

A woman with long dark hair and glasses is shown in profile, looking out a window. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, likely from the setting or rising sun. In the foreground, several white orchid flowers are in bloom, their petals catching the light. The background shows a window with a view of a body of water and some foliage. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

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Summer Solstice

A Film by Christian Lee

**Synopsis: On the longest day of the year,
a queer Chinese American teenager
writes a heartfelt letter to an old flame.**





Technical Specs:

Duration: 4 mins

Completed: August 2022

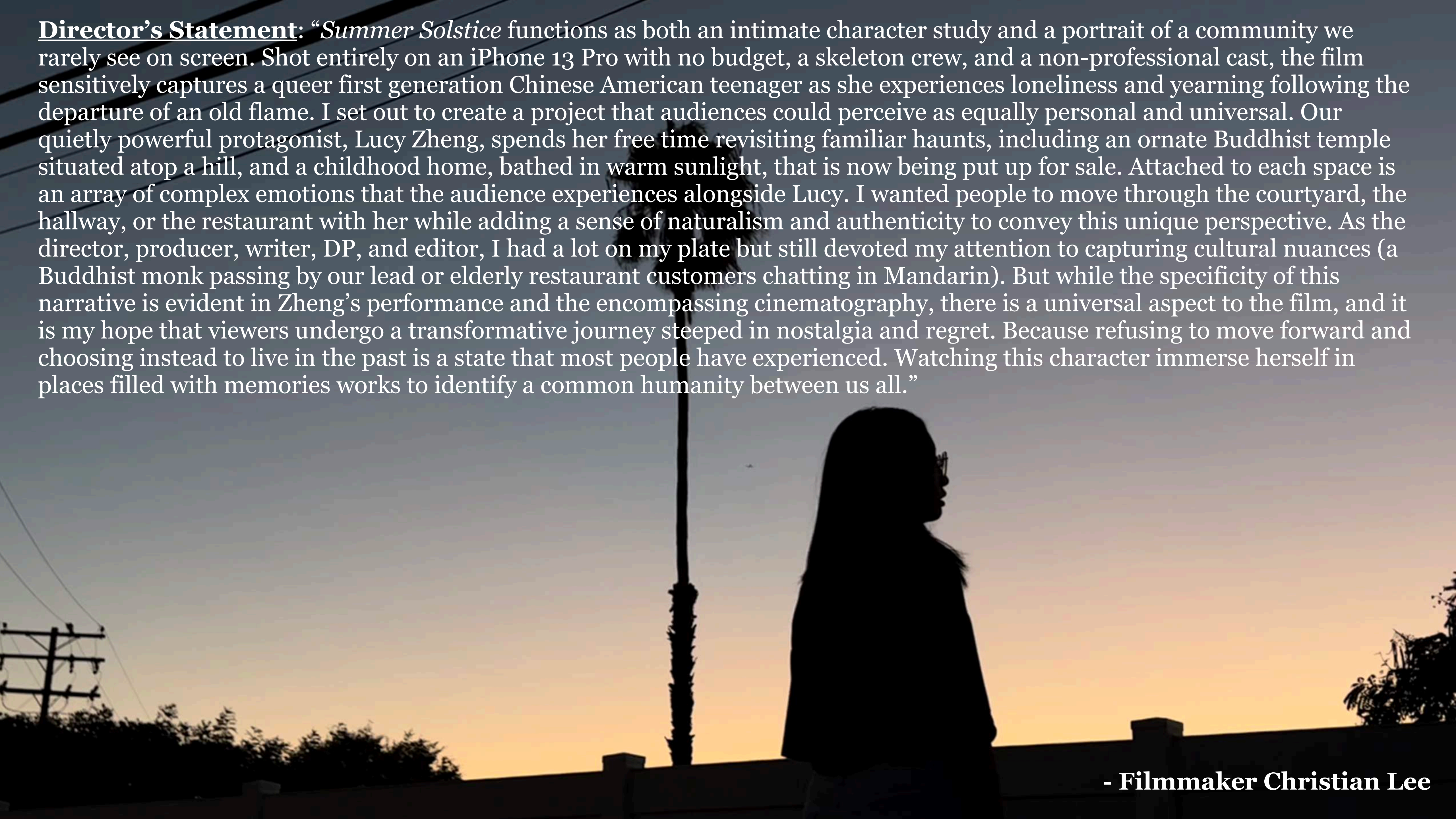
Shooting Format: Digital

Screening Format: DCP

Aspect Ratio: 16:9

Language: English &

Chinese (Mandarin)

A silhouette of a woman with long hair and glasses is shown in profile, looking towards the right. The background is a sunset sky with a warm orange glow. A tall palm tree stands in the middle ground, and utility poles are visible on the left. The overall mood is contemplative and nostalgic.

Director's Statement: “*Summer Solstice* functions as both an intimate character study and a portrait of a community we rarely see on screen. Shot entirely on an iPhone 13 Pro with no budget, a skeleton crew, and a non-professional cast, the film sensitively captures a queer first generation Chinese American teenager as she experiences loneliness and yearning following the departure of an old flame. I set out to create a project that audiences could perceive as equally personal and universal. Our quietly powerful protagonist, Lucy Zheng, spends her free time revisiting familiar haunts, including an ornate Buddhist temple situated atop a hill, and a childhood home, bathed in warm sunlight, that is now being put up for sale. Attached to each space is an array of complex emotions that the audience experiences alongside Lucy. I wanted people to move through the courtyard, the hallway, or the restaurant with her while adding a sense of naturalism and authenticity to convey this unique perspective. As the director, producer, writer, DP, and editor, I had a lot on my plate but still devoted my attention to capturing cultural nuances (a Buddhist monk passing by our lead or elderly restaurant customers chatting in Mandarin). But while the specificity of this narrative is evident in Zheng’s performance and the encompassing cinematography, there is a universal aspect to the film, and it is my hope that viewers undergo a transformative journey steeped in nostalgia and regret. Because refusing to move forward and choosing instead to live in the past is a state that most people have experienced. Watching this character immerse herself in places filled with memories works to identify a common humanity between us all.”

- Filmmaker Christian Lee

Behind the Scenes:

Shot entirely on an iPhone 13 Pro, the latest film from Telly Award® winning filmmaker Christian Lee features strong direction, lyrical cinematography, poetic writing, and a quietly moving lead performance from newcomer Lucy Zheng.



How You Can Help:

Summer Solstice is a proof of concept film for a full length short drama that could not be completed due to a lack of funding. Independent filmmaking is a difficult pursuit, and student directors of color with minimal resources already face an uphill battle, both in executing their creative and technical visions in addition to remaining true to themselves by telling intimate stories that reflect the experiences of their diverse communities, which rarely appear on screen. By contributing financially, you are ensuring that the concept film receives the very best Sound Design, Mix, Color Grade, and Film Festival Submission fees while allowing us to begin production on the much-awaited full length version.





Credits:

Directed, Produced, Written, Shot,
and Edited by Christian Lee

Starring Lucy Zheng

Production Assistant: Eunice Lee



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Shot on Location in Diamond Bar & San Gabriel Valley, California

