



"The smoke rises up and blurs the line
between life and death."

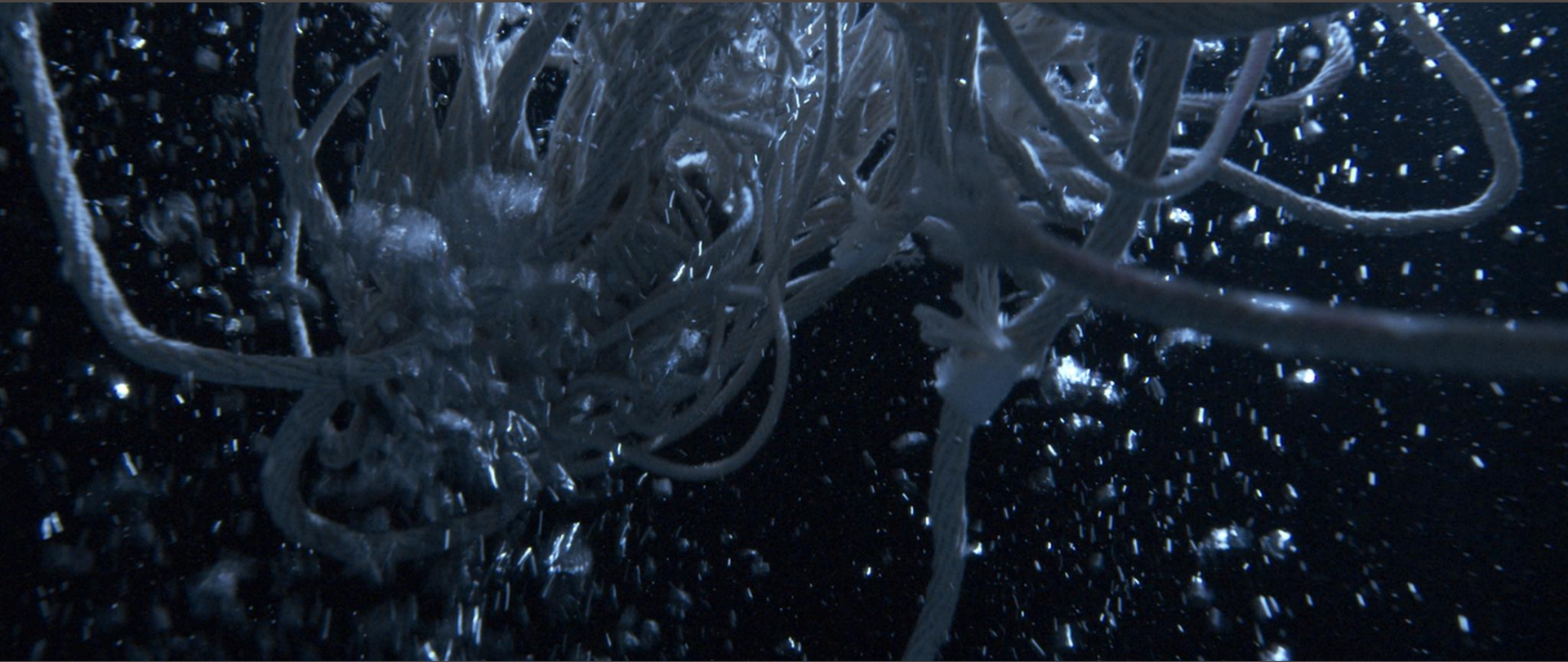
Logline

Chinese-American cook Amy Chang wants to move to L.A. with her girlfriend Megan, yet is held back by unfinished business with her late grandma.



Synopsis

"Noodles represent our lives. The longer they are, the more years we have. They separate and tangle, only to come together once more in the broth... The smoke rises to the heavens, and blurs the lines between life and death."





When Amy finds out that her girlfriend Megan is moving across the country, she is faced with an incredibly challenging decision. As a young Chinese-American cook living in Chicago living on her own, she is still constantly in contact with her culture through noodle-making and ancestor-worship - practices which date hundreds and hundreds of years before her. Nonetheless, moving to Los Angeles to be with a woman unsettles this cultural foundation, best embodied by the growing guilt Amy feels over her late Grandmother's more traditional views.

What results from one girl's quest for closure is an adventure that transcends time and space - a journey which explores the themes of the remnants of guilt over contradicting one's culture, as well as the permanence of the love for home and family.



Director's Statement

Growing up in America, I can remember spending countless Chinese New Years in the kitchen, where my Mom would set down a piping hot bowl of noodles in front of me and explain its cultural significance. Every year, I'd remember nodding and smiling politely, before ravenously devouring my meal without a second thought.



Being a product of the diaspora, I felt that experiences such as this were plentiful. We were always told stories about China, yet we never truly understood what they meant. We understood that it had something to do with heritage - that these very traditions are ingrained in our bones - and yet, it all strangely felt irrelevant to the life that I was leading in the United States.

NOODLES & INCENSE was born from this ongoing contradiction - the tug-of-war from both the powerful pull of a homeland I didn't quite understand, and the more tangible life that was present right in front of my eyes. For me, I often felt this conflict through guilt. In a very abstract sense, I felt as if I was "letting down" my ancestors through taking on an unconventional occupation and for being a transgender woman.

Through this film, I saw both mine and thousands of other Asian-Americans' experiences reflected on-screen: this constant reminder that we aren't good enough, that we've somehow failed our culture. Our film explores the violent clashes of this duality of identity, and furthermore is also a respectful homage to the beautiful intricacies within Chinese culture.



Although the protagonist of our movie experiences catharsis through the ever-present love of her late Grandmother, other queer people from immigrant communities often do not share this positive experience. Sadly, many people become estranged from their families and their heritage, as the ongoing stigmas within the culture against the “other” proves to be blinding and dangerous forces in play.

We hope that, with **NOODLES AND INCENSE**, we can show that family, although sometimes a source of conflict and sorrow, also remains our greatest strength and hope. We believe, no matter how much hate there is in the world, that love between families is ever present, and that it is, at its very core, unshakable. Our goal is to spark discourse over what it means to have these conflicting identities, as well as to spread the positive message that, in the end, like smoke from incense sticks, love can transcend past the virulence of ignorance and hate.

Director Bio

Rey Tang began writing scripts and making short films in the seventh grade, after becoming inspired by Asian-Americans showcasing their videos through YouTube. After being accepted to Northwestern University, she moved from New Jersey to Chicago to begin studying Radio/Television/Film, while also pursuing a double major in Economics. In high school, while writing, shooting, and editing shorts with friends through the school's Film Club she had founded, Rey won a National Medal from the Scholastic Arts and Writing Competition. Her work "Just Another File", which conceptualized Death as an overworked bureaucrat, later went on tour with Scholastic's Art. Write. Now. Tour exhibit in 2017-2018. Currently, she is focused on her work as the writer and director of "Noodles & Incense", and hopes to give a voice to Asian-Americans through the short.



Full Production Credits

Written and Directed by Rey Tang

Produced by Maddie Hong and Lauren Loesberg

Cast Harmony Zhang, Kandace Huebner, Li Li, Mann-Yi Hsieh, and Lila Bahng

Executive Produced by Youngsong Hong

Casting by Charmaine Tan and Josh Jacobs

Cinematography by Adam Birch

Edited by Drew Thomas

Production Designers Erika Rodriguez and Nathan Yang

First AD Beth Koehler

Second AD / Script Supervisor Camille Argentar

Associate Producers Bruna Rosário, Sam Hassett, Cindy Shang, and Scarlet Li

Camera Assistants Jacob Chaurize, Dani Zhang, and Emily Yan

Underwater Camera Operator Manolo Mendieta

Safety Diver Jonah Frueh

Gaffers Linkon Pickus, Leo Gallagher, and Hans Misra

Key Grips Owen Pickette, Katie Kearney, and San Lee

Grips Dhruv Mehra, Maggie Brill, Hannah So, Thomas Quinn, and Jerry Lee

Production Assistant Alanna Ramquist

Location Sound / Sound Designer Sarah Nogly

Boom Operator Charmaine Tan

Assistant Editors Camille Argentar and Emily Baker

Original Music Jerry Lee

Colorist Matthew Filipek

Thanks Eileen Bei, Melissa Berlin, Gretchen Birch, Lucy Chen, Alessandra de Souza Seixas, Chunfang Ding and Yizi Xu, Jia Fei, Lawrence Feldman, Minhee Han, Libby Hanley, Maggie He, Isabel Ledesma, Marjorie Lee, Frank Liu, Janet Loesberg, Jian Lou, Jenny Lu, Isabella Penellope, Susan & Doug Present, Michelle Qin, Beatriz Sampaio, Steve Schwartz, Aria Snedegar, Wen Sun, Zhiyi Sun, Lin Tang, Min Tang, Qin Tang Yvonne Tang, Hui Wang, Lily Wang, Lois Wang, J. Xiao, Cameron And Caden Xu, Vivian Xiong, Jenny Yao, Jean Yu, Felicity Yuan, Brian Zeng, Jian Zhao, and Jing Zhu

Special Thanks Red Chili Pepper, Nicolette McManus & Leta Dickinson, Elmer's Watersports, Ed Martig, Angela Bahng, Brian Perkinson, Rachael Moeller, La Macchina Cafe, Bagel & Bialy, Bagel Art Cafe, Mt Everest Restaurant, and Siam Splendor

Full film available [here](#) // Password: noodles888!

Different file format available upon request.

Technical Information

Title: Noodles & Incense

Production Company: Studio 22 Productions

Completion Date: June 2019

Duration: 19 min 29 sec

Country of Origin: USA

Production Budget: \$7,000

Aspect Ratio: 2.39:1

Sound: Stereo Mix

Color

Language: English

