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Don't Go Away

From celebration to squabbles, food serves as a microcosm for the push/pull of family dynamics. Coming from a passionate French-Canadian restaurant family, Kirouac's experiences of familial relations have been continually filtered through the ubiquitous, yet intimate act of cooking. In *Don't Go Away*, Kirouac combines these histories and emotions into a mediated conversation with her deceased father "Fernie." From 1976-78, Fernand (Fernie) Kirouac co-hosted (with George Knight) "Charcoal Chefs" - one of the first televised cooking shows on CBC Television. Long before the days of stage sets, pre-cooked conclusions and digital polish, Fernie and Knight demonstrated barbecue cooking techniques on location in a Winnipeg park.

Fernie passed away in 1990, leaving behind one episode in the CBC archives. Decades later, Kirouac reformulates the footage to meet her adopted father at an intersection between analog and digital. She hired two actors to "play" her, playing Knight opposite her own father via split-screen. As dishes are prepared, moments of seamless connection are interspersed with collapse and fragmentation as power shifts back and forth between an experienced chef and his younger assistant(s). As the daughter vies back and forth with the father, we are witness to the vulnerability, humor, discomfort, endearment and even underlying antagonism, typical in all our families.

Steven Matijcio

Christine Kirouac, *Don't Go Away*, 2011, Digital Video (TRT - 25:15).



