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"The Political Life of Cancer: Beatriz da Costa's *Dying for the Other* and *Anti-cancer Survival Kit*"

Kelley, Lindsay

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One of the late Beatriz da Costa's last projects, *Dying for the Other* (2011), presents three channels of video footage from testing environments, including laboratories, hospitals, kitchens, and living rooms offset by pink mice wriggling in their cage, living and dead mice weighed and handled by breast cancer researchers, and the materials of laboratory and medical work: test tubes, petri dishes, scalpels. Together across three shared video channels, bald pink mice have materially moved into da Costa's frail body through a deft game of pharmacological cat's cradle. This article will investigate da Costa's *Dying for the Other* and a related project, the *Anti-cancer Survival Kit* (2013), as engagements with Elizabeth Wilson's articulation of the gut as "an organ of mind." Figuring the eating body as ecosystem illuminates how cancer's political potential furthers both Wilson's desire for "sustained attention [to] the nature of attacking, sadistic impulses, and the difficulties of how to live (and politick) with them" and Scott Gilbert, Jan Sapp, and Alfred Tauber's call for "intermingled symbiont relationships." The multispecies power structures playing out in *Dying for the Other* and the *Anti-cancer Survival Kit* reveal the political life of cancer to be animated by cellular and culinary anarchisms, bile, toxicity, frustration, and, in da Costa's words, "more than even I can take." (Text from author's abstract)

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