

Author's Statement 2011

Cynthia Sowers

I confess: I am not a good cook. I tried to learn (with brief, dedicated fervor) under the influence of Julia Child's Mastering the Art of French Cooking. Yes, I too was swept away by Julia, Louisette, and Simone. For me, the *batterie de cuisine* was the magical paraphernalia of the alchemist's studio; the definitions (to fold, to nap, to refresh) were blissful; the line drawings by Sidonie Coryn graciously assisted the neophyte in the art of trussing a chicken, fluting mushrooms, and pressing pastry ovals together. The large substantial volume itself preserved the wisdom of the past; each recipe – patient, thorough, and rational – brought comfort to body and soul. But cook the food I could not. It was the book, after all, that captured me. My “still life” poems pay tribute to these kitchen muses: Julia Child, Elizabeth David, Dorothy Hartley, and to wonderful food. I eat with gusto; but as for the craftsmanship and inspiration that transforms the raw, chaotic array into a splendid repast – I stand apart in awe.



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Plums and Figs
Acrylic on cardboard