



The pigeon breast was served on the plate carved open. We also served the leg (fig. 4). I wanted to serve the leg as brutally as possible, that's why it was completely intact with the claw still on it. Served on the side were the pigeon jus and a second jus made with truffle, hay milk, tonka beans and lime. We also served the pigeon heart. This was first pickled in brine and then cooked with butter, stock, salt and pepper in the *Roner* at 64°C. Then we sliced the heart in half and dehydrated it in the *Easy Dry*. After that we ground it to a powder and mixed it with *fleur de sel*. At the last minute the pigeon was seasoned with its own heart. The dish was garnished at the table with shaved black truffle for a celebratory finish.

Every detail of this dish was connected to my farewell. When I think about goodbyes I think about flowers. So that's why there was also a rose made of beetroot (fig. 2). The beetroot was marinated, vacuum-packed and steamed. The rose was then assembled leaf by leaf with every rose consisting of twelve to fourteen leaves – a hell of a job but I absolutely wanted it: I thought it was a lovely poetic element on the plate. The vinaigrette that was served with it was flavoured with merlot vinegar and the rose was surrounded with baby herbs and twigs, symbols of a new beginning.

The beetroot came back in other textures too, for example the crisps in the shape of rosebush leaves. I had a mould made especially for that. The mould was filled with an emulsion of cooked beetroot and rice flour, then baked to crisps in the oven at 90°C. Next to that on the plate were tiny dots of beetroot gel, rounds of beetroot jelly and freeze-dried beetroot powder (fig. 4). We also made a beautifully smooth beetroot emulsion with a little vanilla, grapeseed oil and olive oil. The biscuit you see there is flavoured with grains that pigeons like to eat.

And then there are the feathers... The feather on the left is edible and made from root vegetables (fig. 3). It's an ode to two of my greatest sources of inspiration: the fashion designers Martin Margiela and Ann Demeulemeester. These are people who stir something up with their own unique style – at least in me. And they often work with feathers, so there you go. The feather on the right was real (fig. 5). There was a pigeon ring attached to it with a little note bearing a personal message to my customers. What did it say? That it's time to take the next step in my cooking career. That this is why I'm leaving the nest heading towards a new future in search of new flavours, new creations and new challenges.

“THIS DISH WAS MY WAY OF SAYING: SWEET PEOPLE, THIS WAS IT.”