

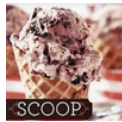


TOP
blog
STORIES



Cooking Shows
Top 5 Metal-Themed Cooking Show Videos

By Andrew Simmons



Cookbook Review
Is Scoop The Ultimate Ice Cream Book?

By Jenn Garbee



Farmers Markets
May at Farmers Markets: Your Virtual Grocery List

By Amy Scattergood



Tacos
Eat This Now: Al Pastor at El Flamin Taco in Echo Park

By Ben Mesirov

Food in Movies

Fishing with Jon Shook: Animal Chef Stars in Documentary

By Elina Shatkin, Fri., May 13 2011 @ 5:04PM

Categories: [Chefs of LA](#), [Food in Movies](#)

Share

Like

0 tweet

0



Son of a gun, Jon Shook can fish. But can he cook what he catches? Picking through the wreckage of a recalcitrant sanddab riddled with bones, the chef ([Animal](#), [Son of a Gun](#)) at one point in the short documentary *Fish* turns to a pal and laments, "What I got going in my head is just not working." We're watching that crucial moment when a chef, swinging for fences, watches his boll plop into an outfielder's glove. Despite its title and its subject matter, this isn't actually a film about fish. It's a film about the creative process, with all the pitfalls and failures so often forgotten in the aftermath of success.

Shot shortly after Shook and his creative partner, Vinny Dotolo, opened their seafood restaurant, Son Of A Gun, *Fish* is a 20-minute documentary directed by R.J. Cutler, known for his crisp, vérité explorations of politics (*The War Room*), fashion (*The September Issue*) and high school (*American High*). We follow Shook through a catch-kill-cook experiment as he sails out into the Los Angeles harbor, reels in a few fish and tries to turn them into a plausible restaurant dish. That's not easy with sanddabs. Small, flat and hard to de-bone, they don't lend themselves to gourmet glory.

Most Popular Stories

Viewed | Commented | Recent

- [Nooooooooooooo! Alton Brown to End "Good Eats"](#)
 - [Olive Oil Taste-Off: The Best Value For The Price, The California Edition](#)
 - [Dogfight: The Bacon Wrapped Hot Dog vs. Let's Be Frank](#)
 - [Weiland Brewery: The Most Ridiculous Happy Hour in L.A.](#)
 - [World's Most Expensive Phở Goes on Auction Block](#)
- [More Most Popular...](#)

TODAY'S DEAL IN LOS ANGELES



\$99 ZOOM!
Teeth Whitening
from
Agaki Dentistry

[GET IT NOW](#)



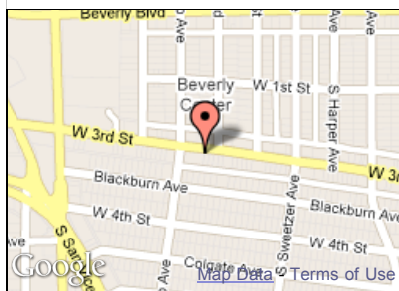
"What's more compelling than watching somebody create something out of nothing?" Cutler says. "The producer's impulse is that you want Jonny to succeed before your very eyes the first time he tries. But the filmmaker's impulse is that you have to embrace life as it comes. And, as is always the case, it proves to be the more interesting story."

Was Cutler ever worried, in the midst of Shook's struggles, he wouldn't find a narrative for his film? "I was sitting there in the restaurant going, 'Oh, man. He's not going to do it. What are we going to do?' Then I realized, 'Oh, that's exactly what we're going to do.'"

We won't reveal how the story ends except to say it involves serrano chiles and arugula flowers. Even beyond the boundaries of the movie, Shook's pursuit isn't really over. He's still thinking of ways to improve his concoction. That's part of the process too.

The documentary is part of [USA network's "character project,"](#) a series of eight short films each made by a different director. The films will screen in The Brig parking lot several times over the course of next weekend (May 20-22).

Location Info



Son of a Gun
8370 W. 3rd St., L.A., CA
Category: [Restaurant](#)

Tags:

[Animal](#), [Documentary](#), [Elina Shatkin](#), [Jon Shook](#), [Movie](#), [R.J. Cutler](#), [Son of a Gun](#), [Viny Dotolo](#)

[Write Comment](#) [Email to Friend](#) [Print Article](#)

[Like](#)

Add New Comment

Optional: Login below.

[Post as ...](#)

Showing 0 comments

Sort by [Oldest first](#)

Real-time updating is **enabled**. [\(Pause\)](#)

LA Weekly on Facebook
[Like](#)

20,518 people like LA Weekly.



Lauren David Dusty Vita Gina

[Facebook social plugin](#)

Sign up for free stuff, news info & more!

enter email



Los Angeles Classifieds

buy, sell, trade (13,692)	musician (1,514)
rentals (4,884)	jobs (1,312)
personals (1,450)	adult entertainment (38,656)

Slideshows



[May at the Farmer Markets](#)



[Porkapalooza at Cochon 555](#)



[Photo Gallery: Noodle Guy in the SGV](#)

[More Slideshows >>](#)

Tools

[Search Squid Ink](#)

Follow us on: [RSS](#) [Twitter](#)

[Search](#)

[send us your tips](#)