

WHEN I FIRST APPROACHED HIM ABOUT THIS NEW FEATURE, he immediately obliged and even let us in on a creative idea he's been going over in his head for years. Tell me if you think this is a stretch, 'he said, at that moment, I discovered now things: I) This was going to be a challenging shoot to execute and 2) Roger Mooking doesn't lend his name or become involved in something without being included in the creative process It is this meticulous and careful manura that has allowed him to plant the right seeds at the right ime. Waiting for the right lime is how he landed his popular cooking show, Everphoff Entire.

THE CHEF

YOU INFUSE SEVERAL CULTURES IN YOUR SHOW "EVERYDAY EXOTIC" HOW DID THAT COME AROLIT?

About 7 years ago, I was a chef at a restaurant called, Barrio, on Queen, around the corner at that time is where the Rod Network well to shoot all those shoots like "Sugar" and some of the first shoots that hunched. Then after work, they'd be beat and they would stop by my little restaurant and have dinner. At the time I didn't know who they were but I would always go over and say hi. I got firendly with these people and then after a while I discovered who they were. After a long period of building that relationship, they called me and told me about an idea they had for a show and although I was flattered I didn't really believe in that idea. I told them my idea but they weren't really interested in that. After a while they stopped calling me then I opened Kultura at King and Javis and the same producer ended up at the restaurant. At that time, they had changed production and she was no longer heading the Food Network. She had moved to HGTV and Slice. She put me in touch with the right people, we finally had a meeting, then two years later, "Everyday Exotic" aired.

YOU HAVE SUCH A RICH CULTURAL BACKGROUND, HOW DOES THAT INFLUENCE YOUR COOKING?

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How you carry yourself is a reflection of your past. My grandfather came from China and moved to Trinidad; I moved to Edmonton, Alberta, where I grew up; then I came to Tronton when I was 19, and I ve lived here ever since. So the roots of my cooking are what I learned growing up. There's Chinese, Caribbean and I was trained in classical European techniques in North America. I draw from those three specific cultures to create a broad type of food.

DO YOU HAVE CREATIVE CONTROL OVER THE RECIPES AND EVERY ASPECT OF THE SHOW?

I work with a great production team and we co-create the recipes together. I write all the music for the show with my partner. "We have the best food syling people and the recipes are pretty much downloaded from my brain. We test them, perfect them, and then those are the ones we use after the network approves them."

I ALWAYS WONDERED ABOUT COOKING SHOW—IS IT REALLY EVER LIVE?

"Well I don't always know what they're doing, so I can submit a recipe for a grilled steak but they may have just taped a show with Anthony Sedlak, who did a grilled steak last week, and from their brand perspective, they don't want to duplicate things. So they look at things like audience response and they gauge it, and we work together. It's a collaborative effort and at the end of the day, if I'm not comfortable cooking the suff while I'm shooting, it's not going to happen."

YOU HAVE SUCH A BUSY SCHEDULE, HOW DO YOU HAVE TIME TO DO EVERYTHING YOU DO?

It's just like how this shoot came together, we just had an idea then told someone about it and they got excited, then another person gets excited and then you need to build a team and before you know it, in ten days you have ten people who are excited about something. Then I can step away and say "go do it." It's about creating teams that are excited about sty our elong. There's no way I could run restaurants by myself. I have great partners at each location and I trust them implicitly to support what we're doing. On the record company side, I manage the company and if I want to make a video, I just go do it. I've been in the game for a while, been through the system and I find sometimes the ideas get filtered down and diffused and they get lost with the energy of it, everybody clee will control the final product because they don't want to disappoint the energy. The key is building

teams and getting excited.

THE MUSICIAN

LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR ALBUM

It's my first solo record and the process was quite different because every final decision was mine. In every other situation I've kind of had to compromise and get somebody ethe's idea in. It was a little bit daunting but loved the final product. I brought in Chin who co produced a song and Ivana (Santili, CP-records) does some amazing piano parts on the record with me, so regardless of whether it's a solo project or not, I still had a team. I would never have been able to make that record without all of the people involved.

WAS IT DONE UNDER A HUGE LABEL OR INDEPENDENTLY?

I own the masters to my recordings and I own the publishing, so if anyone wants to use one of my songs for whatever purpose, they have to come to me. It's about ownership, as opposed to a publisher using it and it ending up somewhere and I have no idea about it.

At least I know where and when things are happening. It's beensed under Warner Music Canada so they do their thing and give me all the support as a label, but I have full creative control.

ROGER

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU HAVEN'T CONQUERED YET?

For the record, I don't think I've conquered what I'm doing now. There are lots of things I can do. I look at what I do as a lifestyle. I could say look I'm creating a line of pots and pans or cutting boards and it's not a leap but it's a part of branding my lifestyle. Martha Stewart does it. Ore had ideas, they motivated people and look at what they've created. Our only limitations are our own minds. We put these limitations on things because society follows a certain structure or our parents trasied us a certain way but they've superfluous. I think I've created my window under the

entertainment umbrella and there are a lot of ideas I

YOU ARE AN AVID USER OF ECO-FRIENDLY UTENSILS, WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND EVERYTHING GOING GREEN?

We live in a world where if you're not conscious of taking care of the planet (like the Gulf and what's going on right now with the oil spill), then you need to be concerned because it's very real. We are very fortunate to have things like clean tap water. I've been off bottled water for a while. It's all just a matter of being conscious. I compost everything I possibly can. The raccoons are a nuisance but you have to be mindful.

YOU'RE GOING TO BE EMBARKING ON NEW VENTURES IN THE U.S. AND THE CARIBBEAN, WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

We sold first to *Discovery Asia* and *Travel and Living* and we just sold to the *Cooking Channel*, so "Everyday Exotic" is now playing in the US and the Caribbean and the response has been great. It plays about 10 times per

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE DISH ON THE MENU AT NYOOD?

I love the Braised Short Ribs. Every menu has what I call, a "Big Mac." The Big Mac will never leave McDonald's, and the ribs will never leave Nyood."

YOUR FAVOURITE APPETIZER, MAIN AND DESSERT?

I love soup, which can be all three of those things. I would eat soup everyday of the week if I could. ▶▷

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