Reindeer, a Red Horse, a Yellow Horse. It has been a long time since we have seen animals; more importantly, it has been a long time since we have seen images.



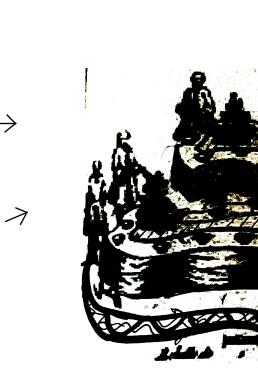
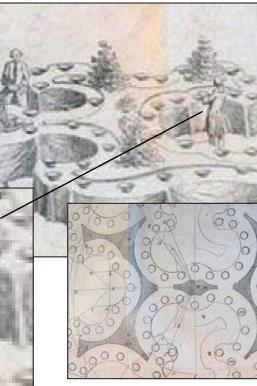
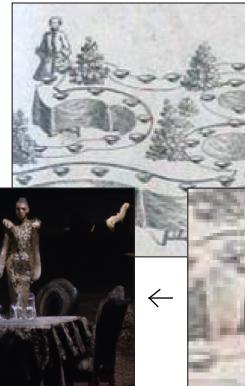
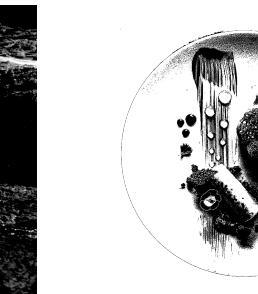
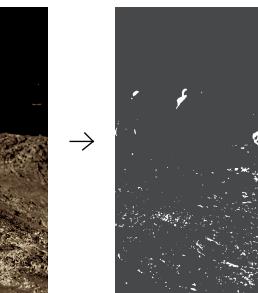
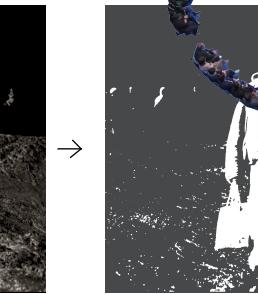
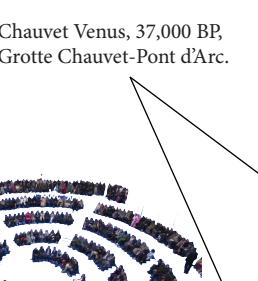
Kim's Bday Dinner, Calabasas, October 22 2022.



1. Before Present years are a time scale used in archaeology & geology. Because the "present" time changes, standard practice is to use 1950 as the arbitrary benchmark of what's considered "present". "BP" may also be considered to be an abbre-

Appendix I. More Interpreted Diagrams, with Captions

or Bibliography / Ingredients



Act II. Introduction to Diagram Interpretation

Balenciaga, Spring 20 RTW Spiral Set, Sep 19 2019.

El Bulli, unidentified molecular gastronomy Spiral, served 2004.

Chauvet Venus, 37,000 BP, Grotte Chauvet-Pont d'Arc.

Kylie Jenner, Instagram, October 2 2022.

Balenciaga, Spring 23 RTW, Paris, October 2 2022.

Tanya, "Molecular Gastronomy Girls' Lunch" <http://eatdrinklove.co.za/2016/07/04/molecular-gastronomy/>, 2016.

Joseph Gilliers, *Le Cannaméliste français: ou, Nouvelle instruction pour ceux qui désirent d'apprendre l'office, rédigé en forme de dictionnaire*, Nancy, France, 1751.



E!, 18 Photos from Kim Kardashian's 42nd Birthday Trip That Never Was (captions only).

Esquire, "The Last Meal" (François Mitterrand's Feast of Ortolan Buntings, 1995)

Pastry Chef Pierre Hermé, Lecture to the Harvard Graduate School of Design (Nov 27, 2012).

Professor Savinien Caracoste, Lecture to Harvard Graduate School of Design.

There are conflicting interpretations of the animal-shaped markings left in caves by pre-literate peoples. They seem to be both paintings (beautiful) and *DIAGRAMS* (useful), a theory catalyzed by the discovery of several images of bison whose flanks bear *ARROW-LIKE SIGNS*. One (I) might imagine these signs to both 1. represent weapons used for hunting and 2. act in the manner of the relational units connecting events in time-based flowcharts. By the logic of the Magic of the Hunt, the depiction of animals led to their multiplication in real life. Images of animals killed by hunting are therefore the culmination of a diagram that is not only a blueprint, representation, or *RECIPE* for a procedure, but also, like a computer program, a writing-drawing-form that performs, executes, or instantiates this process in the flesh. Cooking is another elaborate process of diagram-interpretation that produces material consequences. Another theory (derived from N. Aujolat's research 1988-1999) has proposed that the images show seasonal mating cycles, symbolizing the regeneration of *TIME*. *FOOD* has

therefore always been used to count, recover, and experience time (other examples: "3 meals a day," Proust's madeleine, Lindt chocolate advent calendar); so is *LIGHT* (sunrise, ortolan buntings, etc). Since the painting of the Caves, *WRITING* (which requires light) has also been used to express, recover, and freeze time (diaries, historical chronicles, time-based flow-charts); even more recently, so are *PHOTOGRAPHS* (light-writings). To live, we do not technically need

writing, photography, or even light. We do need food, and, by definition, time. In an area of southern California inhabited by Kim Kardashian et al., the sky is already frequently covered with thick yellowish fog, blocking sunlight. According to Hervé This, the father of molecular gastronomy, technological & scientific advances in kitchen chemistry will save us from future food shortages. In the absence of animals on Earth and light on plants, we will still be able to eat red meat and green salads. These could be produced by intelligent machines in underground labs, for example.

However, we might not have the energy & resources to write & draw, and therefore to experience & evolve through time, and therefore, like the prehistoric painters who are our ancestors, to live a human life. This is a speculative interpretation of several (written, drawn, or photographed) historical diagrams of eating for a future without sunlight. This banquet designed for the Caves of Lascaux has the inverse function of the original animal diagrams painted therein: through ritualized eating, to magically bring about the return of images.

"Kim's 42nd birthday celebrations began Oct. 22, 2022. Kim celebrated an intimate birthday dinner with friends and family at her office in Calabasas. Kim boards Kylie Jenner's private jet to Las Vegas. The group enjoys drinks aboard the plane. The festivities begin onboard. Kim announces that they are returning to Los Angeles due to bad weather. A dinner table at Carbone at the ARIA Resort & Casino in Las Vegas awaits the guests who will not arrive. Kim heads to In-N-Out in Los Angeles with her group after returning from their flight that never made it to Las Vegas. Kim, Khloe Kardashian, Kris Jenner, Tracy Romulus, Olivia Pierson and Steph Shepherd wait to order at In-N-Out. Khloe Kardashian exits In-N-Out with a beverage."

"There is something in the French countryside, with its flat, anytime light, that demands melancholy. And I wonder what it means to knowingly eat a last meal.... It was just before Christmas 1995, the shortest days of the year. The president's doctor slept on the cold floor of the house in Latche while the president [Mitterrand] slept nearby in his bed, snoring lightly... He asked that the rest of his family and friends be summoned to Latche and that a meal be prepared for New Year's Eve. He gave a precise account of what would be eaten at the table, a feast for thirty people, for he had decided that afterward, he would not eat again. 'I am fed up with myself,' he told a friend."

"I don't need to make things in three dimensions in order to imagine them; on the contrary, I build maquettes in my head. I imagine flavors, sensations, textures—and all the emotions they provide. Later, to 'fix' these ideas, I write them out as recipes. As I compose a recipe, I create what I call a 'taste scenario.' I visualize putting the pastry in my mouth, and imagine what happens first, second, third, and what may surprise. I plan these events from the outset. Everything starts with taste; form comes much later."

"The notion of time in your work reinforces the feeling of space. In the next pastry, the vertical configuration of the components, like a geological cut, stresses the importance of sequence—in both time and space—in the tasting experience.... Time seems to dilate when eating a pastry, as if, like the frames of a filmstrip, we experience flavor 24 times a second."

Act III. The Set

We pass into the Nave, where we find a curiously-shaped table draped with white silk sheets, around which curves a subterranean stream that sparkles in the light of the small open fires, themselves perfectly sparkle-shaped, hovering an inch above the table. Low stone seats (not pictured) of a number corresponding perfectly to our party are placed between the stream and the table's edge. Reflected in the mirrors laid upon the tablecloths are the bulls and horses painted around and above us on the rock walls. On the mirror's surface are arranged snow-white shapes, edged in red: curling ribbons; stars and hearts; skulls and crosses; Egyptian pyramids; the manger in Bethlehem; the Nina, the Pinta, the Santa Maria; the atom bomb and its aftermath; the Hollywood sign; the stories of our own lives — centuries of shapes and scenes, showing the history of our species.

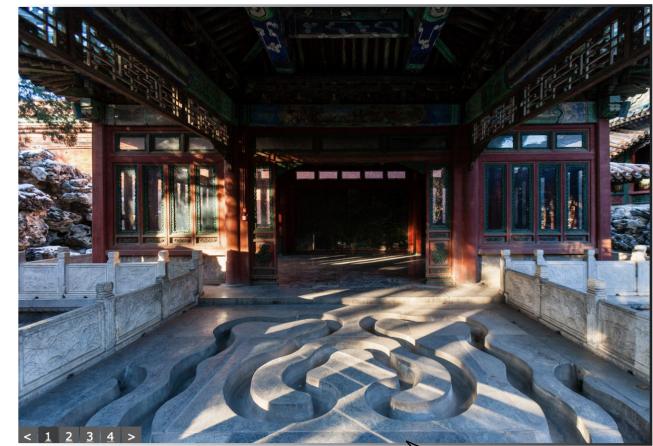
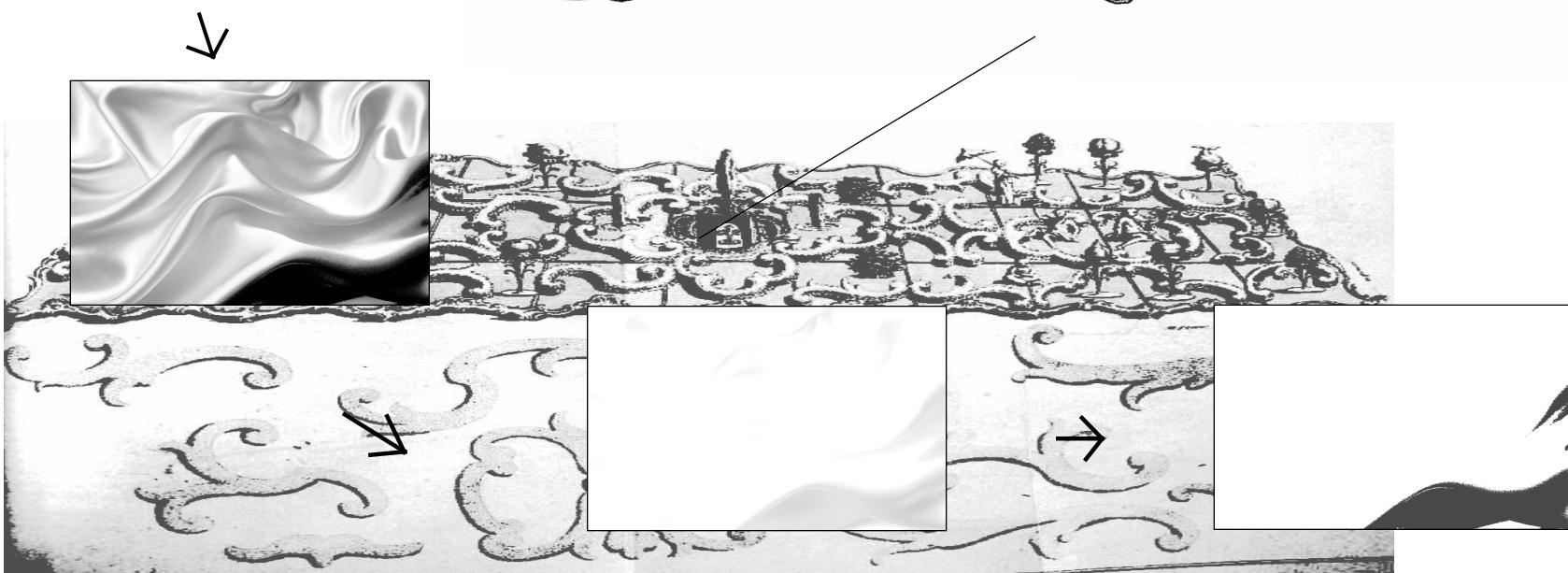
Mirror (sur-tout-de-table): covered in white sculptures

Flame (gas-blue center; orange edge): illuminates table, can be used to heat food

Rubber conveyor belt (clockwise): carries out food

Earthenware glazed bowls & silver cutlery

Stream (counter-clock-wise): dishes are thrown into the water after each course and are carried away

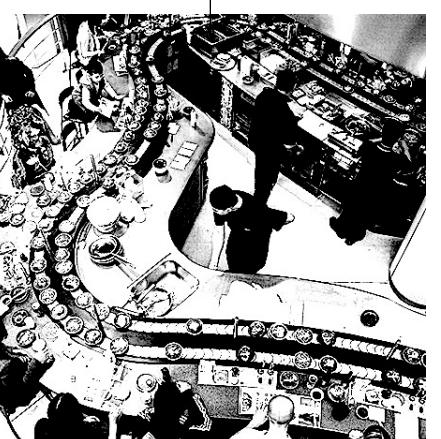


"For decorative art historians, sugar sculptures pose a unique problem—they are ephemeral, and historians must speak for objects that no longer exist. Sugar creates the most temporary of art forms; its impermanence as a medium is similar to that of ice. The art of the 18th century French confectioner survives today in Gilliers's illustrated plates. The sugar arabesque forms seen in Gilliers' illustration are completely rococo in style. They are resting on a 'surtout de table' (a decorative piece with mirrors designed for the center of a table)."

"On a recent visit to San Francisco, I stopped for lunch in Japantown. Online reviews had called the place I picked a "sushi train" restaurant, but when I entered, there were no tiny locomotives towing nigiri in sight. Perhaps, I thought, as I ordered off a touchscreen, because of the pandemic.... Then a whirring sound made me jump, and a sleek, tiny bullet train swept by at eye-level, carrying a plate of sushi to the customers seated to my right. These automated systems are a feature of what are usually called conveyor-belt restaurants. They arose as both a way for restaurateurs to save on labor costs and for busy city workers to order quickly without too much human interaction. But the idea of replacing waiters with tiny transportation systems has a long history, and has spread around the world.... You might be seeing a lot more of these restaurants, especially as COVID concerns and hiring shortages linger....

"...In the Forbidden City's Pavilion of Floating Cups, visitors will spot a large stone tablet. This artifact once had water running through the winding, snake-like loop carved into its surface. Similar setups exist in mansions and pavilions across China, all inspired by a series of poems from the 4th century. Literati set cups of wine to float through tiny artificial rivers, often as a drinking game. Players had to compose complete poems before a cup of wine made a complete circuit. In Guilin, this Song-dynasty meandering-river floating-goblet stone, was unearthed in 1996."

"On the 3rd of March 323 AD (according to the Lunar calendar), forty-two literati gentlemen assembled at [famous calligrapher, government official, and military general] Wang Xizhi's home in Lanting to celebrate the Spring Purification Festival in his garden. Among them were writers, poets, painters and calligraphers.... They enjoyed a drinking game that was called "floating goblets." As the gentlemen sat on stones along both sides of a small winding creek, goblets that were filled with rice wine came floating down the creek. Whenever a cup stopped floating and came to a stop near one of the banks, the man sitting closest to it had to empty the cup or compose a poem on the spot. This unusual game resulted in thirty-seven poems being composed that spring evening by twenty-six of the participants."



Act V. Epilogue

The Perfect Fractal Snowflake has melted in its bowl, so we lap it up. We have remembered centuries of our culture & now the meal is finished. It has been silent in the Nave except for the conveyor belt (creaking), the flames (hissing), the stream (tinkling), the silverware (scraping/sparkling), and eating. As the activity of and around the table halts, we now perceive a faint crunching sound that grows louder and louder. So absorbed by the banquet were we that we had not noticed the fancifully-shaped mirrors overlaying the table—the *surtout-de-table*—edging, like tectonic plates, gradually away from the edges and towards the center of the table, grinding against one another at the seams of their curling silhouettes. All of a sudden, there is a CRACK! and a thousand lightning-shaped fissures appear, running all through the surface of the mirror, shattering the images of the bulls & horses reflected therein. And along the central axis of the table, the plates have formed a raised ridge, and our faces are reflected back at us along the slopes of the mirrored mountain range. Like a reverse volcano, the flames are extinguished with a pop. It is pitch black! We grope in vain for our small lighters and flashlights. The sight of the few painted animals had made us happy. Now we feel our loss ten times more. We mourn the disappearance of the images we once gorged ourselves on so thoughtlessly: the images we took, reproduced, sent, changed, bought, sold, destroyed, recovered, searched, found, collected, and invented; images of ourselves, each other, our world, no world at all.... But now... a bright light floods our sight: fluorescent & icy blue, the kind we have not seen in decades, but which we remember from car dealerships, malls, pharmacies, phones, and computers. Soon our eyes adjust, and we see that the light is emanating from the table itself: underneath the paper-thin white silk tablecloth, there is, unmistakably, a screen....We peer down into the table. To the left and the right of the area where our bowls had been set, a group of dark markings begins to appear, executed in gestural sweeps and strokes. The pattern, though similar, is different for each of us. And as the marks accumulate, we recognize the movements our own arms must have made, where they touched the table—reaching, resting, cutting, etc—appearing like arrows pointing left and right and before and behind us, forming an elaborate wreath of rococo curlicues & arabesques that wind around the edge of the tablecloth. The table was a *touchscreen* all along! One by one, the markings fade...

And then, for exactly one minute, a final image appears, right where our food had been, one for each of us, each one unique: whether photo of event or fabrication of an imagined instance; made by man or by machine or both; perfectly ordinary or strange & surreal; it is the kind of image that's as lovely & as slippery as a path of sparkling light on sunset ocean, so good you can barely believe it is really there. Knowing that it will go, we see it as we have seen no image before, like a fire flickering out with which we would sear our irises, and our mind's eye tries its best to consumer it whole.



Luna moth, Tumblr.

More Reading / Ingredients / Bibliography

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Appendix II.

More Photos from Kim's 42nd Bday That Never Was / More Diagram Interpretations (OpenAI)

