



Isabella Tan

LOLA

Isabella Tan, young talented filmmaker from South East Asia, takes on the relationship between parents and children and the formers' inability to relate to their children's needs and aspirations. Lola is a stringent analysis of the psychologies in families with adolescent children whose path gets overshadowed by the parents' ambition to plan their future according to their own expectations.

Coming into being as a fine psychological investigation and growing into an intense emotional journey, LOLA is one of those rare films displaying a proficient understanding of the theme they tackle.

Phoenix Cinema/ Saturday 11th of August/ Session 2 - 20:30 (21:05)

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How did you start filmmaking and what motivates you to do it ?

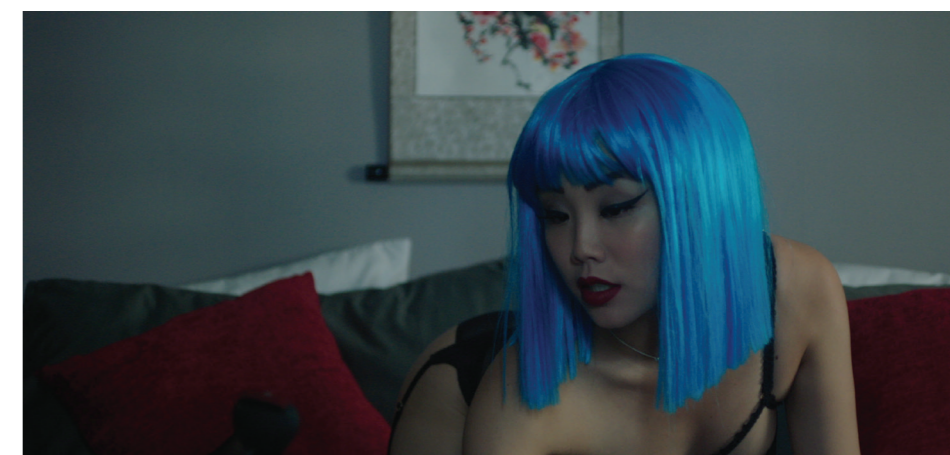
I did photography for a really long time and sometime in high school, a professor caught me staying late to edit photos and he asked why I wasn't taking the media class. Back then we didn't have a photography class and I was just kind of self taught and eventually through lots of convincing my parents, I ended up taking the media class in my senior year and fell in love with film. We studied several different types of films and history of films and I realized this was the story-telling platform I wanted to grow on.

Your film Lola, could you please tell us what's about and what inspired you ?

Lola is a coming of age story about a young Asian American teenager, whose family pressures her into living a pre-planned life. In following Lola through life, we gain an understanding of her secrets and the suffocating environment that she was raised in. When "a dark figure" from her past shows up, he throws her quiet life into turmoil. The inspiration behind Lola beyond personal experience are the several conversations I've had with other young asian women from complicated families who have experienced sexual trauma. The stigma of trauma and the familial shame behind it is a very cultural experience that many have had to go through and this film sort of points you towards the dangers of how that can affect someone who has to hide it for the sake of her family.

The film looks really well how did you get the resources to shoot it?

The DP, Daisy Zhou is a master at Cinematography. Being able to work with her was a dream and I had looked up to her work for so long. When I made this film, I was still in film school and it was a combined efforts of so many different talented people willing to come together to make this story come to life. I owe it so much to my team and my crew who gave up their time and energy to bring LOLA to the screen. The actors are all people I've met on other sets or I've heard fantastic things about and they killed it during the auditions and their chemistry with each other was so very palpable and so honest, it was a joy to direct them. I especially couldn't have done it without my incredible lead actress Anna Mikami whom I had great chemistry with. It's so important to find likeminded creatives who can share your vision. We had mostly female department heads and that really helped us with the way the film



ended up playing out as, and everything was from a woman's gaze and had such feminine touches and qualities to them.

Can you share a few behind the scenes fun facts with us?

Uh, we were filming in a beautiful house in upstate New York and one of the grips broke an expensive vase. Our talented production designer put it back together very precisely and the break was 90% unnoticeable but it haunts me to this very day.

What is next for you?

When I graduated college, I started a production agency called Rebel Motion. Rebel Motion is a female led and female run production company based in New York

City with international work. I decided that alongside my narrative work to really break into the commercial industry because there's still such a representation issue in the mainstream media that the best way to tackle several of those issues was to infiltrate the content platform where we absorb most of our information -- advertising, branded content and social media. Rebel Motion is an agency that pushes complex narratives and we try to portray mostly people of color (especially asian women) to the forefront of our content. We work with several brands around the world. I'm just trying to grow the company right now and build my client base ... but I'm also working on LOLA as a feature so that's very exciting!