

## Creative Living

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Corinne Abatt editor/644-1100



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Elizabeth Chiu King speaks about food preparation and presentation as if she were describing the making of a painting. The cover of her new book, above, shows the individual steamers, which she found in Hong Kong, and a dish that she created and named "baroque pearls," meat balls with rice on the outside.

## New book

## In her hands, food becomes art

By Corinne Abatt  
staff writer

Elizabeth Chiu King of Bloomfield Hills is well on her way to becoming the Julia Child of Chinese cuisine.

Her new book, "The 15-Minute Chinese Gourmet," Macmillan, will be in the book stores in April. And she's already gathering information for more books.

Since, to King, cooking is an art form, she loves to demonstrate and expects that she will be doing just that on a national level once "The 15-Minute Chinese Gourmet" hits the bookstores.

Meantime, she will be doing one local program through the Cranbrook P.M. series. It will be 7-9 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27, at Kitchen Glamour, Hunter's Square, 14 Mile and Orchard Lake, Farmington Hills.

In two hours, King will cook an elegant seven-course Chinese dinner. Since she is not only an excellent, creative cook, but a polished conversationalist as well, she shares her philosophy, her first-hand knowledge of the life and culture of China and her thoughts about food preparation and presentation as she works.

"I will be showing how easy it is to change flavors, to be creative. There are so many variations," she said. "I equate cooking to the fine arts. (What I fix) depends on how I feel and what I can find in the market. It's totally eclectic."

KING, WHO attended a convent school in Hong Kong as a child, has a bachelor's degree from the University of San Francisco, a master's in English from the University of California and a master's in library science from Wayne State University, makes excellent use of her highly sophisticated organizational skills.

For instance she said every recipe in her new

book was prepared and tested at least 25 times. That was partly to test the subtle, sometimes dramatic changes that can be made in every recipe, but mostly because when it comes to her art form, she is a perfectionist.

She recalled that her husband, Albert, a professor of engineering at Wayne State, said after watching her many tests on a recipe, "It will never be perfect." She responded, "I want to get it as perfect as I can."

She compared the struggle for perfection to "polishing a gem."

This was, in a way, her second struggle. The first was to find an agent. She was confident she had a marketable, valuable manuscript. The problem was to have an agent with a good track record in the publishing field accept her as a client, because, at least nationally, she was unknown.

She and her husband had chosen the agent, the problem was contacting him and convincing him of the value of her project. King said she made 20 long-distance calls to his office before she actually talked with him.

When she finally had an appointment with him, she and her husband made the trip carrying two suitcases full of equipment to prepare and cook a surprise Chinese banquet in his office so she could demonstrate her skills.

HOWEVER, BY that time the agent had seen her manuscript and had put a contract in the mail. The agent saw a bright future for King and together they developed ideas for several books, the first of which is "The 15-Minute Chinese Gourmet."

King sounds almost like an Academy Award winner as she speaks of the friends who helped make her book possible — David McCarthy, then chief book buyer for Hudsons, now with Handle-

man Corp. of Troy; David Louie, former news editor of Channel 7; Jack McCarthy of Friday Feast; and her father and the nuns from the convent in Hong Kong who taught her to strive for excellence.

"Actually the book is a work of many, many people," King said, "especially my mother and my mother-in-law."

She sounds more artist than cook as she speaks of her work. "I aim for simplicity. To me art is simplicity. I like space. To me, space is freedom. When I cook and think I have classical music playing. In the dry periods, I go to a play or a concert and I get recharged again."

She talks of all the ideas she has for foods and their presentation and says with a sigh, "There is so much to share."

## King to prepare 7-course feast

"The Gourmet Chinese Dinner . . . for the '80s" is the title of the program that Elizabeth Chiu King will give at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27, at Kitchen Glamour, Hunter's Square, Farmington Hills.

Price of the two-hour program, sponsored by Cranbrook P.M., is \$20. Enrollment is limited and reservations are required, 645-3633.

King will prepare and cook a seven-course Chinese meal, which includes wonton soup, crunchy salad, Sichuan beef and other delights.

## Michigan writer whips up fine new spy thriller

By Pearl Ahnen  
special writer

"Berlin Fugue," J.C. Winters, Aron, \$3.95, paperback.

For readers who don't know Anton Drakov, former director of Russia's KGB dirty tricks department, this novel, "Berlin Fugue," by Michigan author, J.C. Winters (Gilbert B. Cross), will serve as an introduction.

For those who have followed the adventures of Drakov in the spy thrillers "The Drakov Memoranda" and "The Caternary Exchange," the mysterious Drakov this time is pitted against Joshua Bulwar Davies, rotund director of Department D of the British Military Intelligence.

Weighing in at 280 pounds, Davies' taste in exotic food runs a good second to his taste for violence. And there is something fascinating about a big, powerful man who does evil in the name of righteousness. This is the message in this intriguing novel, "Berlin Fugue."

Another book about Drakov you might ask? Yes. But the subject hasn't been exhausted, in fact the author doesn't set modest goals this time, he goes beyond. He tells a story against three dramatic backgrounds — East Berlin, England and Israel.

CROSS (AKA WINTERS) is a professor at Eastern Michigan University, in Ypsilanti and makes his home in Ann Arbor. He uses the pen name Winters for his spy thrillers because he has two separate writing careers, writing non-spy work under his own name, being the second.

This third novel about Drakov begins in a promisingly eccentric fashion. A pivotal character, Gary Letterville, is introduced in the first chapter. He's an American, a Lieutenant attached to the Bizone Economic Commission in Germany. He has a brief and memorable affair with an East Berlin blonde. The first chapter sets the scene for a story within a story.

"Berlin Fugue" tells of the intense intrigue that develops when the rotund Davies masterminds a case of deep penetration at top security levels by the KGB.

Drakov, who has become a Russian defector with a devastating secret, makes a last-ditch plunge toward freedom. These seemingly unrelated events — Letterville's affair, Davies' discovery of security penetration and the defector with a secret — come together with an impact that is shattering.

Others pulled into the net of intrigue are Gell, who could be the crucial link to the Russian agent's survival. She relies too much on drugs, though.

Then there is Kropikov, a KGB assassin who matches wits with Davies, his secret of the sexually bizarre

## review

makes the reader cringe. Then there is the key to Davies' investigation — Sidney Ricketts, a cockney whose undying allegiance is to the Soviets.

The author skillfully takes the reader back and forth across the line between fantasy and reality. In one instant amid elaborately detailed scenes of seedy Berlin flats, the reader encounters inescapable events occurring.

The sharp revelations of the other-side of life remind us that everyone lives with their own secrets be they as simple as little white lies or as deadly as a bloody ax murder. And yet, as in his other two novels, there is the thread of humor and wit throughout. It is rapidly becoming Winters' trademark.

THE HUMOR and wit is ever evident, especially when Davies and his twin sister, Dolores, equally rotund, appear on the scene. Dolores and Davies live in a mansion "though Victorian in scope and aspect, was in part Tudor." The house is called Willow Dene and is set on 10 acres of meadow and woodland called Duncan's Farm.

Brother and sister inherited the house and farm from their father. There is an amusing scene where their workroom is described. Everything is in duplicate, from twin television sets, phones, file cabinets, desks, couches, work stations, word processors and scales. Davies weighs himself every Sunday and every Sunday the scales register 20 stones (280 pounds). Dolores' weight isn't revealed.

While Davies is working for the Crown undercovering spies and decoding important messages to save the state, Dolores is deep into still another romantic novel, plotting, writing scene after scene.

And it's not unusual for Dolores to read passages from her current work-in-progress to her brother, who offers suggestions, and even helps with revisions.

The humorous scenes are sprinkled throughout the riveting chase from Israel's cells to Berlin's decaying flats, to the peaceful scene at Willow Dene. Frequently Winters' eye for the bizarre makes us smile.

There are several moments of reflections on life, love, loyalty and loneliness; there also are descents into comedy and a wealth of insights as Winters turns the ordinary into the extraordinary.

"Berlin Fugue" isn't for the faint-hearted or weak-stomached, but followers of Drakov's earlier adventures will find "Berlin Fugue" a good read.

## Ensemble broadens its repertoire to include Old Testament works

By Corinne Abatt  
staff writer

Husband and wife opera stars Emilia Cundari and Sergio Pezzetti of Southfield have been pouring their energies into the Bel Canto Ensemble for almost a decade.

The group which numbers between 20 and 30 singers and instrumentalists

with Pezzetti as conductor as well as artistic director and founder, gives a series of sacred music concerts throughout the metropolitan area during the Christmas season and another series for the Easter season.

The current series will begin about the first of March and continue through the first week in May. And bookings

are still being accepted.

The musicians and vocalists range from 12 and under to retirees and come from many different communities, from St. Clair Shores to Livonia and Ann Arbor. They rehearse in Lathrup Village.

When it began, Pezzetti was using many of his private vocal students, but studying with either him or his wife isn't a requisite for participation.

"We're looking for more singers and instrumentalists and they should call me for an audition," he said.

THE ONE change in the Bel Canto Ensemble since it began concerns the repertoire. Pezzetti said it is being expanded to include a substantial amount of Old Testament music which means the ensemble hopes to do concerts in synagogues.

"I've spoken with some of the cantors about it and they've been very receptive. We'd like to do a program next year with "Joshua" by Handel in the first half and selections from operas in the second half," Pezzetti said.

And if there's anything these two know well, it's opera. Pezzetti, a comic basso, made his debut with the Met in 1971. Cundari was a Grinnell Scholarship winner in Detroit. Later joined the

City Center Opera Company of New York City until Rudolph Bing signed her with the Met.

Both have sung major roles on all of the great stages of Europe and the United States and while their stage careers have been on hold while raising a son and teaching privately as well as at local colleges and universities in the area, there is a possibility that they both may return to the opera stage.

COMIC BASSOS, at least the truly talented ones, are rare (one who continues to sing is in his 80s), and Pezzetti has been told his return would be welcome. Cundari, a soprano, also knows that she could return to the opera stage should she decide to do so.

But, whatever their future decisions, the Bel Canto Ensemble will continue to provide exciting experiences for area audiences as well as for the singers and instrumentalists.

Cundari and Pezzetti admit they are demanding teachers who strive for excellence. Both believe in the importance of solid basic training as the cornerstone of a successful career. And both are success stories, exemplifying their philosophy about their art.

To schedule auditions or inquire about bookings, call 568-3545.



## Rivera retrospective

The major retrospective of works by Diego Rivera at Detroit Institute of Arts continues through April 27. After that it will travel to Philadelphia, Mexico City, Madrid and West Berlin. But it is most complete in Detroit where it originated with all of his huge preparatory drawings (cartoons), and the permanent frescoes, which fill one gallery of the museum. The exhibit includes a photography exhibit, a 30-minute movie, 115 paintings and many other works. The painting above is "The Flower Carrier," 1935. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday and until 7 p.m. Wednesdays through April 23.



DAN DEAN/ALTT photographer

Emilia Cundari and Sergio Pezzetti are deeply devoted to the Bel Canto Ensemble, which they founded and continue to nurture. Their goal is to give singers and instrumentalists experience in performing and an understanding of the demands involved.