

## Alumna finalist in national film competition



COURTESY CAROL PETERSEN

Director Lillian Wang confers with Rich Schaefer, director of photography, on the set of "The Sound of Movies," a film up for the Coca-Cola Refreshing Filmmaker Award.

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If filmmaker Lillian Wang has her way, her small film soon may be on a big screen. A finalist for the Coca-Cola Refreshing Filmmaker Award, Wang could find her 50-second short, and face, plastered in theaters across the nation.

The annual nationwide competition chooses 10 finalists from eight select universities who are each given \$5,000 grants to make their films.

Upon completion, the films are reviewed by a panel of judges, and the winner goes away with a \$10,000 award and, more importantly, the exposure of his or her short shown in some 20,000 theaters as part of the pre-show

entertainment.

The one requirement of the competition is that the film must deal with the moviegoing experience. Wang, a UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television alumna, wanted to steer away from films that seemed too manufactured and commercial-like. Wang likes to think of her submission, "The Sounds of Movies," as more of a sensory compilation of sounds than a straight narrative.

"I thought having a hip, rhythmic, percussive piece would be fun to do and might just be different enough from previous years' winners to gain some attention," Wang said.

Wang's most obvious inspiration came from "Stomp," a musical that incorporates everyday objects in creating music and choreography. She also kept a picture of Edward Hopper's painting "New York Movie" on hand to help create the warm color palette for the film. Apart from her many inspirations, Wang wanted to keep the film unique to her style.

"It is a blend of (the) real and (the) 'hyper-real' of the moviegoing experience in a very natural way, so it wasn't just people dancing or drumming," Wang said.

Like most film endeavors nowadays, time and money proved to be the most daunting challenges for Wang. Though the duration of the film was limited to 50 seconds, modern production processes pushed up the bill, making it difficult to keep within her \$5,000 budget. Unfortunately these areas could not be skimmed on due to the increases in submissions' standards year after year.

Yet Wang is not one to be discouraged easily. Her hard work aside, goodwill and favors also became vital to the film's success. Fortunately, due to the increasing recognition of the competition, she found people were eager to work on a project that could have widespread exposure.

Wang's roots at UCLA also helped her through difficulties. Not only did fellow UCLA film students work on her team and provide critical feedback, she also contributes much of her foundational film knowledge to her fruitful college experience.

"UCLA has a very independent-minded approach to filmmaking," Wang said. "Our school encourages independent vision and personal storytelling."

Serendipity aside, there is no substitute for hard work in filmmaking. Though Wang has yet to

find out if "The Sound of Movies" has won, she's hoping to see the product of that hard work on the big screen.

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*For more information about the Coca-Cola Refreshing Filmmakers competition, log on to [www.youthdevelopment.coca-cola.com/art\\_refreshing.html](http://www.youthdevelopment.coca-cola.com/art_refreshing.html).*

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