



A ROLLIN STUDIOS PRODUCTION
IN ASSOCIATION WITH SQUAD 47 FILMS

double happiness

DIRECTED BY SHARI ALBERT
WRITTEN BY LAURA LEELUN AND SHARI ALBERT

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SHARI ALBERT

Written By
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Starring
CLEM CHEUNG
KATHRYN GRODY
and
BETH DOVER

RUNNING TIME
16 min 45 seconds

SYNOPSIS

After the death of her husband of 50 years, a life-affirming Jewish widow and the tightly-wound Chinese-American restaurateur who serves her family every Christmas, find themselves drawn into an unexpected late-in-life romance.

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jewish film institute



director's statement

SHARI ALBERT

At its heart, *Double Happiness* is an intimate, character-driven romantic dramedy exploring love, grief, and unexpected connection. It follows two people, bound by decades of tradition, who discover new depths in each other after loss. Through a naturalistic lens, the film immerses the audience in their world, where humor and emotion arise organically.

Double Happiness is deeply personal to me, rooted in traditions, identity, and the humor found in cultural intersections.

As a filmmaker, I am passionate about telling stories that authentically represent modern Jewish life, an experience I rarely see portrayed with nuance on screen. Too often, Jewish characters fall into stereotypes or are reduced to their historical trauma. With *Double Happiness*, I aim to break that mold by crafting characters who are vibrant, flawed, and full of heart.

Food has always been my love language, and *Double Happiness* is a celebration of the deep, often unspoken connections formed around a table. The bond between Lillian and Richard is built through decades of shared meals, reflecting how food becomes an extension of family. My own Christmas tradition—Chinese food and a movie—has continued into adulthood, now with my ex-Catholic-not-yet-converted-Jewish-identifying husband by my side.

This film is a love letter to those traditions, to the found families we create, and to the idea that it's never too late to find joy. Through an intimate, humorous lens, *Double Happiness* embraces the complexity of cultural identity and how love, loss, and a good meal can bring people together.



development

Double Happiness began as a feature film, a project that Laura and I have poured over four years of our lives into because we believe in it so deeply. The story has resonated with so many people from the moment it was first conceived—starting with a single tweet that went viral on Christmas 2020.



That tweet was the spark that brought Laura and me together as writing partners, and it has continued to go viral every single year since, proving that this story has a powerful, built-in audience eager to see it come to life.

While we always envisioned Double Happiness as a feature, we knew that making a short would be the perfect way to entice investors and producers to help us bring the full story to the big screen. Every time we talk about this project, the response is the same: Where can I see this? That level of enthusiasm, combined with the film's organic traction, tells us that we have something extremely special.

This short isn't just a standalone piece—it's a proof of concept for the feature, a testament to the love, humor, and humanity at the heart of *Double Happiness*.



a word about representation

This film broadens representation by focusing on underrepresented perspectives: the experience of aging, the intersection of Jewish and Asian American cultures, and the way traditions evolve across generations. While both cultures may appear privileged in mainstream narratives, they are also vulnerable—often existing as outsiders to dominant holiday and American norms. By centering a story on joy and resilience, *Double Happiness* offers something uplifting and deeply human.

The commonalities between Jewish and Chinese cultures—strong familial bonds, deep-rooted traditions, and the unspoken language of food—create a unique and emotionally resonant foundation for the film. From Richard’s 3 bows to Max’s photo at the shiva and his removal of his shoes entering the household, to Lillian covering the mirrors and commenting on her daughter’s highlights—it’s the attention to detail that makes this film resonant and authentic.

Shari’s personal experience of growing up as the only Jewish child in a predominantly Christian community informs the story’s exploration of identity and belonging. The film also embraces “safe treyf,” a cultural nuance that exemplifies how Jewish traditions adapt over time.

A pivotal moment in *Double Happiness* is its authentic depiction of a shiva. Unlike many portrayals that sidestep Jewish ritual, our film includes the Mourner’s Kaddish in a way that is both meaningful and modern. When the Zelmans find themselves short a person for the prayer, Richard steps in—red socks and all—in an unconventional yet deeply moving moment that highlights the fluidity of tradition and the shared humanity between cultures.



shari albert co-writer & director



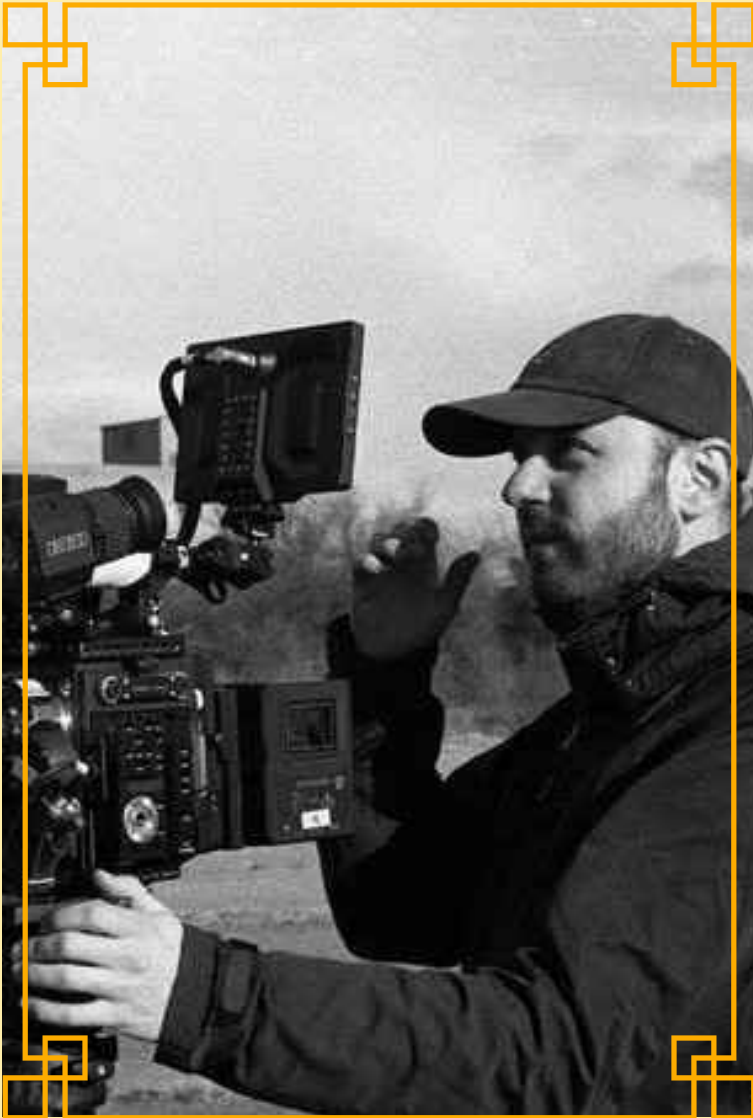
Shari writes dramatic stories through a comedic lens. The first short film she wrote and directed, *WILL YOU TAKE THIS DOG?*, won best female content creator at The Bowery Film Festival and has screened at the San Francisco Indie Film Fest, New Ohio Film Festival, NY City Web Fest, and many others. As a writer, she has been a cohort at the esteemed “The Writer’s Lab” (class of 2022). Her scripts have placed in competitions such as AFF, The Big Apple Film Festival, and Final Draft’s Big Break Contest. She is published in *SHE PERSISTED*, a book of monologues written by women playwrights by Applause Books. With over 30 years of experience in front of the camera, Shari is now stepping behind it with everything she’s learned and absorbed. She lives in NYC with her husband and rescue dachshund, Dr. Watson.

laura leelun **co-writer**



Laura LeeLun is a Los Angeles-based screenwriter, sketch comedian, and recovering litigator. She currently writes and produces videos for a Gold Comedy digital sketch team. Her pilot and feature screenplays have placed at the Austin Film Festival and her comedy writing has appeared in *McSweeney's* and *Reductress*. She enjoys digging her satirical claws into social absurdities, a skill she honed through training at The Second City.

adam kolodny cinematographer



Adam Kolodny is a Cinematographer based in New York City. He gravitated to his craft due to an obsession with stray beams of light and the endless possibilities of collaborative art. His core ambition is to leave an indelible mark on every film that he shoots, while always serving the best needs of the story at hand. Recent credits include the feature film “The Featherweight”, which premiered at the 2023 Venice International Film Festival, the experimental feature film “Little Boxes”, as well as the 2022 Tribeca Festival short “Valentine”. Adam's work as 2nd Unit DP has been showcased on the HBO Documentary series “Nuclear Family” and “Mind Over Murder”. His work has screened at film festivals such as Venice, Sundance, SXSW, and IFFI. In his free time Adam is passionate about hand developing and scanning analog film, eating popcorn in the dark, and meeting strangers dogs on the street.

naomi wolff lachter

costume designer



Naomi's diverse and eclectic body of work ranges from period dramas including *The Featherweight* (world premiere Venice International Film Festival 2023) to contemporary high fashion horror in *Appendage* (Hulu exclusive, SXSW 2023). Upcoming films premiering in 2024: *McVeigh*, *Things Like This*, and *Mr. Crocket*. Naomi has designed the costumes for festival favorites *Voodoo*, *Macbeth*, *Claire In Motion*, *Forgetting The Girl*, *Stones In The Sun*, and *Churros* (the short). Naomi has her MFA in Costume Design from Brandeis University and majored in Theater and Art with minors in Fashion and Art History at CUNY Queens College. She hails from Flushing, Queens, and is based in New York but designs on location nationwide. For more on Naomi please visit naomicostumes.com.

sonia foltarz production designer



Sonia Foltarz is a Multimedia Production Designer and an Art Director. She graduated from the School of Visual Arts with her BFA in Animation. In her early career, she worked full-time at the first immersive content research engine called "SVRF". She collaborated with Snapchat on the first-ever Augmented Reality Portals.

Currently, her work mainly consists of live-action film projects. Her recent feature film, she Production Designed, "A Wounded Fawn" has premiered at The Tribeca Film Festival. Moreover, her Art Direction work includes projects like "The Kill Room" (Uma Thurman and Samuel L Jackson), "Tulsa King S1" (Sylvester Stallone), and Paint (Owen Wilson).

clem cheung



Clem Cheung grew up in Hong Kong before moving to the United States in his late twenties. After spending over 20 years in corporate management, he decided to give up his successful career to pursue his true love: acting. Clem has appeared in numerous films and television shows, such as “Tower Heist”, “The Amazing Spider-Man 2”, “Boardwalk Empire”, “Wizard Of Lies”, “Baywatch”, “Master Of None”, “High Maintenance”, “Mr. Robot”, and “Manifest”, just to name a few. He has also provided his voice for several video games and animated projects. He voiced YeYe in the Nickelodeon hit “Ni Hao, Kai-Lan” and Grandpa in Netflix’s “Over The Moon.” Clem is a proud father and grandfather and currently resides in New Jersey with his wife.

kathryn grody



Kathryn Grody was born in Los Angeles, a cosmic error which she corrected almost 50 years ago. She found her artistic home at The Public Theater, performing in ten productions and earning Obies for *Top Girls* and *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*. Her solo show *A Mom's Life* was nominated for a Drama Desk Award. Other theater highlights include *A Model Apartment (59E59)*, *20th Century Blues (Signature)*, *The Great Moment (Seattle Rep)*, and *THE UNEXPECTED 3rd*, premiering this fall at People's Light. During the pandemic, she shot the Showtime pilot *Seasoned*, and recently performed Geoff Sobelle's *Home* in Toronto and Singapore. Her film and TV credits include *Reds*, *Limbo*, *My Bodyguard*, *Another Woman*, *The Sunset Gang*, and *The Execution of Private Slovik*. An active advocate, she serves on the boards of *Dances for a Variable Population* and *Downtown Women for Change*, and works with the *International Rescue Committee* and *New York Theatre Workshop*.

beth dover

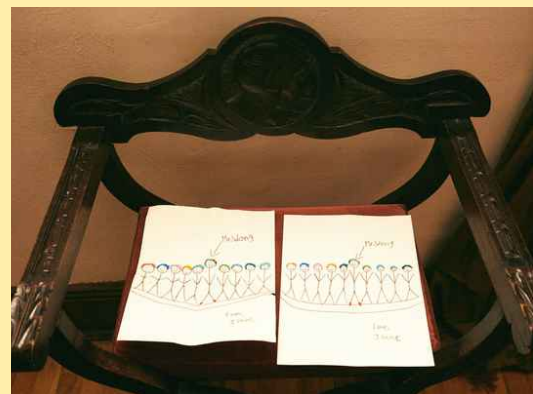


Beth Dover is an actress best known for her standout role as Linda Ferguson in the acclaimed Netflix series *Orange Is the New Black*. She's brought her sharp comedic instincts to shows like *Medical Police*, *Another Period*, *Burning Love*, and *Wet Hot American Summer: Ten Years Later*, and has appeared in *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, *New Girl*, and *Bob's Burgers*, among others. A seasoned improv performer, Dover trained in Meisner technique and got her start in NYC before settling in Los Angeles. When not on screen, she's a proud advocate for Planned Parenthood, the ACLU, and HRC—and an enthusiastic karaoke queen. She lives in LA with her husband, actor Joe Lo Truglio, and their son.

rollins studios production company



Founded by Anthony Argento in 2010, Rollin' Studios is a Brooklyn-based production company that serves as an extension of Broadway Stages, supporting independent filmmakers by providing access to locations, crews, and resources.





bts

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Written By
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Produced By
ROLLIN STUDIOS

Producer
ANTHONY ARGENTO

Associate Producers
SQUAD 47 FILMS
BRENT KATZ

Executive Producers
LEE ANN STEVENSON
ANDREW MORATORE
LAURA LEELUN
SHARI ALBERT

CAST

Lillian Zelman - Kathryn Grody
Richard Wong - Clem Cheung
Julie Zelman - Beth Dover
Issac - Henry James Gross
Nancy Silverstein - Bonnie Rose
Rabbi Ben - Dave Shelansky
Li Na - Teresa Hui
Sam - Iris Feng
Young Jeanie Wong - Katie Lee Hill
Young Richard Wong - Chhoyang Chesthatsang
Young Lillian Zelman - Irina Kaplan
Young Max Zelman - Max Wolkowitz

Director of Photography
ADAM KOLODNY

Production Designer
SONIA FOLTARZ

Senior Colorist
SAM DALEY

Re-recording Mix/Sound Design
ANURAG MASSEY

Costume Designer
NAOMI WOLFF LACHTER

Editor
CRAIG DE LORENZO

Music By
ROBERT LOUIS KING

Music Supervisor
WILL FELKER

Casting By
MIA CUSUMANO, CSA

Unit Production Manager
TARA ZULFIKAR

First Assistant director
ANNA MAUES

Second Assistant Directors
CALLUM STENBRIDGE
OWEN MURATORE

Line Producer
YIWEN QIAN



thank you

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CONTACT

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