



3D PRINTER MAKES PANCAKES THAT LOOK LIKE DINERS' FACES

 FOOD & DRINK

Kinneir Dufort are using their 3D printer to make the ultimate personalized breakfast — a pancake with the diner's face on it.

3D printing has ushered in the era of customized food, and without any doubt, the most satisfying use for this new technology is the creation of edible treats which bear a strong resemblance to the eater. We have already seen 3D printed [Gummy Men](#), and now [Kinneir Dufort](#) are using their 3D printer to make the ultimate personalized breakfast — a pancake with the diner's face on it.

Kinneir Dufort's prototyping director Ian Hollister explains how it works —

“Combining CNC (Computer Numerical Control) technology with embedded face recognition and tracking software, the system dispenses layers of batter directly onto a hot plate allowing the creation of detailed and complex images within the pancake surfaces. As the conventional pancake batter is applied it immediately starts to cook and change colour and as subsequent layers are added the different tonal qualities of the image build up.”

First, a digital camera captures the ‘sitters’ likeness and an image processor extracts the information needed. Kinneir Dufort's bespoke software transforms brightness into contours, which are then produced gradually by the batter dispenser. The greatest challenge is timing the printing process so that the pancakes are both delicious and bear an uncanny resemblance to the diner's face.

The system could be adopted by restaurants aiming to offer customers a unique, humorous dining experience. The camera could capture the diner's portrait on arrival, for example, and their individualized portrait pancake would take no longer to produce than a regular stack. If nothing else, it would certainly help the waiting staff avoid mixing up orders.

Last month saw pancake-makers across the world attempt to fry batter with a perfect likeness to [R2D2](#) and other heroic figures in celebration of Shrove Tuesday. Let's just hope these new capabilities don't kill off the dying art of analogue pancake painting.

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