

For Immediate Release

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MUNKEY IN THE CITY and its high hopes for Asian American storytelling amid Hollywood “whitewashing” trend

San Francisco, CA (November 13, 2017) – Have you ever had the courage to chase your dreams, but were too clueless as to how to actually achieve them? That’s exactly the problem at the heart of the peculiar new web series dramedy by upstart filmmaker Michael T. Nguyen and rising actor Kenny Leu.

First-time director Michael T. Nguyen wrote the story based on his own alienating experiences while drifting in San Francisco. And although race is not highlighted in the story, the fact that Munkey is portrayed as a complex Asian American is nearly unheard of today, given the entertainment industry’s apparent belief that Asians don’t have the right aesthetic to attract wide audiences outside the martial arts genre.

Indeed, when not typecasting Asian Americans into stereotypical roles, Hollywood would rather replace Asians with white actors altogether, leading to “whitewashing,” such as in films like *Aloha*, *Dr. Strange*, and *Ghost in the Shell*.

“It really is the modern day yellowface,” Michael T. explained. “It has become significantly crucial to counter this current movement. The decree must be that Asian Americans can, and will, represent themselves and their place, no matter what the story is.”

MUNKEY IN THE CITY stars Kenny Leu (*The Long Road Home*) as Munkey, a budding novelist who moves to The City to become the greatest writer of his generation. If only he knew how to actually write. Struggling to find his way and to connect with those around him, he escapes through alcohol and drugs and falls for a young painter, played by Monica Barbaro (*Chicago Justice*). Reluctantly, he is pushed along by his band of eclectic housemates, all while being tormented by a mysterious demonic creature.

Nearly five years in the making, MUNKEY IN THE CITY was first conceived in January 2013, filmed in San Francisco in October 2015, and finished post-production in July of 2017. It premiered online on October 18, 2017.

The entire 6-episode web series is available to stream via its website, Youtube, and Vimeo, in addition to a planned festival run in the coming year.

Kenny Leu (Actor/Executive Producer) started his career in the tech industry, having help founded a successful start up in Silicon Valley. Then, wanting to focus on his creative pursuits, he decided to venture into acting, where he is committed to promoting complex, positive images of Asian Americans on screen. You can currently catch him in TV miniseries *Long Road Home*, about the Iraq War, from National Geographic.

Michael T. Nguyen (Writer/Director/Producer) moved to San Francisco 7 years ago to study filmmaking. But battling the high cost of living in The City, he was forced to drop out of school to focus on paying his over-priced rent. After struggling to deal with his situation, he decided to write his story down and channel his energy into creating what would become his first professionally made project, MUNKEY IN THE CITY.

Press kit is available upon request.

Connect with MUNKEY IN THE CITY

Website: www.munkeyinthecity.com

Trailer: www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYhhd69gxWk

Youtube: www.youtube.com/user/munkeyinthecity

Vimeo: www.vimeo.com/munkeyinthecity

Twitter: www.twitter.com/MunkeyInTheCity

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MunkeyInTheCity/

Instagram: www.instagram.com/munkeyinthecity/

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