

# KUNHARDT **FILM** FOUNDATION

ALICE WATERS INTERVIEW  
*MAKERS: WOMEN WHO MAKE AMERICA*  
KUNHARDT FILM FOUNDATION

**Alice Waters**  
**Chef & Restaurateur**  
**October 19, 2011**  
**Interviewed by Chris Durrance**  
**Total Running Time: 1 hour**

START TC: 00:00:00:00

**Alice Waters**  
**Chef & Restaurateur**

INTERVIEWER:

Tell me where you grew up and your fondest memories of your childhood?

00:00:10

ALICE WATERS:

I grew up in New Jersey, in northern New Jersey uh in a little town called Chatham. And I guess the... the really memorable moments have to do with food and uh, you know, when I'm asked about my childhood and how I ended up in the restaurant business it... it kind of goes back to my parents victory garden that they always had from... from when I was born all the way through my childhood. They had a little patch of vegetable garden in the backyard. Uh even though their lives changed they still had on to that victory garden and we ate tomatoes and corn and peppers from the garden. And my mother canned the applesauce and the rhubarb. And from my point of view,

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uh those are probably the tastiest memories because my mother wasn't a very good cook. [16:08:33.03]

INTERVIEWER:

Did you help? Were you there sort of hands and knees digging and planting?

00:01:15

ALICE WATERS:

I remember eating in the garden. I... As a little child uh I think I was put out in the strawberry patch and so I have kind of fond memories of warm strawberries and... and something... something about being in the apple tree and uh I uh... I was dressed on time and I talked about it in my book, uh I was dressed as the queen of the garden and I won a prize for that at a local costume contest. And so it really stuck with me - the whole outfit, the asparagus skirt and the peppers around my wrists and the lettuce leaf for the top and... Uh I... I can picture myself in that time.

00:02:04

ALICE WATERS:

I remember really vividly the applesauce cooking, uh the rhubarb, uh... I remember the flowers in the garden. My mother was always sort of pointing them out to me and helping me name them... uh remember the names - really helping me remember the names of them. And so roses and forsythia and iris and... and many uh flowers as well as vegetables. I really know the aromas, know the kind of tastes.

INTERVIEWER:

I read in one interview that you said you were a very picky eater back then?

00:02:45

ALICE WATERS:

I was a picky eater back then because my mother was really overwhelmed by the idea of cooking for a family of six and she um... she just did what was easiest and what she thought would be good for us and we had brown bread and we had frozen vegetables and my friends weren't eating that and I'd wished that I had something else. But she really cared whether we came to the table. I think that was the most important time for her and she waited until my father got home from work and we'd all sit down at the table together and eat. Uh and I was pushed to eat more than I wanted.

INTERVIEWER:

This period we're talking about, it's before college, the late fifties coming into sixties isn't it?

00:03:39

ALICE WATERS:

Well actually it's the late forties coming into the fifties that I'm talking about. And... And a time when there was a lot of... a lot of land between each little town in New Jersey and it was called the Garden State for a reason. Uh everyone had a garden during the war and they kept that up afterwards.

INTERVIEWER:

Was there a sense of it being a very traditional household even though it's all daughters? Was there a sense of a women's role, as you were growing up, of being constrained in terms of your expectations, your future?

00:04:15

ALICE WATERS:

My parents were kind of wonderful about-

ON SCREEN TEXT:

Alice Waters & Her Sisters

Chatham, NJ, 1950s

ALICE WATERS:

-encouraging us to think what we wanted to think. My father was kind of a... a rabid Republican and my mother was very, definitely a... in the Communist world and so I had that... that sort of counter balance. And even though my father was really kind of in charge of the household, and expecting something from my mother in terms of taking care of the kids and having dinner on the table and his... his clothes pressed and his tie in a certain place... Um, my mother was very opinionated and she always spoke up. My father kind of tolerated that. And it was a beautiful thing and they loved each other desperately their whole lives. And uh allowed their children to sort of follow the paths that they wanted and if there was anything that my... I might have wanted a little more of it is guidelines. Uh certainly when I was a teenager they... they kind of let me run free.

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INTERVIEWER:

And so there were no expectations about marriage over career? Or career over marriage?

00:05:41

ALICE WATERS:

There were... There were no expectations about a career or about marriage. I think they... they just impressed us with... with their connection to one another and their care for their children and they... they kind of lived their life as... as an example for all of us.

INTERVIEWER:

I want to skip forward to Berkeley now. Did you all move?

00:06:11

ALICE WATERS:

My father uh... uh left his insurance business and he came out to California and he started his own business in southern California, and that's how we got to California, and uh they really insisted that I choose one of the universities in California because they just couldn't afford to pay for me to go to a school back east. And uh at that time to go to The University of California cost ninety-six dollars a semester. If you can imagine. What a beautiful, public education system.

INTERVIEWER:

And so, Berkeley for what reason?

00:06:55

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ALICE WATERS:

Well I went to The University of California in Santa Barbara first and uh I had a group of friends and we just decided we didn't like it, we wanted a bigger place and we moved to Berkeley in the fall of 1964. So, we just kind of came front and center on the free speech movement and it was a moment in time.

INTERVIEWER:

Can you put us there?

00:07:23

ALICE WATERS:

Uh well I was um sort of on the fringes of that. Uh I just wrote a book about forty years of Chez Panisse and I reflected on that... that big demonstration that was going on - many, many big demonstrations. I was kind of afraid to go into it so I was just on the... on the edge. And absorbing uh everything. I think sort of osmosis that Mario Savio was saying and what people were thinking both about the war in Vietnam, but more importantly um really about this world that we could create that... this idealistic place where people could uh pick up friends, take them to the cities and not lock their doors, and not lock their bikes and offer people food who didn't have enough. And uh it was a beautiful moment um where we really imagined that we could live harmoniously together.

INTERVIEWER:

You talked about how you, on reflection, for you maybe some of what Mario Savio was saying is rooted in the way that he's brought up. The communal

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tables of southern France and northern Italy. The sort of passion in which they live and share.

00:08:52

ALICE WATERS:

Well I think that was something very important uh that Mario Savio communicated,--

ON SCREEN TEXT:

Mario Savio Speaking To Students

University of California, Berkeley, December 7, 1964

ALICE WATERS:

– was the way that he lived his life, the way he was brought up and he was uh... had Italian sort of roots and um he... he had a bottle of wine on the table every night and brought his family and friends around. Uh this was uh a kind of... an important um ritual for him.

INTERVIEWER:

*The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan's book, comes out in '63. Had that registered with you?

00:09:30

ALICE WATERS:

Well it certainly registered with me. Uh *The Feminine Mystique*... I mean you couldn't uh live in Berkeley without being really impressed by it. Uh and I uh... I absorbed all of that too and it probably sort of helped me to have the

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confidence to open up a restaurant. Uh I... I felt empowered, in a way, by that, by the Women's Movement that was uh sort of erupting and the... And just that the way that we were thinking about really living together, all of us, that we had to have some kind of balance and that women had to... to really be a big part of that picture.

INTERVIEWER:

What was primary for you? Was it free speech movement? Was it Civil Rights? Was it the war? Is there sort of a healthy ferment of all of them?

00:10:29

ALICE WATERS:

When I think about all that was going on - the Civil Rights and the Women's Movement and the war um in Vietnam, there's no question it was about the war in Vietnam for me. I was... I mean yes it was all of those things but I... I was um... I was so shocked by what was happening uh in our name and uh I read the... the white papers that Robert Scheer wrote back then and that really... uh that peace movement was... um what kind of brought me into the... into politics.

INTERVIEWER:

What did bringing you into politics mean for you?

00:11:24

ALICE WATERS:

Well at first it really meant that I was ready to go door to door and talk to people about uh the war and I got involved with uh Bob Scheers uh campaign



for Congress and I just went boldly down to Oak... to North Oakland and West Oakland and I knocked on those doors and I... I believed that we could get people to the polls, that they would hear Bob and... and they'd be changed by the message he was delivering. And I was so disappointed when he lost. I mean I just... I couldn't imagine that the truth that he was speaking was not compelling enough to the people... to everyone that... that somehow he would be elected to Congress. And so I... I kind of dropped back.

ON SCREEN TEXT:

Alice Waters Gardening, 1978

INTERVIEWER:

I opened Chez Panisse.

INTERVIEWER:

I'm interested in three steps, actually, before that. The first is about communes and consciousness raising. Is there something that there's kind of a search for a commune, search for groups of like minded people? Is that something that emerges in your life then?

00:12:46

ALICE WATERS:

Well I think I've always been searching for a group of people that... that either I want to live with or want to live close to. Uh... Uh I love living in Berkeley because I share so many of the same values with so many friends and neighbors - people I don't even know, I feel a sense of that. Uh and so it's

very important to me and I think I've been talking about, you know, an old folks commune in you will, but it's never been with the idea of an old folks home. It's always been um multi-generational, uh integrated experience where... where people can participate even if they are young or they're old and that we have meaningful work to do and that we help each other. And have a wonderful time. So that's been a piece. And my thinking probably certainly came from uh just the experience that we were all having in the '60s and in the '70s.

INTERVIEWER:

Two things, but the first is teaching and the second is France, it seems those are both, you know, huge currents-

ON SCREEN TEXT:

Alice Waters & Students

The Edible Schoolyard Project

INTERVIEWER:

- in your life still today. You got to be in the UK and come back here and are teaching, but you also have two very important trips around France.

00:14:18

ALICE WATERS:

I guess it really began, my thinking about education, um when I was an intern at the Montessori school here in Berkeley and uh I... I had always struggled at... sort of at the desk and trying to uh do this kind of abstract thinking

um... uh around math or science. I... I... I didn't... I couldn't... I couldn't relate really. I did okay in all of those subjects but I... I loved my third grade teacher because she carved little birds out of driftwood and she got us to paint them and we went out in the woods and all of that... that really is part of kind of an education of the senses, that Maria Montessori embraced as the kind of uh... philosophy behind uh her whole pedagogy uh of teaching and I...

00:15:32

ALICE WATERS:

When I went to the Montessori school in Berkeley I just felt like, "Ahhh." You know, "This is it. I completely get it. This is..." It's not only very idealistic in terms of the outcome of the sensory education. I mean, she imagined we'd all be friends on the planet, that that was... it was The United Nations and she had that big fish in the world and yet she began with each child and uh learning how to taste, learning how to see something, learning how to touch and listen and it was very, very important to me.

INTERVIEWER:

At that stage, did it feel like that could be a way of life for you?

ON SCREEN TEXT:

Alice Waters

Montessori School, 1969

00:16:20

ALICE WATERS:

I thought at one point that I could teach. I discovered, of course, when I came back to teaching after I'd gone to France, that... that I didn't have the patience to do it. I... I was kind of wanting it to happen all at once and... and some of the kids, you know, were taking a long time to have this enlightenment. And the... I... I just felt like I... I would leave that to the people who... who wanted to move at a slower pace.

00:16:56

ALICE WATERS:

And then I went to France. I went to France in my junior year in college, not with a university but on... on my own with a friend and uh we had quite an edible education. We didn't go to class and I'm not sure I learned French. Uh, I didn't learn French, really. I had lots of friends in France who spoke English and... But I absorbed a beautiful... a beautiful, beautiful experience of the culture.

INTERVIEWER:

Right at the beginning, how do you even get there?

00:17:32

ALICE WATERS:

We made this uh crazy reservation on Luxem—What was it called? Luxembourg Airlines. And we flew from New York to Iceland and from Iceland to Luxembourg and then we took a bus to Paris in... in the middle of the night. And went through all of northern France uh in the dark - no lights on even in the middle of little towns. Uh maybe just one or two little lights that were... uh that you could see. Um... But it was quite a revelation to

arrive in Paris. And I was very lucky because I arrived in, you know, 1965 and it was a time when... when the food from Paris came from right around Paris and either were two markets a day - one in the morning and one at night and if you wanted fresh delicious food, you had to go to the one in the morning and you had to go at night.

00:18:46

ALICE WATERS:

And you had to buy your flat bread everyday right at that baker down the street, support the restaurants that were right around where we lived. And so I... I didn't know. I thought it was just about food. When I came back, I... I fell in love with the taste of—of the dishes I had. But it was really way more than that. I just fell in love with the whole way of life - that... that took food and connected you to nature, the time, the moment in time. This is the moment for wild strawberries... and this is the moment for, you know, persimmons. And it was just that way. Everybody ate that way.

INTERVIEWER:

Why did you even go there in the first place? I mean, what was— you and your friends... was there some dream? Some movie you'd seen? A book? A friend?

00:19:46

ALICE WATERS:

Well I think my friend, who was much more literate than I was, had read a lot of... a lot about France, a lot of um literature from France, but I wanted to go because my mother had taught me how to count to ten in French. And I

thought I would be able to communicate in some way. And I knew little words and phrases uh that... that I learned as a kid.

INTERVIEWER:

And had you seen the films that we'll get to? The Pagnol films? Had you seen them by then or was that part of the love affair?

00:20:19

ALICE WATERS:

Seeing the films of Pagnol really didn't come until much later. Um that came at the end of the sixties uh with my friendship with Tom Letty (?) and seeing those films at the theaters in San Francisco. But when I went uh I almost had a Pagnoll experience being there. I mean it was much more sophisticated than the... the kind of provincial uh world that Pagnol lived in, but it was that same sort of values that you kind of met your friends in the cafe in the afternoon to have a... have a... have a coffee or a glass of wine and... and you went to little restaurants because you knew people. You knew the people around them. You met your friends in the market. Uh you went to a concert at night. Uh it was just part of the experience, and the students had this great priority, that we could have almost the best seats and the going to the opera, I think, was free for students. We could sit up in the balcony. So I had a cultural kind of um inspiration when I was there. As well as a... a gastronomic revolution.

INTERVIEWER:

So is it there that it starts to dawn on you that food is going to be an increasingly important part of your life?

00:21:54

ALICE WATERS:

Well I know... I knew right then, I mean very quickly on, that it was um more important than anything else - I was supposed to be learning in France. I mean it just... it just was the priority. It's where are we going to eat? You know. What little restaurant do we want to go to?

INTERVIEWER:

What were the foods that you... ?

00:22:21

ALICE WATERS:

Everything from oysters... I had never eaten anything really. I felt just completely ignorant and everything that I tasted I loved. Food in California back in the '60s... I mean it was fancy French restaurants or just mediocre... you know very much fast food was emerging. Uh... uh... just not tasty. Very much out of a package. Uh there were a few little restaurants that were kind of beginning to emerge in Berkeley. Uh but not very many. And the good ones at least, after I'd been to France... the good ones were really fancy French restaurants.

INTERVIEWER:

But for you— So going to France. So, oysters, mussels, I mean all these things were just...

00:23:19

ALICE WATERS:

Every... every day it was something really, really special for me. And... And very simple. I mean apricot jam. An oyster on the half shell. I mean it wasn't a big preparation. It wasn't like... I mean maybe pate was, but I didn't have the sense of that. It would just be served with a few pickles and a little salad on the side. And always the salad came after the main course and always a small amount of desert. Uh the portions were... were just right for me.

00:23:58

ALICE WATERS:

I came back and sort of, uh, was enthusiastic like Julia Child. She had that kind of revolution in Paris like I did out in the market place, but she came home and she just started, you know... chopping those onions, determined to learn how to master the art of French cooking. And I... I was just uh learning how to cook almost as a necessity to eating well. You know. That I had to do it myself. I had to find these ingredients because they didn't exist uh just out there in the supermarket.

INTERVIEWER:

And so the films, talk about them. Talk about the waterfront isn't it?

00:24:45

ALICE WATERS:

It's a waterfront Marseille. I mean well it... in and around, in the hillsides beyond. But-



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ON SCREEN TEXT:

Marcel Pagnol Directing *César*

1935

ALICE WATERS:

– Pagnol was... was really talking about those... those values of... of humanity, civilization. I mean we're talking about taking care of the land and... and uh having meaningful relationships with your family and friends, enjoying the rituals of life, uh... uh... generosity, and good humor, and... and taking care of your children, and all of those um... all of those um ways of living that give life meaning. And that's... that's what he was talking about and he was saddened by the way France was changing, that people were coming from the land, abandoning the land and then coming into the city. And... and then kind of living crazy lives and... and, you know, and this little family of people that he works with... I mean they really were his... his friends. And they were in all of his films and you got to know them - the baker and the baker's wife and the priest, and the... They were all the same actors that were in his films. And he... you know he... he... he just got me to... to pay attention to that... that way of living life and I, of course, am... am in the rapids, but um... you have to take your time.

INTERVIEWER:

And who was Panisse?

00:26:38

ALICE WATERS:

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Panisse was the character in the Pagnol trilogy. Uh he was the only one who made any money and he offered to marry Fanny, when her boyfriend left for the sea and he left her pregnant and to save her honor, he offered to marry her. And it's a beautiful thing.

INTERVIEWER:

His he, in some sense, the Pagnol figure? The kind of nostalgic in some ways...?

00:27:10

ALICE WATERS:

Well he was a little outrageous and a little preposterous and you know all of that. He was... he was boastful and uh liking young, pretty women and all of that. But he had kind of a heart of gold. And in a sense that is a Pagnol figure.

INTERVIEWER:

How does the restaurant emerge?

00:27:31

ALICE WATERS:

So I came back and I taught school again and discovered uh that I like cooking for my friends at home more than I like teaching and I just thought, "Well, you know if I opened up a little restaurant they could come there and then they could pay and I could make a good living and I could see them." But of course it didn't work that way.

00:27:57

ALICE WATERS:

I opened a little restaurant uh but it took all of my time and I couldn't see my friends. So that was um... And, I didn't make any money for a long time. So I guess... But we had a great time.

ON SCREEN TEXT:

First Day At Chez Panisse

Berkeley,CA, 1971

INTERVIEWER:

It sounds like the first few years were tough. I mean, I don't know how emotionally difficult they were, maybe you're just living it. Probably looking back, you're thinking, "God, how did I get through that?"

00:28:23

ALICE WATERS:

Well I do think about those first years as being uh pretty crazy and... and very intense. I... But I... I just did it because... because I had a passion to sort of make this thing right and to make it work and to get people to like what we were cooking for them. I... I just... I was just intent on it and because of that I... I just never worried if I got paid or had enough sleep or... or if I was living any kind of normal life. It just... Nothing else mattered except finding food that these people in the dining room would love. And that was it.

INTERVIEWER:

Did you know beforehand that you had that in you?

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ON SCREEN TEXT:

Alice Waters In Chez Panisse

Berkeley, CA, 1982

00:29:16

ALICE WATERS:

I read one time in a yearbook that my teacher wrote uh that I was determined and driving and, you know, uncompromising. And I was surprised by what he said to me and uh it just sort of um... was a beautiful memory. I liked that because he thought I would have a wonderful time in my life too, which I have had. And so in reflection, I... I guess... and my family has always said to me that I... I was impossibly stubborn.

INTERVIEWER:

So no question of quitting?

00:30:04

ALICE WATERS:

There was no question of quitting. Ever. I never. No. No. There was no question of quitting.

INTERVIEWER:

Do you remember, for example, opening night? Can you put us there how you felt?

00:30:18

ALICE WATERS:

I was in the dinning room and I was really excited, and I was just trying to get everything right and um, you know, it was all the last minute things. I... I wanted a rug on the staircase and I do remember visa- vividly that people were coming in the door and I was still putting the rug up the stairs. Uh and it's...it was just kind of a rush of... of lots of things coming together and um... It's hard to... It's kind of in a blur, but... but they all came back the next day so... Maybe it's because they didn't get fed.

INTERVIEWER:

I mean, community being a big sense of what you were about, and bringing friends, but what about the tighter community with family? Was there a sense of what— were you... I'm not sure if you were married at that point. Or if Fanny was around at that point.

00:31:17

ALICE WATERS:

No. I didn't have uh a family at that time. I never even thought about having a child. I... I... It was even difficult to have a relationship with... with... with someone uh because I was pretty much married to the restaurant. I mean I was there from early in the morning till late at night and... And uh all the people who worked in the restaurant uh sort of socialized together. Uh we, you know... we never had time off for the first years, and I thought about that - how to make that a kind of civilized time that I remembered witnessing in France when I... when I was going into restaurants. Early I would see them sitting at a table and having lunch together or uh that sort of scene happening late at night and... and restaurateurs at the marketplace, and buying their

food and having their... all the people who worked in the restaurant carrying the bags and I... I think was sort of, again, part of just absorbing these experiences and... and really... uh they became part of me. I never um sort of learned them. They just... I just absorbed this kind of life and uh wanted it.

INTERVIEWER:

So how did you make room for more of a work life balance?

00:32:54

ALICE WATERS:

What I've done though is uh I... I don't see... It's again a Montessori idea. I don't see work and pleasure. I mean life outside. I think they have to go together, that you have to have pleasure in your work and... and work in your pleasure. They... Their... They're like this and there are a little higher times or lower times, but basically you're trying to find a balance in that way rather than this and that and just sort of trying to bring that together.

INTERVIEWER:

What point did you realize it was going to be okay? The business was going to— That it was a business, I guess, and that it was going to work out.

00:33:39

ALICE WATERS:

I guess I really uh accounted on my friends who were in business and one particular friend in Berkeley had a cooking store, and she came and she helped us. And when she came into the office and picked up all the pieces of paper and tried to make sense of the numbers, I knew we would be okay.

Somehow we would be okay. I... But I never thought we wouldn't be. If we just served the best food, we would be okay. It was just getting to that, that um... there was a challenge.

INTERVIEWER:

The restaurant becomes a broad network as well, doesn't it? Farmers and the other suppliers. How did that emerge?

00:34:25

ALICE WATERS:

It's really kind of incredible how we built this network of suppliers because I was never really looking for local, sustainable food. I... I wasn't looking for that at the beginning. We were looking for taste. We were looking for the food that tasted like what I had eaten in France. So I wanted the little strawberries. I thought they were just little, big strawberries and... and the little arecover (sp?) - the skinny little French ones, I thought they were small Kentucky Wonder Beans. And so I sorted the boxes and I tried to do it that way and then um I realized that... that, you know, I needed to bring the seeds from France and... and I... I... I wanted to have those planted so that we could have the salad, the mesclun salad that I had had in the south of France.

00:35:29

ALICE WATERS:

And then um, you know, we started foraging out there, just wherever we went. We went to Chinatown to try to find ducks that were, you know, not in packages and... and we went to farm stands at the beginning. Drove down to Palo Alto and out in the central valley and we'd get the corn and bring back

boxes in our cars. And uh... And then we had this idea that... that maybe if we planted a garden in a really good place that uh... We hired a farmer and we could make this happen for the restaurant but of course you have to know a lot about the land, to choose the right place to put the right varieties in and it wasn't easy like that to do. And we had someone working in the restaurant, really incredible, who had made friends... had many friends who were farmers and was very interested in the farmers market movement and was a cook at the restaurant.

00:36:32

ALICE WATERS:

And she said, "Maybe I should go out and try and find people who would like to grow for the restaurant." And that's what she did. She brought us the first um lettuces and... and sort of cool weather crops from Warren Webber who was out in Balinas and then she brought us uh produce from the central valley and we began to make friends in that way with the farmers. And we'd invite them to dinner and she would write about them so that the staff could know who they were and... And uh there were times that we would go down to a trout stream and uh Big Sur and pick up the live trout and there were many, many experiences of... of searching for ingredients uh at the restaurant before we really built this wonderful network and then ultimately it was... it was really my father who helped us to find a farmer - a full time uh... uh... farmer that could grow what we wanted.

00:37:48

ALICE WATERS:



I mean the bulk of what we wanted. Uh and where we could work together and sort of take our compost to his farm and bring back the vegetables and uh... Uh now we have Bob Kanard up in Sonoma and that's what he does. He... He um grows for Chez Panisse and we... we think he's extraordinary and he's... he's not just farming for us, but he is teaching in the most beautiful ways. He has interns from all around the world who come and work for him, and he inspires us all to think about the land in a very different way. And um it's something I never wanted to talk about.

00:38:47

ALICE WATERS:

I always uh wanted health to be the outcome of living well and so I never wanted to talk about it. But Bob, our farmer, really likes to talk about it because he really believes that his fruits and vegetables are more nutritious because they are absorbing the rich soil at his farm that he builds in harmony with all of the little bugs and... and bees that live up there on the farm. He's working with nature and in this beautiful way. He... He has really made an impression on me and um... So I'm... Whereas I resisted my mother's nutrition, uh this delicious, edible education uh has... has made me believe that we can uh bring children into a new relationship to food. And I guess that's really the experience of having my own child and watching her fall in love that made me believe that we could do this in the public schools.

INTERVIEWER:

When I think of California, in the time that you've been living here—

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ON SCREEN TEXT:

Sacramento Valley

1976

INTERVIEWER:

-I presume it's tragic. Is it sort of finger in the dike as California has changed?

00:40:26

ALICE WATERS:

In my time here in California, things have changed entirely in really unfortunate ways and in very fortunate ways. Really. There's like... It's the good news and the bad news. The orange groves have disappeared, but a whole new generation of young people is planting the... the orange groves again. Unless you are really involved with the farmers of this state, that you don't know what's really going on. There... It's... It's um... It's been an education for me uh, but I started a long time ago. I mean I started thirty years ago or more than thirty years ago really. Um... Uh... But... And it has been that relationship that I have with the producer that makes me sort of treasure their work because I could never do that.

00:41:40

ALICE WATERS:

And so when I go to the farmers market, I think about it as making a contribution to the environment when I go there. I... Whatever I give them, whatever price I give them, I'm thinking that now I can help send their kids to college. I want them to feel empowered by the bind that happens there, by the... the... the... and not just the money exchanging, but by the support of...

of the people who are so enthusiastic about what... what they're.. what they're selling... all their beautiful produce. It's incredible.

INTERVIEWER:

Why so few women? Top women chefs, top women restaurateurs?

00:42:29

ALICE WATERS:

I think it really is changing. There are many, many women that are in the restaurant business, but I've thought about that uh you know all my life and it... it really has to do uh with children - really has to do with children. That if you have a family, you're working at hours that are just completely contrary to what would make a family life. I mean you need to be present at the dinner table, and you're always working when people are not working. So it's been a really mission of Chez Panisse to figure out a different kind of system that allows people to have a civilized life and I think it's... It's kind of unique uh, at least I don't know very many places, that have two chefs who work uh each three days a week and they're paid for five and their... their two days off uh they're in contact but they really can be with their family and they can be with their friends.

00:43:46

ALICE WATERS:

And we have two chefs who work the downstairs in the restaurant. They each work six months. They work five days, but they have six months off and they can write a book, or they can teach a class, or they can have a life with their family and friends. And I think it's so important that there's flexibility in

terms of... of even the... all the other cooks in the restaurant that they can work nights. They can work days. They can work in the dining room. They can work in the kitchen. So that you're... You're really uh... I'm always thinking about uh, you know, having uh that connection with nature even if you're inside and you're in a restaurant. So we have a table outside where the staff can eat and there are no doors to the kitchen because I wanted to watch the sunset from the kitchen.

00:44:50

ALICE WATERS:

I also wanted to talk to the customers and get them to eat their food, but uh that was the reason we did that. I... I... If you're going to be in the restaurant for, you know, fifteen hours a day it should be nourishing that way - in that Montessori way that it should appeal to the senses. We should be able to have flowers in the kitchen. We should be able to have art on the walls. We should be able to have uh a connection with each other around the table. And... And that's... that's really been important to me.

ON SCREEN TEXT:

Alice Waters & Students

The Edible Schoolyard Project

INTERVIEWER:

The Edible Schoolyard, how did that start?

00:45:28

ALICE WATERS:

I guess the ideas for the Edible Schoolyard or Edible Education were really, you know, planted back there uh by Maria Montessori because I... I understood how important education is for everyone. I mean she was talking about, for everyone, not just for people that can afford it, but for everyone. And when the twenty-fifth birthday arrived, or in or around... a little bit before the twenty-fifth birthday, uh I was again uh... uh talking about uh the decline of public education in Berkeley and the principal of the school that I was talking about called me on the phone. He said, "Come over and... and take a look at the school and maybe you can help beautify it. So I did. I went there and I did. But from the moment he asked for help, I never thought about planting flowers or even vegetables on the front of the school.

00:46:41

ALICE WATERS:

I always thought, "Ah. At last. We can take over the school lunch and we can make a beautiful lunch room and then... then I thought, "Well you know, we need a garden." And you know it's all connected. We build a garden. We need a place to teach kids about cooking and then we need a place where they can eat that food. And so it was all together. And I proposed that to him and he said he'd like to think about it for a little while, and six months later, I thought he'd forgotten... Six months later he called me up and he said, "I think we're ready now." And he said, "Just don't talk about that part about all kids eating for free because I think it might frighten people. Let's just start with a garden, and you and I will know that it's about... really about integrating a cafeteria into the academic curriculum, but we won't talk about that right now. We're just going to talk about the garden."

00:47:53

ALICE WATERS:

I said, "Okay. We could do that." And we had a lot of brainstorming sessions with lots of gardeners and teachers, and we created what he called a revolutionary committee. Uh and we invited... Again, we used the feeding people ideas... idea - invited the teachers over to Chez Panisse to have their math meetings. And... And talked about, you know, whatever they wanted to talk about, but at the same time we were delivering this edible education message. And it grew from there. It really uh... The garden uh wasn't planted for a couple of years because we... We were busy sort of planting ideas in people's minds and... and we wanted the whole school to-to be engaged in this way, because we're not really teaching gardening per say out in the garden.

00:48:57

ALICE WATERS:

We're... It's a math class that's coming out and it just happens to be in the garden, and the kids are doing the work of measuring the beds or they're... And while they're doing that uh they're picking the raspberries and they're out in the sun and they're experiencing another dimension of... of being in school and they like it. They really, really like it. And that's the key is that they really like it, because if they really like it then these are habits uh that they're going to have for their whole life and it was like I felt when I went to France. I loved it and I wanted to eat like that. Um I wanted to live like that and that's what's going to bring children into a, you know, a beautiful world of nature and culture at the table and... and just uh finding themselves. Being able to...

to make decisions about... about their own health. I mean it's a beautiful thing.

INTERVIEWER:

A piece of advice that you'd give a young woman? Whether it's on building a career or on work life balance?

00:50:25

ALICE WATERS:

I don't believe in sort of building a career. I don't think of it like that. I... I... I think, you know, you're... you're talking about the way you want to live your life and it can't be that... I think of career as being about making money and going up in the ladder and... and being successful in some way that people expect you to be successful. And who knows, you might just like sweeping floors. I like sweeping floors. You know, I like making my bed. I like doing that. I like washing dishes. I like washing salad. Uh and you're looking for that thing that... that you're passionate about. And I think defining it in this way and thinking of, you know, obviously it's not about money. You need enough to nourish yourself and your family and your friends and have that but that's... that's um delusional.

INTERVIEWER:

The most meaningful piece of advice you've ever received?

00:51:49

ALICE WATERS:

Take your time. Take your time.

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INTERVIEWER:

What did you want to be when you grew up? I mean, we know what you're doing now.

00:51:57

ALICE WATERS:

I didn't know what I wanted to be when I grew up. I just assumed that I would uh follow the path of my older sister, and she got married when she was in college and... and she had two children and um her husband worked in a newspaper and they... they... they made a... a wonderful life together. And I just assumed that I would have children and that would... that would be my life. Uh so it... it's... It was a quite uh... a surprise to my family that I wanted to open a restaurant. But it was my father who gave me... who mortgaged his house to give me the money to open the restaurant. So he... He uh, you know, had a... a kind of adventurous spirit and I think his whole life he was in that treadmill place of a job and he never really understood what... what he wanted until it was almost too late - until he was at the end of his fifties that he had meaningful work. And he was always pushed um to do things in a certain way.

ON SCREEN TEXT:

The Waters Family

00:53:22

ALICE WATERS:



He was incredible. I mean, when we opened the cafe, the restaurant just quickly doubled, tripled in size over a period of a year and... and everything that I had been kind of communicating one on one was impossible. And so uh he wanted to have meetings to... He was a business physiologist and he wanted me to have meetings with everybody to discuss this and I just couldn't be in a meeting like that. It just felt like uh some tea group from the fifties and sixties and I just... I didn't want to communicate like that, and he came down in the middle of the night and talked with the dishwashers and...

00:54:11

ALICE WATERS:

He um... He made me get a computer. He did. And he uh... He just worked with the whole staff and he wrote a book called *Organic Management* at the end of his life and reflecting the last... the last uh chapter was about Chez Panisse and how unorthodox it was, about how it should never have succeeded, but how it did. And uh it gave me a kind of credibility in the business world um and I got a business leadership award along with uh the Hyatt Hotels and I think Dominos Pizza. And I've wondered why I got this business leadership award and uh the person who invited me said, "It's because of this green that's on the plate."

00:55:13

ALICE WATERS:

And I thought, "The green... You mean the parsley, the salad?" He said, "Yes. You helped us put salad on the plate. That's... that's why you're getting this. And you've been successful at that." And I... I... It just... And I... I do think I've... I've brought salad into the world, certainly in the world of Chez

# KUNHARDT **FILM** FOUNDATION

Panisse. There's not... there's not a single plate that doesn't have a salad on it.

INTERVIEWER:

The accomplishment you're most proud of?

ALICE WATERS:

My daughter. Without any question.

INTERVIEWER:

Your first paying job?

ALICE WATERS:

My first paying job. I was a carhop. I was a car hop in uh Michigan City, Indiana at the Country Cousin.

INTERVIEWER:

Three adjectives that describe you?

ALICE WATERS:

Determined. Uncompromising. And I guess passionate.

INTERVIEWER:

And the person you've never met with biggest influence on your life?

00:56:13

ALICE WATERS:

It's really hard to say because I... I'm constantly impressed by... by people who are doing work that I could never do and uh I've had people like that all along from Maria Montessori all the way to Peter Sellers and there are many, many, many others in between. Uh, certainly you know in terms of cooking - Elizabeth David, uh... uh opened my mind. But there are so many people that I treasure and... and I... I allow them to... to change my thinking and I try to change theirs. And it goes without saying that Pagnol. Marcel Pagnol has probably had the greatest influence on my life.

INTERVIEWER:

Lightning round. iPad or notepad?

00:57:14

ALICE WATERS:

iPad or notepad? How about iPhone? And iPad. I have I... Again, it's a very uh tactual thing for me. I never could use a computer. Never, ever, ever and then I could touch and then I could make this thing happen for me. Uh... And that's where I am - addicted.

INTERVIEWER:

Early bird or night owl?

ALICE WATERS:

Uh... Absolutely early bird. I... I can't stay up late.

INTERVIEWER:

Spontaneous or methodical?

ALICE WATERS:

I mean people think I'm spontaneous but I'm... I'm very plotting and planning in that way. I like things in order. Um... I like to have that order in the world around me.

INTERVIEWER:

Diplomatic or direct?

00:58:16

ALICE WATERS:

I think I'm diplomatically direct.

INTERVIEWER:

Type A or easy going?

ALICE WATERS:

No question. Type A.

INTERVIEWER:

Higher math score or verbal?

ALICE WATERS:

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Oh. Well... I'm not sure I had either high math or high verbal. But I think of myself uh as... as absolutely uh... uh in a world of books. More literal.

INTERVIEWER:

Patient or impatient?

ALICE WATERS:

Impatient.

INTERVIEWER:

Prada or GAP?

00:58:54

ALICE WATERS:

Prada or GAP? You mean expensive or inexpensive? Uh. Dose.

INTERVIEWER:

Prepare or cram?

ALICE WATERS:

I prepare in a very unusual way. Uh but I definitely cram at the end.

INTERVIEWER:

Domestically skilled or challenged?

ALICE WATERS:

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Domestically enlightened I think.

INTERVIEWER:

Ten minutes early or late?

ALICE WATERS:

Always uh early.

INTERVIEWER:

Book smart or street smart?

00:59:28

ALICE WATERS:

I'm not brave out there on the streets. I'm not... I don't think of myself as street smart. I am uh aware, sensually aware, of the world around me. I'm very, very conscious of smells. I'm looking. I'm hearing sounds. I'm very open in that way and if that connects to street smart, then that's what I am.

END TC: 01:00:00