

What Can a Kitchen Teach Us About the Time We Live In?



The Kitchen Practice Collaboration with the Dabeï Sein project are coming to an end as a result of funding cuts imposed by Berlin's political bodies. This decision demonstrates how those in power choose to withdraw support from socially necessary projects at a time when collective care, shared resources, and democratic spaces are more urgently needed than ever.

Feeding the community, creating spaces for encounter, and enabling learning from one another are not optional cultural activities. They are essential social infrastructures. The withdrawal of funding from such practices reveals a political logic that prioritises efficiency, visibility, and measurable outcomes over care, relationality, and long-term social impact.



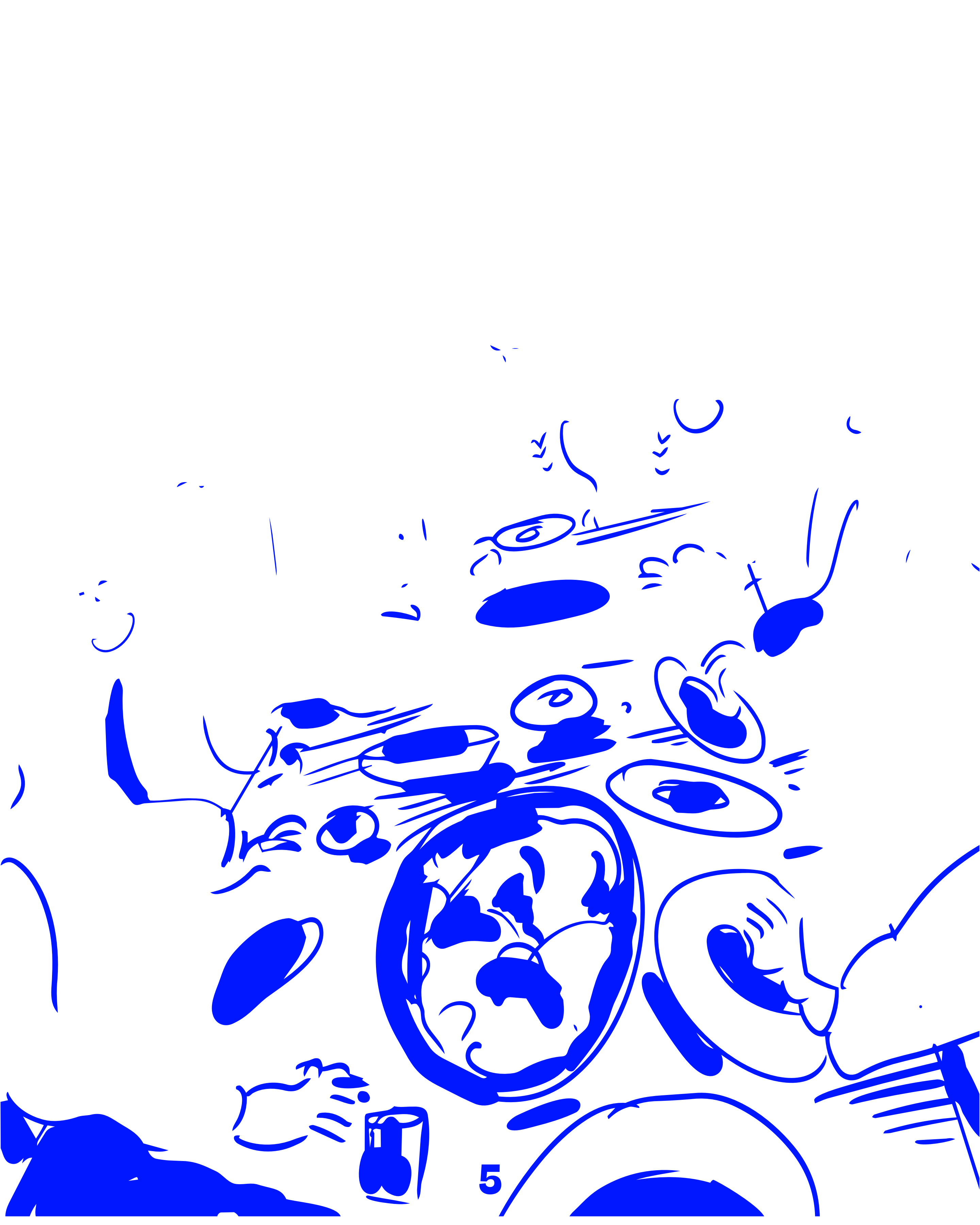
Within this space, aesthetic practice is inseparable from social life. The kitchen functions as a dialogical field where meaning is generated through interaction and exchange. Artistic value is not located in an object, a performance, or a final outcome. It exists in the relationships that are formed, sustained, and transformed over time. Participation is not symbolic. It is material, social, and grounded in shared responsibility.

This approach resonates with what Claire Bishop describes as dialogical aesthetics, where meaning is produced through social exchange rather than representation. In this framework, dialogue is not an added layer or a method of mediation. It is the primary material of the work itself.

We are not a cooking group.

Our work observes, analyses, and reflects on the kitchen as a site of learning, a site of knowledge production, and a space for dialogical aesthetic practice. The kitchen operates as an everyday public space where knowledge circulates outside institutional hierarchies and beyond formal educational systems.

In the kitchen, learning happens through proximity, repetition, care, and shared labour rather than instruction or expertise. Knowledge is not delivered from expert to participant. It is produced collectively through doing, listening, remembering, and responding to one another. It is embodied, relational, and situated. It emerges through gestures, routines, recipes, stories, silences, and forms of mutual attention.





The kitchen challenges dominant models of cultural production that privilege visibility, authorship, productivity, and spectacle. Instead, it foregrounds processes that are slow, informal, and often invisible. Oral histories, embodied knowledge, migrant survival strategies, and everyday forms of care are treated as central modes of cultural and aesthetic production rather than marginal or supplementary content.

For migrant communities in particular, the kitchen operates as a space of emergency knowledge. When orientation to one's mother tongue, cultural context, or social infrastructure is disrupted, embodied knowledge becomes a navigational tool. Cooking, sharing food, and gathering together allow people to reorient themselves, transmit knowledge without forcing it into institutional language, and establish new relationships in unfamiliar environments.

The kitchen also functions as a counter-institution. It resists the separation between private and public, between art and everyday life, and between teaching and learning. It questions who is authorised to produce knowledge and whose knowledge is recognised as legitimate. By refusing professional hierarchies and institutional gatekeeping, the kitchen becomes a democratic infrastructure where undocumented, marginalised, and minoritarian knowledge can exist on its own terms.

In the capitalist time we live in, where speed, extraction, and efficiency dominate social life, gathering itself becomes a radical act. Making time to be together, to listen, to cook, and to share labour is already a practice of democratic knowledge. Social relationships are not a by-product of the work. They are the work.

This is the kind of practice Berlin's political bodies have chosen to defund.

This decision will not stop us.

We will continue to hold the space every Wednesday at Nachbarschaftshaus under a new model we call **Kitchen+.**

Kitchen+ acknowledges the kitchen not only as a place of food preparation, but as a space of learning, care, and collective knowledge production. A space where gathering remains political, relational, and necessary.



The kitchen remains a site of learning, resistance, and collective imagination. A space where knowledge is practiced rather than consumed. Where democracy is enacted rather than declared.

**Come and join Every
Wednesday, 17.00–20.00
at Nachbarschaftshaus
Urbanstraße**