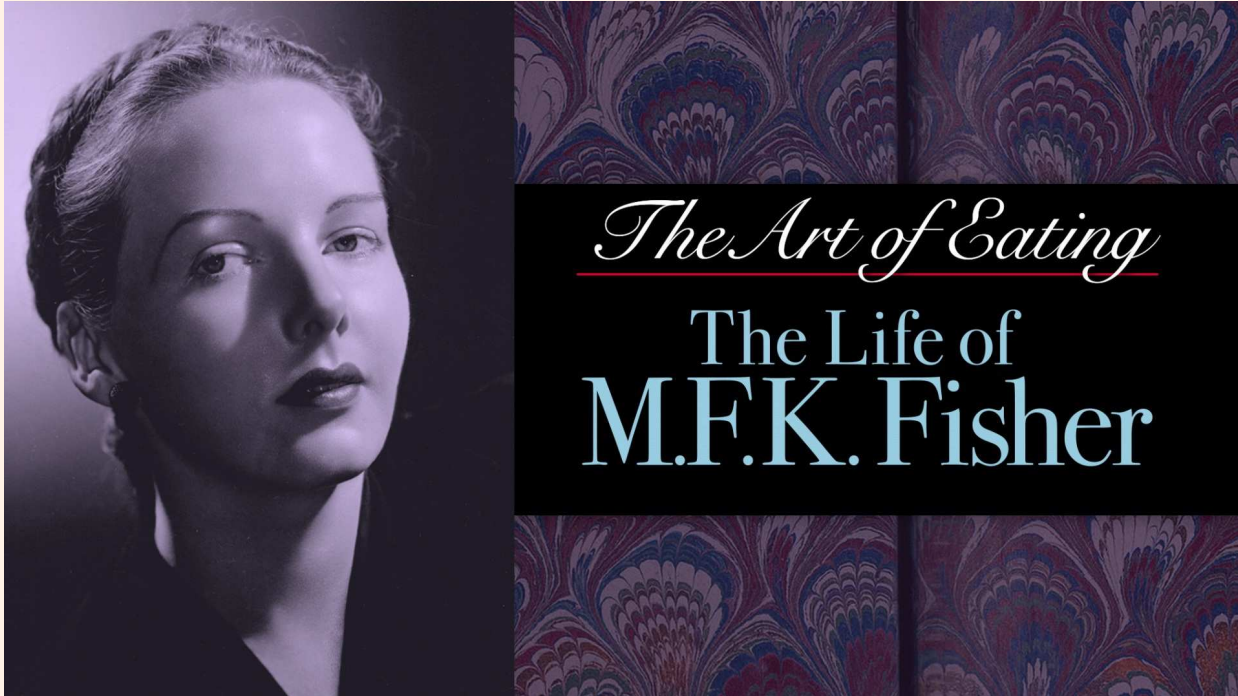
A black and white portrait of M.F.K. Fisher, an elderly woman with white hair, resting her chin on her hand. The background is dark and slightly out of focus, showing what appears to be a kitchen or dining area.

The Art of Eating
The Life of
M.F.K. Fisher

A DOCUMENTARY FILM

by Gregory Mark Bezat



THE ART OF EATING LOOK BOOK

a film by Gregory Mark Bezat

LOGLINE

In *The Art of Eating: The Life of M.F.K. Fisher*, a groundbreaking female food writer champions human dignity through the love of cooking, companionship and culture.

Fisher spoke eloquently and often about the value in eating good food together, the antithesis of the fast food culture. She champions a simple idea: learning to eat is learning to become human.

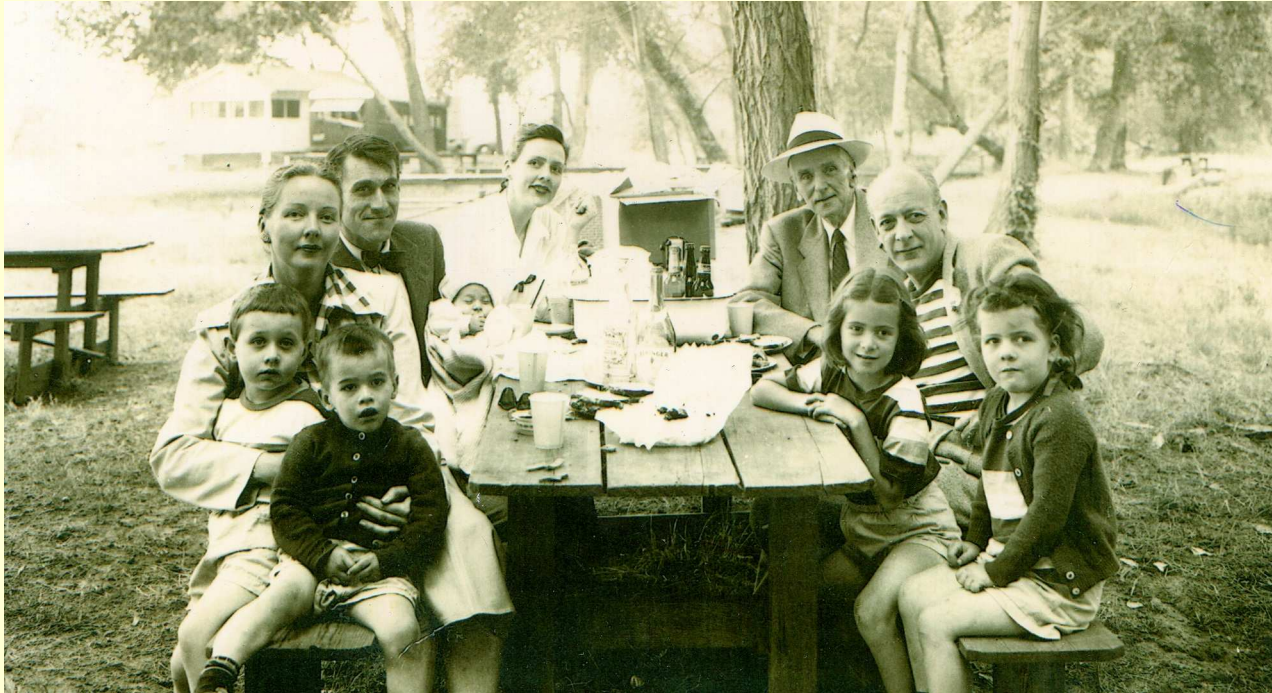
SYNOPSIS

This documentary film is about the renown food author M.F.K. Fisher, whom W.H. Auden described as “the best prose writer in America”. Our film traces the remarkable life of this vibrant, sensual writer, and explores the impact of her ideas on food, companionship and its meaning in our lives.

Like many female writers, M.F.K. Fisher’s work was marginalized even while it laid the foundation of modern literary food writing. This film aims to return Fisher to her proper place as a major American author and the grande dame of today’s food revolution.



M.F.K. Fisher in Napa, California



"Why do you write about food, and eating, and drinking? Why don't you write about the struggle for power and security, and about love, the way the others do? The easiest answer is to say that, like most other humans, I am hungry."

M.F.K. Fisher

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

While working at Sunset Films, I met and interviewed Fisher at her home in Sonoma, California. We spoke at length about her writing, her library, and her life. She was erudite, flirtatious, daring, witty, and captivating, just like her prose. Her voice transcends food. It is ultimately about companionship, friendship, and a curiosity to understand others. As a filmmaker, I want to bring this striking voice and powerful story to the screen.

I also will be exploring Fisher's perspective on the profound indoctrination that fast food culture has imposed on America. As "flavorists" in laboratories concoct the "natural and artificial flavors" found in almost every processed food product on earth, I feel it is important to understand how deeply corporate agribusiness has pervaded our thinking and actions. As a filmmaker, the goal is not to pound the viewer with how horrible fast food is, but rather to leave the viewer with an overall feeling of excitement for, as Fisher put it, "The Art of Eating" and share her enthusiasm for a rich, vibrant American culture.

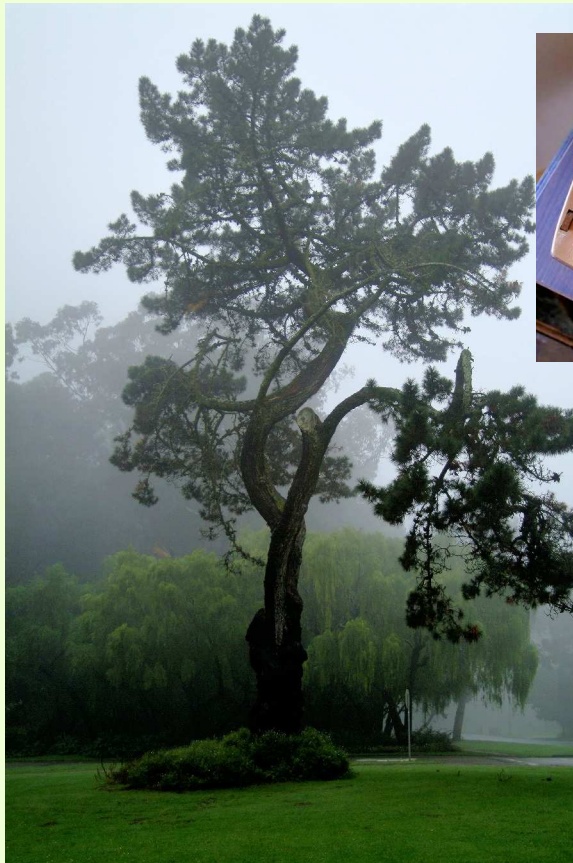
CREATIVE APPROACH

We envision a three-act film steeped in an atmosphere of memory and emotion, a fast-paced telling of M.F.K. Fisher's life story of fame and tragedy told through her own words and voice.



LOOK OF THE FILM

The topic and locations will allow filming sensuous images, from a Provence farmers market to the lush landscaping that graced her last years in California mixed with visuals depicting life in the 20's, 30's and 40's. We will use a mixture of narration, new interviews, archival and original footage.



HER WORLD

“I must have been a very objectionable child – especially during my first years in high school – so serious, so sad and drudging in my pursuit after things. I can still see myself, trying to look down my nose at popularity, and sex, and cheating.”

M.F.K. Fisher



Raised in Whittier, California 1920s



Dijon, France 1930s



1930s Dijon, France

“Ribaudot's Aux Trios Faisons was a special restaurant. It was dingy and plain on the outside and after tasting the sauce you'd agree with them. It's an art and a religion, this French food, and I'm an ardent follower of the faith.”

M.F.K. Fisher

Aux Trios Faisons Restaurant, Dijon, France



HER IMAGINATION



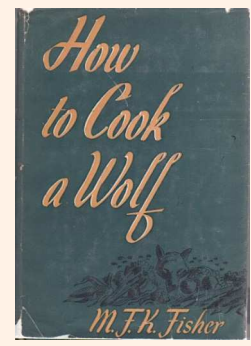
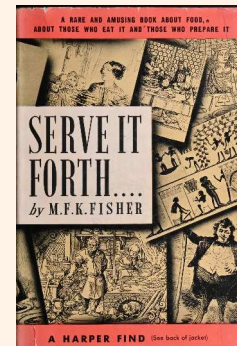
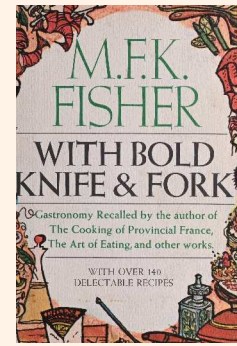
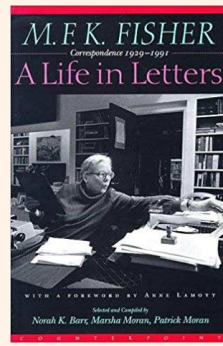
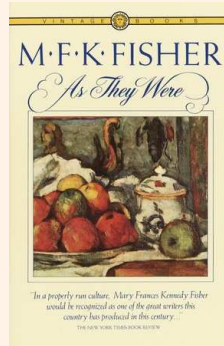
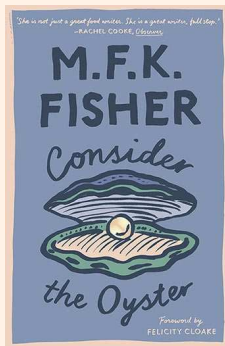
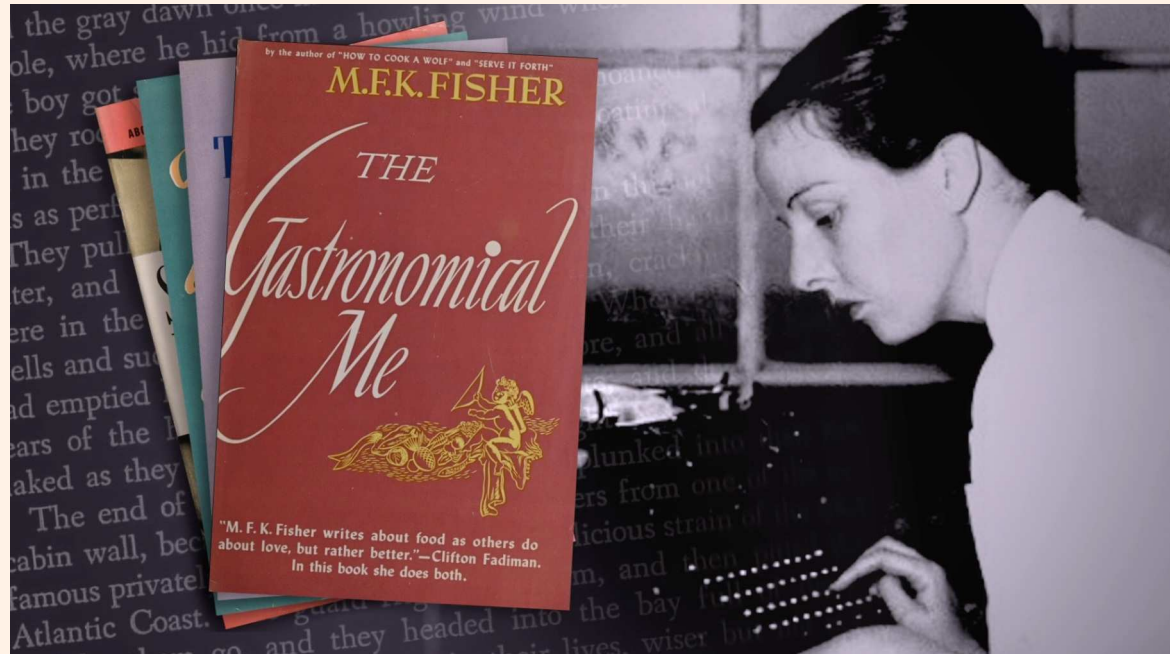
“Sharing food with another human being is an intimate act that should not be indulged in lightly.”

M.F.K. Fisher



THE BOOKS

As corporations and consumers embraced the advantages of mechanization and convenience, Fisher stood up for the importance of real food, writing over 30 books, thousands of magazine articles and essays celebrating foods' power to elevate the human spirit.



ADVERSITY AND RESILIENCE

By 1943, Fisher was thirty-five years old, divorced, lost her second husband and was on the brink of single motherhood. She would go on to marry again and later divorce and have a second child and lose her beloved brother.

Her later years and literary work would be ruled by her numerous appetites: for love and attention, for work, for fame, for travel. She was nothing if not complicated.



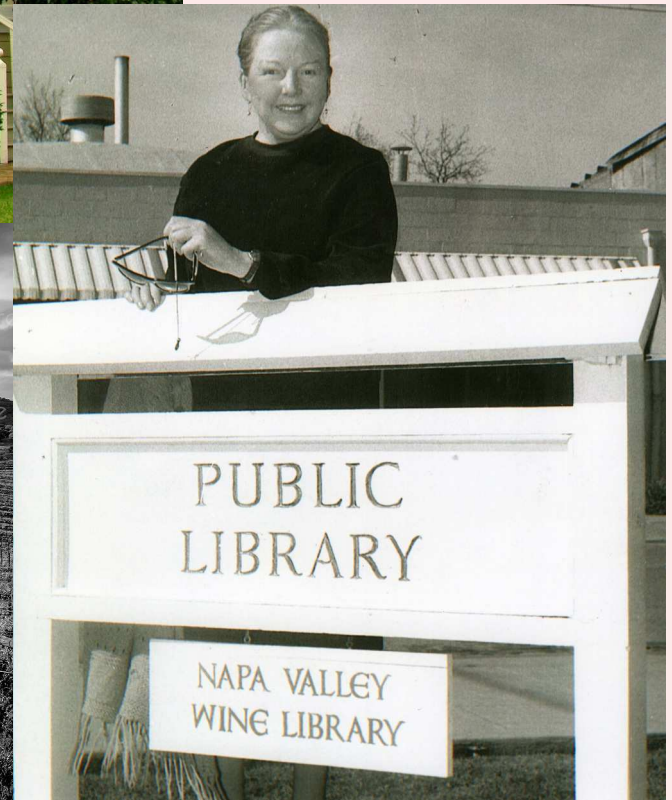
*Mary Francis and Dillwyn Parrish
Her second husband*



Napa Valley 1950s

"I cannot count the good people I know who, to my mind, would be even better if they bent their spirits to the study of their own hungers."

M.F.K. Fisher



2020 VIDEO INTERVIEWS



"Mary Frances was an opinionated woman, she knew what she was talking about, food became an interest in life, this is what she wanted to write. Way out of her time, talking about food in a way that people have not done before."

Jacques Pepin



"I've admired many women. It turns out they all have what Mary Frances had, which is a kind of confidence in herself to live her life the way she wanted."

Alice Waters



"If it hadn't been for James Beard and Julia Child and M.F.K. Fisher and Jacques Pepin, I don't know where American cuisine would be today. Because they really made it interesting, made it fun, introduced to the exoticness of food and culture."

John Ash



"She's telling you to pay attention to every sense. She does it in an extremely graphic, sensual, and I would say feminine way. She is observing the world in a way that very few people do. Nothing escapes her."

Ruth Reichl

WOMEN AND EQUALITY



Fisher developed her voice at a time when the gourmand was masculine and women were tasked with creating delicious food to satisfy men's appetites. Her use of sensuous language to describe food and partaking of its wonders served as an open expression of female desire.



INDUSTRIAL FAST FOOD



Fisher's style of writing about food was revolutionary for the early 20th century, particularly during the cultural shift to industrialized agriculture and food, a development Fisher strongly condemned as early as the 1930s. Factory-produced, canned, and fast food created a standardization of flavor that served as a barrier to the pleasures and subtleties of taste that she felt inspired the human spirit.

A FOOD REVOLUTION



As Fisher's influence and popularity was growing, a revolution in the way we understand, prepare, and experience food was simultaneously developing in California, emerging from the 1960s.





RELEVANCE

Fisher's work reminds us that our relationship with food is as important as our relationships with each other. When we eat good food, all of our senses are engaged, which ignites our emotions. Good food inspires us to care for ourselves and others, which helps us shape how we live. And what makes her as relevant today as ever is an idea that Fisher wrote about over and over: the sense of human dignity expressed through a love for food and culture. And the world of food Fisher described for us expands with each generation. Younger chefs, food writers and stars today continue to take her lessons forward.

LEGACY



"So it happens that when I write of hunger, I am really writing about love and the hunger for it, and then the warmth and richness and fine reality of hunger satisfied, and it is all one."

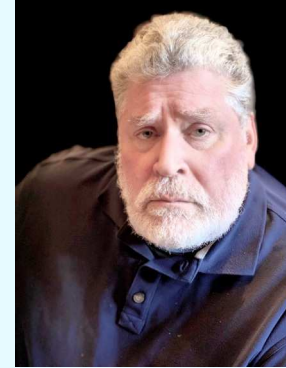
M.F.K. Fisher



Gregory Mark Bezat *Producer/Director*

In addition to making a living as a producer, director and editor in San Francisco for over 35 years, Gregory Bezat has made films about food and culture most of his professional life. He has a deep feeling for people, their values and beliefs and was lucky enough to meet and be inspired by Mary Frances at Last House. Greg has a strong passion to make a first-class film that presents a rich and textured portrait of this gifted writer.

As owner and Creative Director of Bezat Video Group, Greg has produced and directed dozens of documentary films and TV shows, thousands of programs for corporations, and food and travel programming. Documentary projects include films *Green Gulch*, *The Matriarch*, *NUMMI*, and *The Ride to Wounded Knee*.



Camille Servan-Schreiber *Producer*

Camille Servan-Schreiber has produced several films including the Peabody Award winning *Eames: The Architect and the Painter*, about the iconic designers of the Modern Era and more recently completed *American Jerusalem: Jews and the Making of San Francisco*.

Previously Camille directed and produced several films including *Bible Belt Atheist*, a short that premiered on New York Times OpDocs series and *The Secrets of J. Edgar Hoover* which aired on National Geographic. Camille has received many honors including the Golden Spire Award from the San Francisco Film Festival, a national Emmy nomination, and the National Education Writers Association First Prize for Broadcast Journalism.



Sara Maamouri *Editor*

Sara Maamouri is an Emmy nominated documentary filmmaker and editor who has explored a diverse range of topics for over 20 years. Her work touches on social, educational and political issues, from a teacher and students performing under extraordinary circumstances in *The Music's Gonna Get You Through* (2010) to rebuilding a life in a former war zone *Amal's Garden* (2012). Her most recent films include *We Are Not Princesses* (2018) and the Peabody Award winning film *The Judge* (2017). A multilingual Tunisian educated in New York and California, Sara brings cultural sensitivity to her editing, production and story development.



CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about the Company or the Project, and to discuss ways to get involved in the development, financing and production of the project, contact:

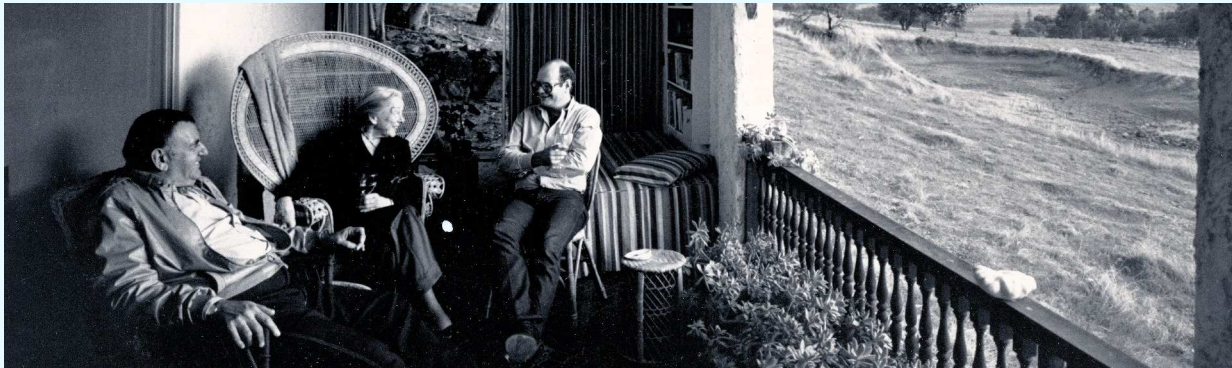
Gregory Mark Bezat
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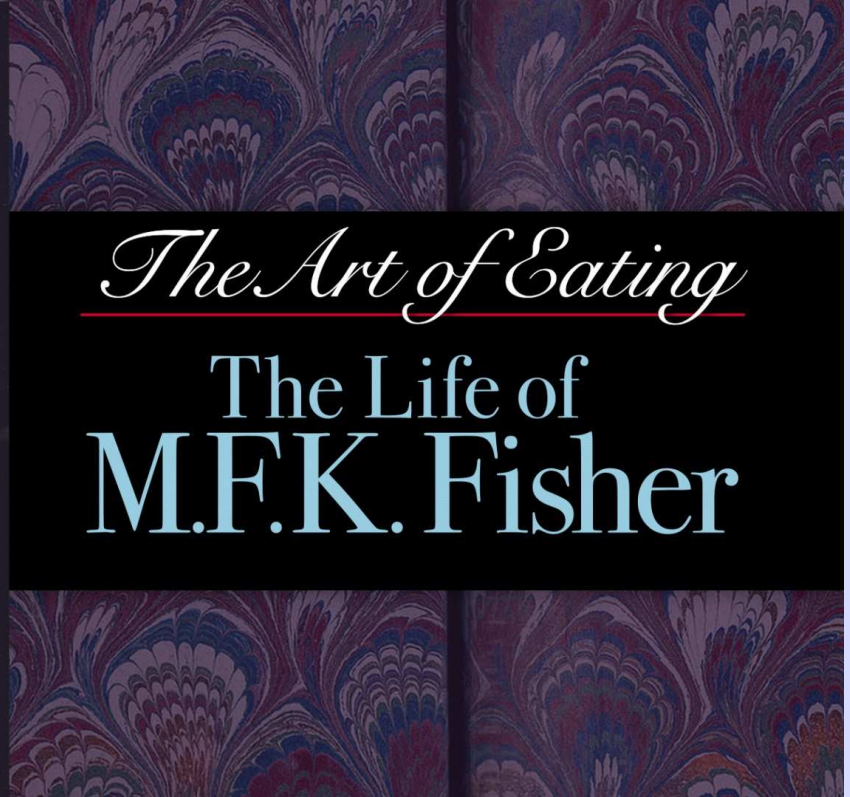
Film website: www.mfkfisherfilm.com

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