

Café Carbon

THE GLUTS

The Gluts are an environmentally crusading girl band comprising Gina Birch, Kaffe Matthews and Hayley Newman. We formed in 2009 to write *Café Carbon*, 16 songs about food and climate, which we took to the Copenhagen Climate summit (COP15) in December 2009, adding our voices to other concerned citizens urging governments around the world to take action on climate change.

Before leaving for Copenhagen, we wrote lyrics and music and rehearsed our dance moves. Wearing black upcycled costumes made from charity-shop finds which would otherwise have been dumped in landfill, we sang along to our backing track; 1980s-style eco-electro (think George Monbiot meets Lady Gaga), from a time when electricity and the dawn of the synthesiser first made their invasion into musical possibility. We performed our absurdist/agitprop songs from *Café Carbon* on the Klimate Express, a specially commissioned train, on the way to the summit and on the main march in Copenhagen a day later, where we narrowly missed mass arrest (900 people were arrested) by the Danish police.

Our name, The Gluts, is an allegory for capitalism, overproduction and consumption, their roles within climate change and its effect on our world and people. Gluttony, as opposed to alcoholism, is part of an addictive cycle where the abused substance cannot be avoided. For example, people can eat too much, but, unlike alcoholics, who often abstain from consumption altogether, a glutton can't avoid food completely without starving.

In *Café Carbon* we sang about global food production, growing our own food, food waste, water shortage and excess, famine, modernity, green capitalism, carbon trading and extinction. We warbled about freegans, supermarkets flying their food around the world, the Arctic and Arctic Roll (remember it from the 1970s?). Our songs were ludic, passionate, loving, absurd, sweet and deadly serious ballads of climate, ecology and conscience. Through *Café Carbon* we wanted to construct a dialogue of awareness around food security, food imperialism, supermarkets and oil, vibrantly illustrating the current disenchanting global image of food production by championing the fact that food is not a luxury but a basic requirement for human life. We also sang about wider issues such as greenwashing and carbon trading, which was seen at the time as a market solution to limit carbon emissions.

While on the train and at the march we provided audiences with a menu of songs, from which they were encouraged to choose a starter, main course, dessert and drink. Once the meal had been selected, we would sing it. Our starters were short and pithy, our mains more substantial and filling, while the desserts were incredibly sweet. The only drink available on our menu was tap or sparkling water.

Through *Café Carbon* we asked questions about how artists might take creative action to contribute to political change. More specifically, we asked how the female voice might manifest itself in this realm and how humour in music can work as protest by subverting or undermining power.

We worked together as musicians, researchers, writers, performers and film-makers, harnessing our collective skills and creative talents. We wrote lyrics and music, we sang and danced, shot pop videos and made the musical documentary film *The Gluts Go to Copenhagen*. In the documentary, we are seen rehearsing, travelling to Copenhagen and at the march; a mix of song, laughter and defiance performed in an atmosphere of latent police repression. Back home and disappointed at the summit's outcome, which bore no legally binding agreement on carbon emissions, we filmed ourselves letting our passionate anger loose on a Tube train.

On our return to London, we sang to Christmas shoppers outside the John Lewis department store on Oxford Street and at Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park, and we organised a COP15 event to which artists and activists who had been to the summit were invited, to share their work and experiences of the summit with a London audience.

Café Carbon Menu

Starters

Stone Cold Soup
Cheap Cheep Chicken
GMNO

Main Courses

A Sparrow inside a Duck inside a Swan
Spaghetti Carbonorama
OilY
Skip Soufflé and Bin Burger
Raw Onions and Milk
Rook Pie with Hoover Sauce
Extinct Animals
Roast of Greenwash
Locally Grown Worm, Cabbage and Potato Salad

Desserts

Passionfruit Pie
Arctic Roll

Drinks

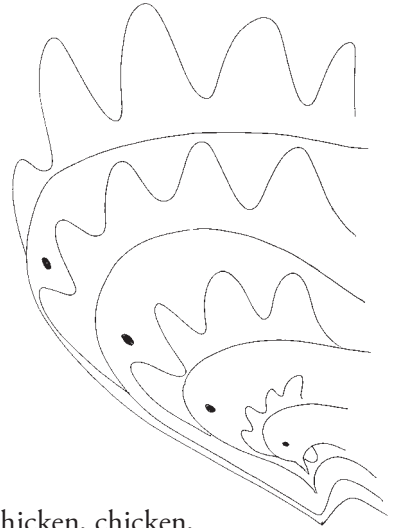
Tap Water

Cheap, Cheep Chicken

Cheep, cheep, cheep, cheep
Let's eat chicken 'cos it's cheap
Chicken's cheap, chicken's cheap, chicken's cheap
Chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken
Roast chicken, cold chicken, chicken wings, chicken in a basket,
chicken breasts, lemon chicken, chicken kebab, chicken in
breadcrumbs, chicken pie, fried chicken, chicken soup, chunky
chicken, chomsky chicken, chop down chicken, chicken pasta,
chicken noodles, chicken in breadcrumbs

Chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken
315 times a week

Let's eat chicken 'cos it's cheap
Cheap, cheep, yeah, yeah
We can make it so many ways
We will eat it every day
Not for us a special feast
We'll just eat chicken for every meal
Cheap as chips and twice as nice
We'll eat chicken every night
Tesco chicken breasts £4 a kilo



Chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken,
chicken, chicken
Chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken,
chicken, chicken
Chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken,
chicken, chicken
Chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken,
chicken, chicken
Chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken, chicken,
chicken, chicken

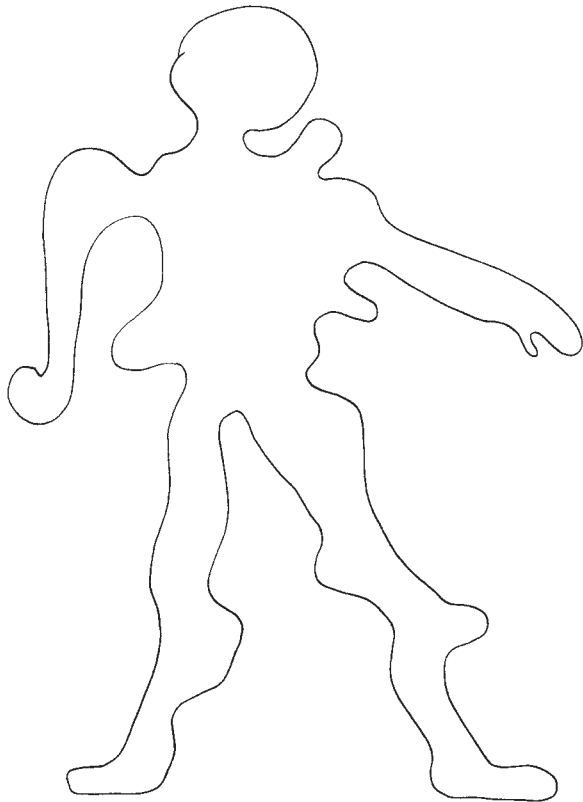
Do the funky chicken now yeah, yeah, yeah!

GMNO

GMNO, GMNO
OH NO GM NO
GMNO, GMNO
OH NO GM NO

Gender Mode
Generate Modem
Genial Moderate
Genital Modal
Gene Module
Gentle Modish
Gentlewoman Modern

Genetically Modified
Genetically Modify
Genetical Modif
Genetica Odif
Gen Mod
Gn Mo
Go Mn
GMNO



Spaghetti Carbonorama

Carbon trading
Environmental fading
Buy rights to pollute
Don't think about fallout
A new economic power
Over the poor towers
Carbon, land, air and sea
Offsetting electricity

Leave oil and gas underground
Where it was found
Halt carbon addiction
Reshape predictions
The time to change has nearly gone
Renewable is the only one
The final sources of energy
Solar, wind, tidal, Ecotricity



Oily

Welcome to Oily and Deep fried, there is Climate Change ahead, so
please buckle your seat belts and drive carefully

When we started hunting and gathering, we never thought how
much our food would be travelling

Plant it, feed it, pick it, sort it, pack it, cool it, store it, fly it, drive it,
sell it, buy it, drive it, cook it, eat it, throw it

SUPERMARKET

Greasy, smelly, slimy, blimey, gimmie oil ooohhhhhhhh babay!

Drain it, chop it, blend it, grate it, squeeze it, peel it, mash it, roll it,
mix it, can it, bottle it, label it, sell it

SUPERMARKET

Deep fried

The greasy poles

Sun in the sky

Oil in the earth

Energy from below

Polluting with CO₂

Food is a fragile bounty

Plant it, feed it, pick it, sort it, pack it, cool it, store it, fly it, drive it,
sell it, buy it, drive it, cook it, eat it, throw it

SUPERMARKET

SUPERMARKET

Petrol stations

All the fashion

Have food courts

For oily sorts

Drive in for cool cats

To get your trans-fats

Food flying

Food frying

Frying food
Flying food
Food travels so fast
It has grown wings
Food flying
Food frying
Frying food
Flying food
Food travels so fast
It has grown wings

Plant it, feed it, pick it, sort it, pack it, cool it, store it, fly it, drive it,
sell it, buy it, drive it, cook it, eat it, throw it

SUPERMARKET

Greasy, slimy, blimey gimmie oil ... ooohhhhhhh babay!

Fish 'n' chips
Burger 'n' fries
Veg 'n' fertiliser
Fruit 'n' plastic
Olive 'n' oil
Palm 'n' oil
Food is nourished by oil.

Kaffe: Why are cooks cruel?

Hayley: Because they batter fish and whip cream ...

Greasy, slimy, blimey, gimmie oil
Greasy, slimy, blimey, gimmie oil
Greasy, slimy, blimey, gimmie oil
Oily olay!
Oily olay!
Oily olay!
Oily olay!

Drain it, chop it, blend it, grate it, squeeze it, peel it, mash it, roll it,
mix it, can it, bottle it, label it, sell it

SUPERMARKET

Roast of Greenwash

Where does the money lie?
 I need a slice of this environmental pie
 Marketing, greenwashing
 Job creation, grant sloshing
 Environmental prostitutes
 Sucking up to this new politic
 Extracting cash to build my nest
 My needs, my greeds, my hairy chest

Think of an idea
 Tune in to the Zeitgeist
 Make some money
 It's a sure-fire heist

Who is the owner of this planet?
 I need to buy some more, dammit
 I haven't got enough
 Give me more of your stuff
 Put a green stamp on it
 I just don't give a shit
 Green packaging, slish, slosh, greenwash
 Green earnings, bish, bosh, greencash

Think of an idea
 Tune in to the Zeitgeist
 Make some money
 It's a sure-fire heist

Need a gadget to unscrew your eco-light bulb? Come to us...
 Solar-powered eco-backscratcher? Come to us...
 Electric Rolls Royce? Come to us...
 Wind-powered toilet-seat heater, bidet and bottom-dryer?
 Come to us...

Save-the-rainforest water shower? Come to us...
 Recycled crocodile-skin matching his-and-hers luggage? Come to us...
 Solar-powered icemaker? Come to us...

Arctic Roll

Ice cream in a sponge
Eat it in the lounge
It melts on the tongue
A frozen carpet of nostalgia

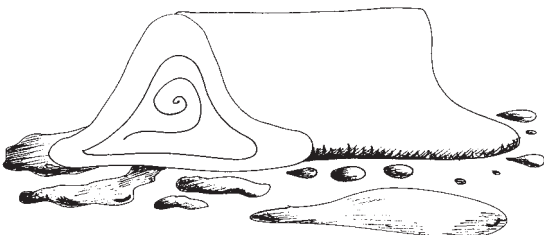
Roll up, roll up for some Arctic Roll!
The last desert on earth
Come see the wilderness in retreat
Ever-decreasing, light-absorbing
Melting, shrinking, warming, releasing ...

Created in the 1970s
Crammed with preservatives
Eaten with boil-in-the-bag cod in parsley sauce
Twenty-five miles sold per month

Roll up, roll up for some Arctic Roll!
The last desert on earth
Come see the Arctic haze
Red and brown in the atmosphere
Polluting, lingering, staining, obscuring ...

Relaunched in 2010
New triple-choc version
Comfort food extraordinaire
Three million boxes sold since then

Roll up, roll up for some Arctic Roll!
The last desert on earth
Come see the wildlife search for food
As they adapt to their habitat
Suffering, starving, fighting, dying ...



Tap Water

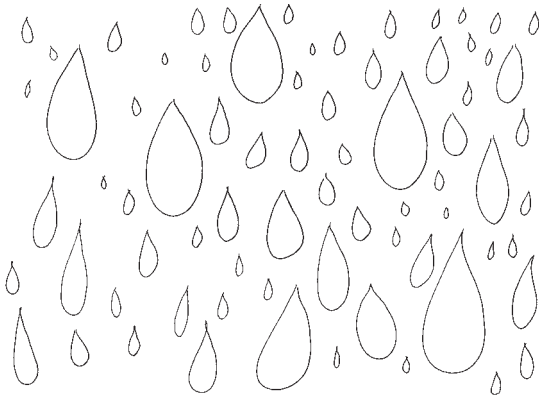
Water is too much, water is too little
 Water is no more for all
 I need water is a call

Water is too much, water is too little
 Water is no more for all
 I need water is a call

Wet and splashy, cool and freezy
 Slurp it down, free and easy
 Slippy, sippy, tasty-wasty
 Oops, things are turning nasty

Floods and famines follow
 People haven't enough to swallow
 Water, water everywhere and not a single drop to ...
 drop, drop, drop, drop, drop, drop, drop, drop
 Water, water everywhere and not a single drop to ...
 drip, drip, drip, drop, drip, drop, drip, drop, drip
 April showers
 Not enough for flowers

Water is too much, water is too little
 Water is no more for all
 I need water is a call



Extra helpings

The Glut gorges, a bellyful gets bolted and then choked on. Clogging, cloying and congesting on its way down, crammed, devoured and drenched in an engorged, excessive feast. The Glut demands to be filled up, to be flooded and full, ready for more glutting, gluttonising, gobbling and gorging. A gormandised, gulp-guzzle, greedist is jam-packed; closer to an over-brimming-overdose than anything else. The Glut is *over* – overfed, overflowing, overfull, overloaded, overstuffed, overweight and oversupplied. Satiation is never reached; a swamped, sickened, skinful of stodge, stuff and surplus, wolfed down without giving a shit. Beware the gobby glut who fills a gape – *Resisto Glutonis!*