

## **Abandoned, Adopted, Here**

Produced, Directed and Written by Lucy Sheen

Year Made 2015 38 minutes

Synopsis: From 50s, 60s Colonial Hong Kong to pre-multicultural UK a group of Hong Kong foundlings were transracially adopted. I interviewed a few of my fellow adoptees to explore whether their experience of identity and belonging had been as challenging as mine. How far do other British East Asians feel a lack of belonging or identity or is it just something that culturally displaced babies and children feel?

### Director's Statement:

There was a brief period in my life when I knew without certainty who and what I was. For the first six years of my life I truly believed that I was like everyone else. I was a white Caucasian child growing up in rural England.

What a blow to find out shortly after I'd started school that I was not what I thought I was. I was in fact a transracially adopted Hong Kong Chinese foundling. One of one hundred and six, the first ever group of children to be transracially adopted by English families during the late 50s to early 60s.

One could say that from that point it was all down hill. My formative years revolved around trying to get to grips with who and exactly what I was. So when I was contacted by BAAF (British Adoption and Fostering) asking me whether I wanted to participate in their research study on Chinese adoptees the door swung open again and I began to wonder about my birth parents. I was curious to know, had any of the other foundlings that were adopted in the UK shared my struggle to find an identity. Did any of the other British East Asians that I knew, how did they view their own identity?

The saying if you want something doing right then you should do it yourself, in this particular case holds true. This is my first film as a Producer, director and writer. But the subject matter is so close to my heart and the treatment and approach to both adult adoptees and British East Asians needed to be at once both sympathetic and empathetic. The first Producer that I hired turned out to be neither and was not interested in the story and the connection of emotions, thoughts, ideas and perceptions that I wanted explore.

I'd like to think that I have learnt a lot from this inaugural experience. That the documentary that I have produced will spark debate and discussion about the place and the nature of belonging in the UK for an East Asian. That it will allow greater and more frank discussion amongst the professionals in the adoption profession about culture, ethnicity and race.

I don't claim and neither do I aim to offer solutions – but to provoke communication. To illicit interest in people and circumstances that many times and oft are side barred or ignored.

I have been able to combine two things that are very important in my life the fact that I'm a transracial adoptee and the fact that I'm a British East Asian Artists.