

# Womxn in Food - FOOD XX: Honouring the game changers and supporting the startups



By [Ruth Cooper](#)

26 Feb 2019

The inaugural Womxn in Food - FOOD XX Awards and Symposium took place at Jetty 5 at the V&A Waterfront on the 12 February 2019. Conceived and managed by experiential marketing company Studio H, the event was an informative, inspiring and delicious celebration of local and international game-changing women in the food and drinks industry.





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Many conversations were started about finding solutions and opening doors, kitchens and senior board positions for women in all aspects of the South African food and drinks industry. On the menu were talks, panel discussions and workshops from local and international chefs, writers and food designers, in-between vegan ice-cream tastings, plant-based snacks, sweet treats, pop-up shops and the culmination of the event, the FOOD XX Awards.





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### Empowering womxn in food with new conference FOOD XX

Ruth Cooper 26 Sep 2018



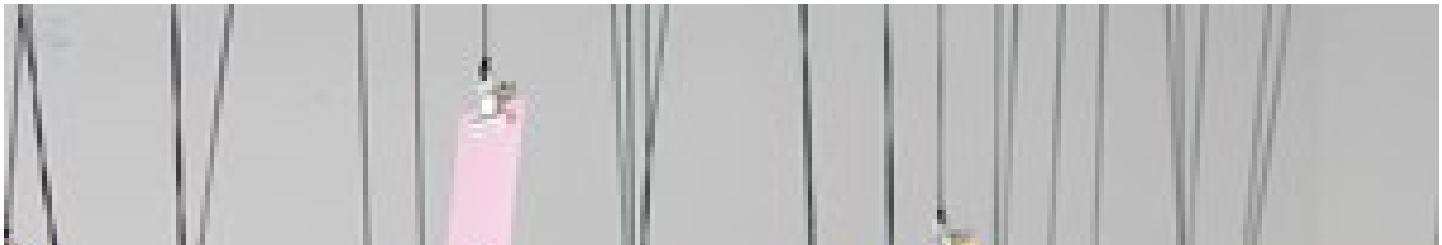
### For womxn by womxn

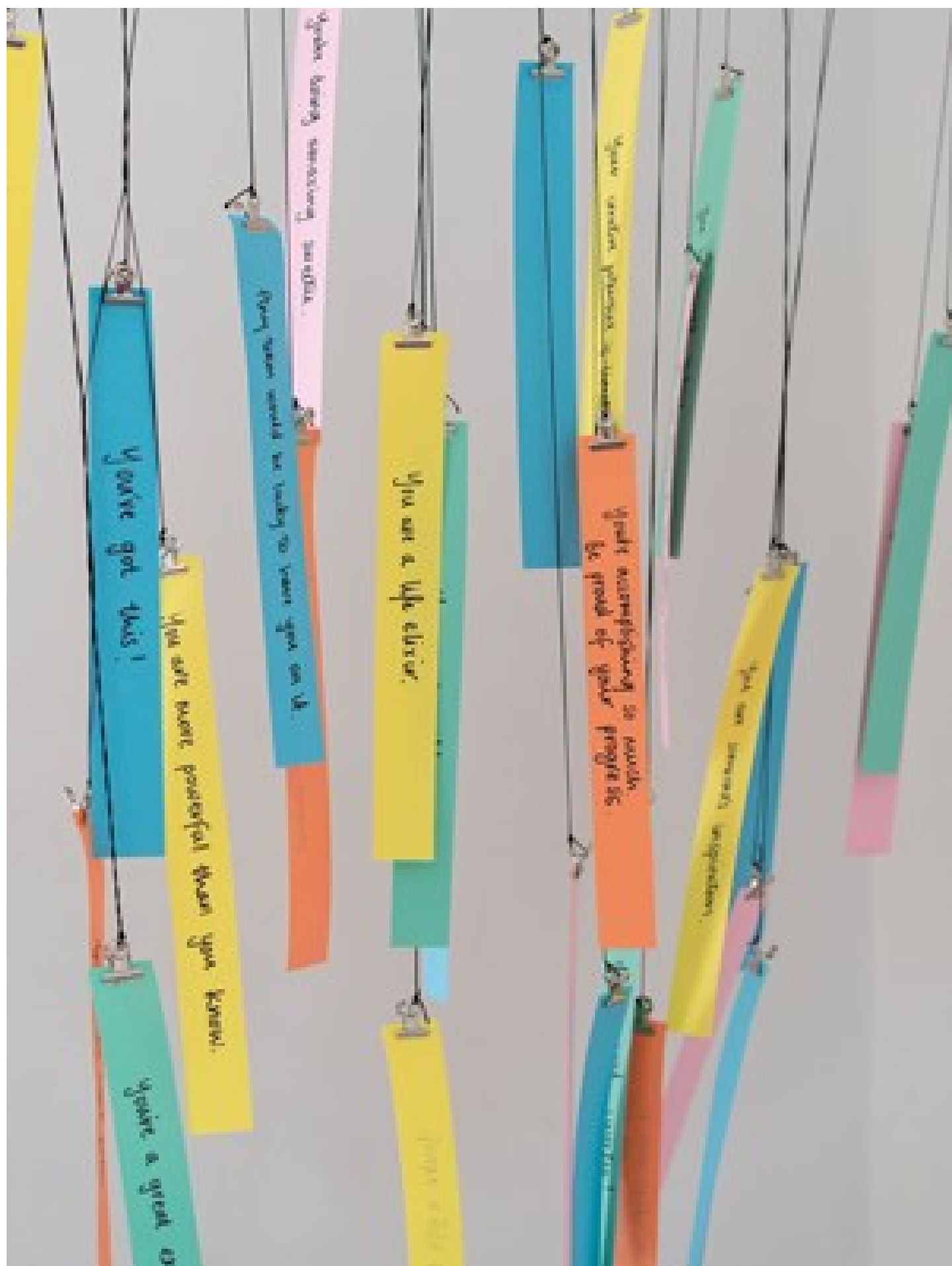
First up was a welcome and “Pause Exercise” by clinical psychologist Carly Abramovitz who was on hand throughout the conference to chat to any of the participants. In fact, much effort had been made to make the conference a safe, supportive and non-judgemental space – a “Don’t Panic Room”, with soothing music and comfy bean bag, was offered as well as a complement installation and confession wall, in which anonymous comments and queries could be posted and answered by Carly. No doubt that this was a conference created for womxn by womxn.





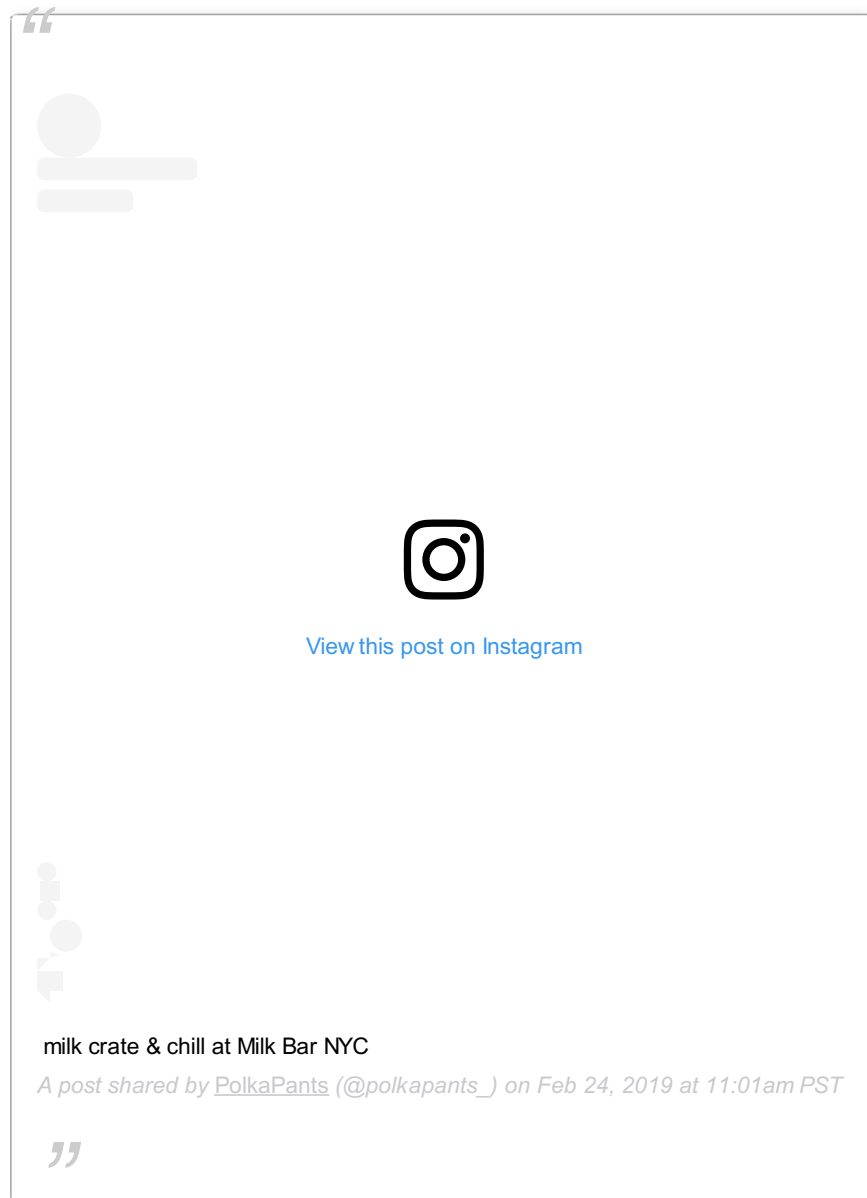
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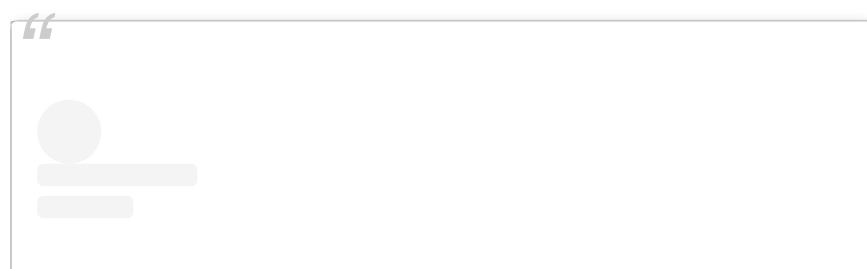
Australian-born, London-based Chef Maxine Thompson, founder of [Polka Pants](#), presented a talk titled “Making solutions through businesses”. After seeing a gap in the market for well-fitting and stylish chef pants for women, Thompson created Polka Pants, combining two of her passions – food and fashion. Fittingly following in her mother’s footsteps who created special sky diving suits for women. She emphasised that even though she began with no set career path perusing something she felt passionate about led to a successful business.

“ *“When I was cooking I was happier,” Maxine Thompson.* ”



A panel discussion on the state of Food Media today led by Isnay Govender with panelists – Mogau Seshoene, Tshepang Molisana, Zola Nene and Sandiso Ngubane – discussed challenges as well as solutions for media houses today when it comes to inclusive and diverse coverage of food-related topics and how food can be used as a bridge for diversity through media.

“ *“We can’t eat this cake alone, it’s quite a big cake,” award-winning wine writer Tshepang Molisana.* ”







[View this post on Instagram](#)



Lean In | “No person is your friend who denies your silence or your right to grow.”-Alice Walker | Thank you for all of your safe spaces, @fxd\_xx. Honoured to have sat beside giants and icons. Thank you for your thoughts, your poise and your power. Thank you for shaking the table @ishaygovender @zola\_nene @thelazymakoti @skinnylegendlovesfood - thank you for leading our panel with grace @ishaygovender. Congratulations on your Award | 💎💎: @jonesingrid at #FoodXX Dress: sourced by @elize\_grobler Bag: @tg\_duze for @atgekasi\_\_ x @pongacz\_sa Shoes: @louboutinworld from @icecherrydesign Necklaces: @nomihandmade from @michelleheslop1

*A post shared by Tshepang Molisana (@tshepangmolisana) on Feb 13, 2019 at 7:29am PST*

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## 10 female-run food businesses to champion in 2019

Studio H 22 Jan 2019



Next up UK ‘baketress’ Lily Jones, founder of [Lily Vanilli](#), spoke about “How to give back while running a successful business.” Having received much positive press in the companies formative years and even cooking for celebs like Elton John and Lady Gaga, Jones explained how she has used her notoriety to not only promote her delicious baked goods but also to give back through initiatives – such as creating the [Young British Foodies](#) (YBFs) community and awards and the [Bake for Syria](#) global movement. By hosting Syrian themed pop-up dinners and creating Syrian recipe books the initiative has raised over £40,000 and counting for children in need in Syria.

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A post shared by Fiona Day (@figandliquorice) on Feb 7, 2019 at 11:05pm PST

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Dutch food designer [Chloe Rutzerveld](#) discussed futuristic food trends in her talk “The future of food and women’s role in what we will be eating in 2050.” From lab-bred meat to alternative meat choices such as mice and unusual animal parts, Chloe began by posing the question “How far we are willing to go to continue eating meat?” in a sustainable way.

“

*“Eating is more than nourishing the body, it’s a culture and religious tradition.” Chloe Rutzerveld*

”

Chloe also spoke about conceiving and creating Strooop! a twist on the popular Dutch *stroopwafel*. By using 100% vegetable by-products from sweet potato, beetroot and celeriac, she created a healthy and sustainable alternative to the traditional baked dough and caramel syrup version.



Image sourced from [www.chloerutzerveld.com](http://www.chloerutzerveld.com)

## Workshops and awards

The latter part of the conference saw hands-on workshops such as rediscovering local indigenous foods of the Western Cape by foods innovator and activist Loubie Rusch as well as a workshop on South African women in fisheries by Weskus Mandjie founder, fisherwoman, farmer and activist Hilda Adams. And of course the first ever FOOD XX Awards, which saw

15 well deserving South African women in food and drinks honoured for their contributions to the industry. [Click here to see the full list of winners.](#)



Winners of the women in food FOOD XX Awards announced  
13 Feb 2019



All in all a truly inspiring and nourishing event and the start of an important movement, we can't wait till next year Studio H!

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What an inspiring day we've had at @fxxd\_xx! We met some of the smartest, most capable, hard-working and passionate womxn today ♥️ Many conversations were started, hopefully many will continue. Celebrating womxn doing great things in the world of food was one of the highlights of the day. Head to the link in our bio for the list of inspiring winners. Long may we cheer each other on! 💎💎 #foodxx

*A post shared by Eat Out (@eatoutguide) on Feb 12, 2019 at 11:44am PST*

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[View gallery](#)

ABOUT RUTH COOPER

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