



ANNA SHEPARD

My year of living sustainably

WEEK 16: USING POTATO PEELINGS

We're big fans of potatoes in this household. Many of our favourite meals centre around mash, wedges or roasted tatties. Blame my husband's Irish heritage, but our food waste bin's never short of peelings. I'd like to reinvent them, inspired by anti-waste chef Tom Hunt, who turns them into crisps.

We wash and dry them before dropping them into hot oil for a few minutes. While they cool, we sprinkle over salt and marvel at our wonky crisps. Tom suggests adding a squeeze of lime and a touch of chilli, which turns them into a tasty grown-up snack.

Food waste campaigner and chef Martyn Odell oven roasts them for 15 minutes. He also transforms carrot peelings into a salty, crunchy umami powder. His playful Instagram videos (@lagomchef) reveal the potential there is in reinventing scraps, as well as the fun you can have in the process.

Don't expect your peelings to look like normal crisps, but at least they don't come in a package that combines plastic and metal in a way that's difficult to recycle.

My next challenge is to avoid peeling spuds completely. I convince my husband – whose family recipe for roast potatoes is sacrosanct – to try parboiling them in their skins, once he's given them a quick scrub (any remnants of dirt come off when you boil them). They are delicious and slightly less fatty because a peeled spud soaks up the fat more easily.

We also try skin-on mash, but prefer a creamier version. Anyway, we need to create a few peelings so we can have them as snacks.

For more food waste tips see Max La Manna's #TooGoodToWaste series on the Waitrose YouTube channel



Illustration: Amelia Flower/Folioart



Illustration: Alex Green/Folioart

MY WEEK

Alvin Hall



A full-circle moment as I paid it forward to the next generation

Last week I flew to Brazil to meet artist Leandro Júnior and to attend the opening of his first solo exhibition at the Museu de Arte Sacra de São Paulo. The trip connected me to my own youth in ways I couldn't have imagined. Before this visit, Leandro and I had never met, but a little over a year ago, a long-time friend, Simon Watson, who is a São Paulo-based art adviser, asked me if I would join a group of other collectors in financially supporting Leandro's participation in an artist-in-residence programme in the city. Instantly, I said yes. An intuitive feeling – in my gut, not my head – said this was something I should do.

After years of collecting contemporary art, I was ready for a different type of art adventure. And given my interest in Brazil, my visionary friend's track record of recognising, nurturing and guiding young artists and his forthright honesty, the one thing I felt sure of was that the journey with this artist would be, at the very least, memorable.

In fact, it's been extraordinary – and a journey about much more than art. I've learned about quilombos – the remote, difficult-to-access places in Brazil where escaped slaves settled. I've read about Jequitinhonha, the small city north-east of Minas Gerais that is Leandro's roots and the source of inspiration for his paintings and sculptures. And my knowledge of Afro-Brazilian history has deepened and widened. But it is Leandro's artistic journey in the residency programme that

has been most impressive, inspiring, and affecting. Because his financial resources were limited, early on, he'd dig up clay from the land around Jequitinhonha and used it to make not just ceramic sculptures, but pigments for his paintings. He continues to use clay because it keeps him and his art practice connected to his roots.

Some of Leandro's early paintings are seascapes that contain prints of his hands, made by dipping them into the clay-pigment mixture and pressing them onto the painted image. Others depict the look and texture of the exterior walls of homes in Jequitinhonha, with red clay running down and through the lower blue border that is a characteristic decoration. In his portraits, most of the people are seen from behind looking into the distance, with clay used to delineate the infinite horizon toward which each of them gazes.

These observations and thoughts about his artworks, along with inferences I'd made about the man himself, were in my head when I walked into Leandro's studio and met him for the first time. When he heard my name, his face beamed. I felt enveloped by his smile as he walked towards me to give me a hug. In that moment, I felt Leandro's deep, heartfelt appreciation and gratitude. It was clear that participating in the artist-in-residence programme with its financial support had changed the trajectory of his life. And I realised he'd given me a gift greater than art. He had given me a full-circle moment.

In 1969, when I was growing up in the piney woods of the sandy Florida Panhandle, Dr Joel Fleishman, creator of Yale Summer High School in New Haven, Connecticut, had selected me for a programme that opened my mind and eyes to new possibilities and paths. When I look at Leandro's portraits of people, especially of young people, looking out into the open landscape, I can't help but see a connection to my young, rural self – wanting, believing, hoping, and trusting in a better future.