

Her past film work include roles in the films *Beautiful*, starring Minnie Driver and directed by Academy Award winner Sally Field and *The Specials* starring Rob Lowe and Thomas Hayden Church. She also worked with Woody Harrelson in the Spirit Award nominated film *Rampart* and was part of the big budget comedy *The Internship* which starred Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson. In television, Tiu has enjoyed numerous guest-starring and recurring roles in some of television's highly rated shows: "24," "Rizzoli & Isles," "Weeds," "The Closer," "Southland," and "2 Broke Girls."

ABOUT OSCAR TORRE:

Oscar Torre, is a film and television actor, who recently took a turn behind the lens with his directorial debut in the award winning film, *Pretty Rosebud*. The film was honored with five awards at the Idyllwild International Film Festival: Best Feature Film, Best Director (Oscar Torre), Best Screenplay, Best Actress (Chuti Tiu) and Best Cinematography (Tarina Reed), a first in IIFC's history.

Pretty Rosebud, is a passion project for Torre. The script, brilliantly written by actress and first time screenwriter Chuti Tiu, resonated with him and he felt compelled to tell the story with respect. Without a formal education in film production, but with countless hours on set, Torre, took on the challenge on telling the story of flawed and believable characters. The endeavor has paid off and the film has garnered Torre his first "Best Director" award, in addition to the film's inclusion in other film festivals this year.

Torre first garnered attention as an actor for his lead performance as a political prisoner in the film *Libertad*, which he also produced. He received rave reviews for his comedic performance as an actor recruited to be a con-man in the Lionsgate heist film, *Ladron Que Roba Ladron*. He also stars in the sequel, set to release late 2015. Torre also has significant roles in the Lionsgate film, *Couterpunch* and the Warner Brothers film *The Hangover II*, directed by Todd Phillips. Up next, Torre is set to star in the film *The Boatman*, which is scheduled for a late 2015 release. In television, Torre is best known to audiences as 'Santos' in his series regular turn in the CBS show "Cane," alongside Jimmy Smits. He has also has guest starred in "CSI: Miami," "NCIS," "Cold Case" and "Dollhouse."

ABOUT HANDLE WITH CARE PRODUCTIONS:

Handle With Care Productions is a film and television production company formed by wife and husband team Chuti Tiu and Oscar Torre. Their objective is to tell stories that celebrate the human spirit, encourage understanding and call humanity to action. *Pretty Rosebud* is their first produced feature film; *Hello Goodbye* is in production, and *Lunarticking* is in pre-production, as well as a short and several co-productions.

TRAILER: <https://vimeo.com/prettyrosebud/trailer>



CREW LIST



Oscar Torre

Director

Chuti Tiu

Writer

Rebecca Hu

Producer

Tarina Reed

Director of Photography

Donna Mathewson

Editor

Dave Volpe

Music Composer

Thomas Corkran

Sound Designer

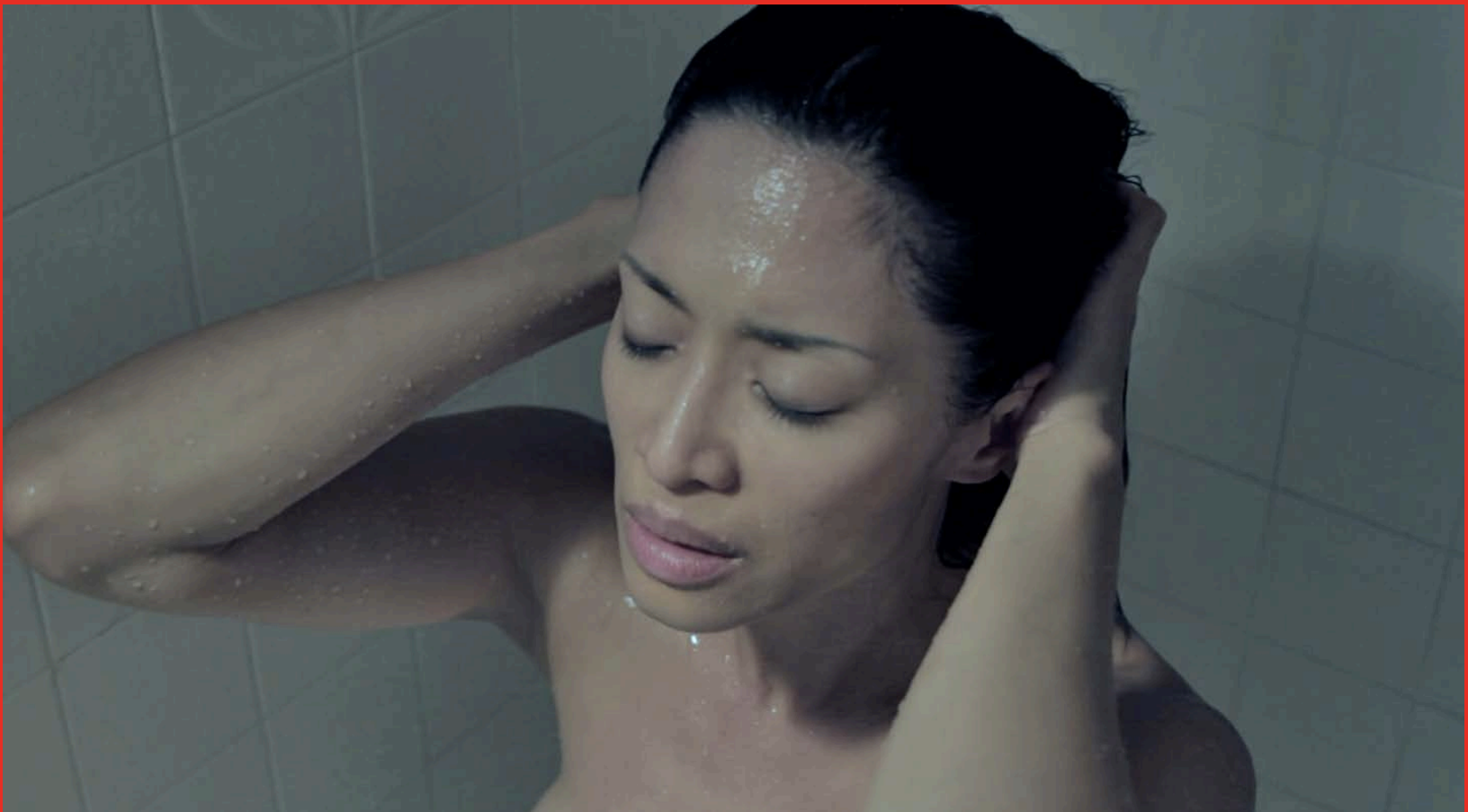
Kristyn Ingle

Production Designer

"...an award-winning film that's MOVING, CONTROVERSIAL and taking the film circuit by storm." - Ilana Rapp, *Huffington Post*

"Oscar Torre SHINES in his directorial debut..." - James Wood, *Examiner*

"(Tiu) is a STRIKING presence, but the maturity tempering her sexuality is something you almost never see on film. It is a BOLD, vulnerably exposed performance." - Joe Bendel, *Libertas Film Magazine*



"Tiu delivers a STELLAR PERFORMANCE..." - Kevin Young, *Asian in NY*

"A SKILLED and nuanced take on the great expectations of family, religion, work, status and sexual desire..." - Scott Stiffler, *Chelsea Now*

"Not all movies leave a MARK ON YOUR LIFE, but "Pretty Rosebud" is one of those deep movies that does." - Nikoleta Morales, *Extra*

CAST LIST



Chuti Tiu

Kipp Shiotani

Dana Lee

Bel Hernandez

Wolfgang Bodison

Tamara Braun

James Kyson

Cecilia "Cissy" Santos

Phil Santos

Dr. Crescencio Lam

Letty Lam

Frank Allen

Candace

Jun Lam

libertas

film magazine >>

the voice of freedom in movies and popular culture



jason
apuzzo

&

edited by
govindini
murty

LFM: THE VOICE OF FREEDOM IN MOVIES & POP CULTURE

By [Joe Bendel](#). Cecilia "Sissy" Santos is a political consultant who feels deeply guilty when she succumbs to adulterous temptation. Yes, that sounds far-fetched, but if you can accept it, there are merits to be found in Oscar Torre's *Pretty Rosebud*, written by and starring his real life wife Chuti Tiu, which opens this Friday in Los Angeles.

Apparently, Santos works for a combination boutique PR agency and political consulting firm, but it's not clear what they do during odd numbered years. Regardless, she at least has a going career with opportunities for advancement. That is more than her lay-about husband Phil can say. He resents his wife's status as the sole breadwinner, but he refuses to even consider anything less than his previous gig. In all honesty, his ambition has dried up and his sex drive essentially followed with it.

However, Sissy Santos has this boxing trainer (conveniently played by Torre, who looks the part). She regrets it afterward, but of course her husband is still his same insufferably entitled self. Time spent with her traditional Filipino family does not help much either, especially when they complain about her golden boy brother's divorced Anglo girlfriend. To make matters worse, she has plenty of candidates for further adultery at work, including the congressional nominee, whose campaign she is assigned to.

Tiu might be writing from a Filipina perspective, but the issues Santos wrestles with should resonate with audiences from diverse ethnic backgrounds, with old school parents. Arguably, she really stacks the deck against dumb old Phil, but her scenes with the family's Catholic priest are surprisingly well written and more than fair to the priest. In fact, the good Father just might have some helpful, nonjudgmental counsel to offer.



From "Pretty Rosebud."

Obviously, *Rosebud* was conceived as a showcase for Tiu (a former Miss Illinois), but she proves to be equal to the challenge of carrying the picture. She is a striking presence, but the maturity tempering her sexuality is something you almost never see on film. It is a bold, vulnerably exposed performance. While Torre has limited screen time as Alejandro the trainer, he helps generate the necessary heat to set in motion all the subsequent conflicts. Richard Yniguez's Father Antonio also nicely bolsters the film's forgiving tone. In contrast, Kipp Shiotani certainly makes viewers

contemptuous of Phil, which seems to be his assignment, while the Santos parents are mostly played as broad, churchy stereotypes.

Rosebud is a small intimate film, but it juggles some heavy themes relatively dexterously. If nothing else, the gym scenes ought to convince DirecTV they need Tiu and Torre for the next season of *Kingdom*. Recommended for those who appreciate a frank, women's POV adultery drama, *Pretty Rosebud* opens this Friday (1/16) in Los Angeles at the Arena Cinema.

Guest Post: Writing the Change You Wish to See in Hollywood

By Chuti Tiu | Women and Hollywood
January 30, 2015 at 12:30PM



'Pretty Rosebud'

My screenwriting debut, *Pretty Rosebud*, depicts the journey of Cissy, a professional, career-driven woman trapped in a childless marriage to a long-unemployed architect. Although she seems to have an ideal life from the outside, striving to be everything to everybody has driven Cissy to her breaking point. We follow Cissy as she bucks tradition, breaks social taboos, and searches for her own, self-defined life path, unveiling shocking truths along the way.

We all want to see stories from Hollywood that are more representative of ourselves. Especially as women. Especially as people of color.

When I tell people I grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, people are surprised to hear that there is a community of Chinese- and Filipino-Americans there. I chalk this up to the consistently myopic representation of Middle America in the media. Hollywood has the power to either perpetuate antiquated perceptions or relate new worlds to people unfamiliar with them. It has, unfortunately, consistently done the former.

I count myself as part of the latter group. I wrote *Pretty Rosebud* for a number of reasons. One, I knew there were plenty of women who were the sole or primary breadwinners in their household (I have been one myself), but it was difficult to find their stories in entertainment media.

Two, I wanted to challenge the ludicrous perception that men are "players," but women are "sluts" – and the small-minded cliché that men cheat for sex and women cheat for love. Lastly, I wanted to depict the story of someone battling the pressure to be perfect at work, at church, and around family -- who just happens to not be male or white. A universal story told through the eyes of an Asian-American woman.



As a young girl, I remember the advice given to me from my Chinese father and Filipino-Spanish mother: to succeed in America, non-whites have to work twice as hard as whites. And being female, I'd have to work twice as hard as that. Basically, four times as hard. Wow -- that's a *lot* of work. And they weren't even adding the entertainment industry to the equation.

The question is: Will that ratio ever change? My hope is that it will, and to some extent, it already has. But we must remain vigilant and work toward achieving greater diversity on and off screen. To paraphrase Martin Luther King, Jr., my hope is that one day people will be judged not by the color of their skin, or the arrangement of their chromosomes, but by the content of their character.

At a screening for *Pretty Rosebud*, a man (referencing Cissy's affairs) asked the woman next to him, "Wow, are women really like that?" She retorted, "No, but men often are." "Oh." The man stopped, and a look of recognition crossed his face. He realized that he wouldn't have thought twice if it were a male character being the breadwinner and having an affair, but since it was a woman, it gave him pause.

At another screening, a Muslim woman shared with me that she had felt the exact same pressures and expectations coming from her parents, even though the protagonist is an Asian-American Catholic.

Stories are universal. The challenge is for Hollywood to reflect that reality and foster diversity, above and below the line. For our production, we cast Asian-American, African-American, Latino, and Caucasian actors. And our producer, cinematographer, editor, production designer, and costume designer were all women.

Hollywood may be (predominantly) white and a man's world, but it's changing. And I'm trying to do what I can to help bring that change by writing the change I want to see in the movies.



Share this



Chuti Tiu is an award-winning screenwriter and producer. Her feature film,

La Opinión



Pocas veces un director debutante gana cinco premios.

Foto: Suministrada

Por: **Marcela Álvarez/impreMedia**

PUBLICADO: FEB, 3, 2015 10:45 AM EST

De origen cubano, **Oscar Torre** nació y creció en Miami. Es conocido por sus actuaciones en las películas "Libertad", donde hizo de prisionero político, y "Ladrón que roba a Ladrón". En televisión, se ha destacado como "Santos" en la serie "Cane", junto a Jimmy Smits. Otras apariciones incluyen "CSI: Miami", "NCIS", "Cold Case" y "Dollhouse".

Ahora, va por más. Sin ninguna experiencia en producción ni dirección fílmica, se lanzó a sentarse en la silla de director. El resultado fue mejor de lo que esperaba: "Pretty Rosebud" ganó cinco premios.

Escrita y protagonizada por Chuti Tiu (su esposa), la cinta fue producida por Handle With Care. Como todo proyecto independiente, el tema financiación es clave. Aunque sin dar un número exacto, Torre dijo que "esta película es de bajo presupuesto, y cualquier película como tal cuesta mínimo un millón de dólares".

"Pretty Rosebud" aborda un tema recurrente: las relaciones de pareja, un inminente divorcio y la incertidumbre de no saber qué hacer.

marcela.alvarez@impremedia.com

TRAILER DE "PRETTY ROSEBUD"



Sólido debut

En el cine, la palabra "Rosebud" evoca la película "Citizen Kane" de Orson Welles. Consultado al respecto, Torre aclara que su trabajo no tiene ningún guiño a la obra maestra de Welles.

"Pretty Rosebud" es una melodía infantil "que la mamá cantaba a la niña, quien tiene que crecer y fortalecerse para poder ser una rosa. La película es la historia de una muchacha que se siente sofocada por las expectativas de su matrimonio. Sus padres son inmigrantes, el padre es chino y la mamá filipina-española, so tiene la presión de su cultura, de la religión, pues sabes que los filipinos son muy católicos. Y ella a la vez es una mujer profesional que está manteniendo a su esposo. Un arquitecto que se siente deprimido porque no encuentra trabajo. Los roles están reversos. Entonces ella buscando su felicidad, su camino en la vida, rompe una serie de tabúes sociales para encontrar su verdadero yo", dice.

Torre retrata una realidad que, a menudo, no se ventila sobre un matrimonio. El resultado es la pérdida de balance en la relación. El recibimiento del público angelino fue positivo.

"Esta es la razón por la cual uno hace este tipo de películas, uno espera que toque la vida de las personas de cierta manera. Mucha gente venía. Incluso hombres, y me decían esa es mi historia, yo me identifico con eso, yo pasé por algo parecido, fue muy difícil. Al ver la película me motiva para salir a buscar trabajo. La película tiene que ver con el tema de divorcio, la protagonista no sabe qué hacer con su vida".

Además de la nueva faceta como director, Torre disfrutó trabajar con su esposa. "Fue fantástico, una experiencia nueva que espero repetir" remarca con entusiasmo y agrega entre risas "como yo era el director, fue la primera vez que mi esposa me escuchaba", dice entre risas al otro lado del teléfono, desde su casa angelina.

La película estuvo -con éxito- una semana en cartelera. Está disponible en iTunes y a partir del 3 de febrero via video-on-demand.

¿Cuán difícil es hacer una película para un director latino?

Para cualquiera es difícil dirigir, no solamente para los latinos, porque cuando lo estás haciendo independientemente, tienes que salir a buscar dinero.

GALO

Global Art Laid Out

'Pretty Rosebud' Explores Social Taboos and the True Meaning of Happiness



January 16th, 2015 5:25 pm in Movies & TV by Jenna Iacurci - 0 Comments



Actress Chuti Tiu with husband/director Oscar Torre. Photo Credit: "Pretty Rosebud."

According to British philosopher John Stuart Mill's Greatest Happiness Principle, "actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness." But for Cecilia "Cissy" Santos, the heroine-type in Oscar Torre's new controversial film *Pretty Rosebud*, it isn't so cut and dry.

Everyone believed Cissy had the perfect life: successful job, handsome architect husband, loving family. But for this tormented "good girl," her recipe for happiness was quickly falling apart in her mind. And like any typical rebellious teenager, she lashed out, using the only thing she did have control over — her body — hence bringing issues of infidelity and social taboos to light.

Chuti Tiu, the film's first-time screenwriter and lead actress — earning her a Best Actress award at the Idyllwild International Festival of Cinema (IIFC) for her emotional portrayal of Cissy — is no stranger to the silver screen. She's known for her roles in *Beautiful* (starring Minnie Driver and directed by Academy Award winner Sally Field), *The Specials*, and even the hilarious comedy *The Internship* with *Wedding Crashers* duo Owen Wilson and Vince Vaughn.

But her better half helped to bring out the best in Tiu, for her husband (Torre) was at the helm of *Pretty Rosebud*, an avid actor himself (most recognized for his lead performance as a political prisoner in the film *Libertad*, which he also produced). You may also know him from television shows such as *Cane*, *Cold Case*, *PIT: Paranormal Investigative Team* and *Dollhouse*. But this time around Torre finds himself at the other end of the camera for the first time, making his directorial debut with *Pretty Rosebud*. And it appears that the Torre/Tiu dynamic duo proved their raw cinematic talents, for their passion project also earned awards for Best Feature Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay, and Best Cinematography at the IIFC — a first in its history.

Celebrating the human spirit and breaking boundaries for women everywhere, *Pretty Rosebud* — like Cissy — struggles to find its voice in this stereotypical and opinionated world. Torre and Tiu could not be more proud of their film (or their “baby” as they like to refer to it), and it showed in their recent talk with GALO. Delving into societal issues of culture, marriage and adultery, this director-writer team peels back the layers of *Pretty Rosebud*, and shows that happiness is only in the eye of the beholder.

Editorial Note: Portions of the interview have been edited and shortened.

GALO: “Why spend one moment of your life waiting to live it?” This is the question that the film’s main character, Cissy Santos, is faced with. Society often strives for the perfect white picket fence life, believing that is what leads to happiness. But *Pretty Rosebud* changes our view of that, exploring the difficulty of marriage as well as infidelity. Why was it important that you address this topic, especially for women?

Chuti Tiu: I think it’s very common for women to suppress what they’re really feeling, thinking or needing, in place of what they think will please other people or what they think others want to see from them. And that’s a mistake, because in the end, you don’t please anybody. Maybe temporarily a woman could do a song and dance for her family or her work or society, but in the end it will all come crashing down, which it does for Cissy. It’s based on a pack of lies; it can’t sustain. That’s why I really wanted to write this film — and it’s not just a journey for women, men go through this as well. But especially for professional working women who are also married and have families and other responsibilities, it’s a common misnomer that women are great at multitasking, for example, and that may be true on one hand, but I think it can be taken to an extreme. Women can just run themselves ragged, forget about their own health, their own needs and what they truly want — and that’s something I’ve had to struggle with as well.

GALO: As a married couple yourselves, I imagine that these themes hit close to home. Through the making of this film, what did you learn about yourselves that you will take with you moving forward, perhaps in terms of communicating with one another?



Poster for “Pretty Rosebud.” Photo Credit: “Pretty Rosebud.”

CT: I’ll just speak for myself, but I was blessed to work with a director (and speaking of him as the director who understands me so well) who just happens to be my husband. Oscar likes to joke that I listen to him more on set than I do at home [laughs]. And so, I thought maybe I’ll argue with him less at home than I do on set — not that at home I should think that he’s always right, but I do believe that on the set there should just be one person helming the ship, and I didn’t want to contest Oscar and undermine his leadership. Basically, he’s the director, so I wanted him to lead.

GALO: Were there ever times when being husband and wife created situations when there were conflicts of interest, or did you find it relatively easy, like you said, to stay professional on set?

Oscar Torre: I can’t think of one situation when our relationship was an issue. We had a lot of conversations before we ever shot this film. She wrote the screenplay, and I was going to direct it, so we had a lot of conversations regarding what she’s trying to say and how am I going to shoot that, how am I going to convey that.

I’ve been an actor for a long time — we both have — and I’ve seen what happens when the director doesn’t get along with either the lead actor, or the writer or even the cinematographer — everybody can feel blood in the water. It starts creating chaos, and that’s something we did not want. And it was never really an issue. Once we were on set, I was the director and she was the lead actress, who happened to have written the screenplay, but our conversations were mostly [typically] of those between a director and lead actress. I also didn’t want the other actors to feel I was giving preferential treatment to my wife, so I tried treating everybody the same.

And even in the story that was something I wanted to do. Even though it was through her point of view, I didn’t want to take sides. I didn’t want to create the husband as a villain and make her all good. All these characters you’re rooting for are flawed and make mistakes along the way. I think that when a marriage fails, there are two sides to it — one may be at more fault than the other, but there are two sides to it, and that was something I was trying to convey.

GALO: Like you mentioned Oscar, you’ve been in front of the camera before, in the critically acclaimed film *Libertad*, and in television shows like *NCIS*, *The Mentalist*, and most notably CBS’s *Cane*. You’ve never had a hand in directing before, but how did those acting experiences prepare you for your directorial debut with *Pretty Rosebud*? Was directing something you always planned to get into?

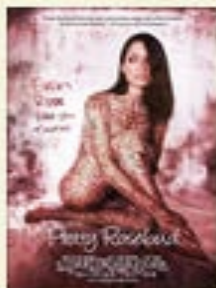
OT: No, I hadn’t always planned to be a director; my passion had always been in acting. But for the last few years, I started thinking I want to direct — I don’t know if I’ll be any good at it, but I want to try it. As an actor, I’ve always had a lot of ideas, but you’re limited because it’s not your film, it’s not your show, so you can only do so much. But I always wondered what it’d be like to direct.

GALO
Global Art Laid Out

THE NYC MOVIE GURU

Pretty Rosebud

Directed by Oscar Torre



Cecilia 'Cissy' Santos (Chuti Tiu) works for a political consulting firm and lives with her husband, Phil (Kipp Shiotani), their own house. Everything may seem like it's going well for Cissy, but under the surface and behind-the-curtain, so to speak, she suffers from a stale marriage and resorts to having an affair with her boxing trainer, Alejandro (Oscar Torre), on the side.

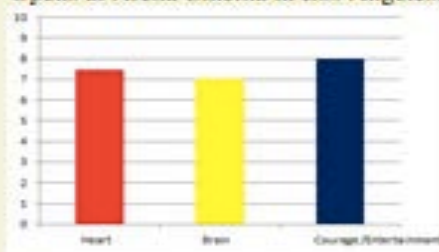
Pretty Rosebud benefits from its simple plot that becomes more compelling and character-driven as it progresses. You might dislike Cissy for her infidelity, but at the same time there are reasons to dislike Phil which makes you grasp why Cissy feels unhappy with him physically and emotionally. Neither of them come across as monsters or villains, but as flawed human beings. Director Oscar Torre is wise for letting a woman, Chuti Tiu, write the screenplay because that helps to make Cissy quite believable. Usually female characters seem like nothing more than a male's simple-minded interpretation of a female.

Unlike many female roles in Hollywood, the role of Cissy is complex, meaty and more interesting than the male roles—that in and of itself makes the film all the more refreshingly un-Hollywood. Her character arc feels authentic and honest, while the same goes for Chuti Tiu's solid performance. *Pretty Rosebud* is proof that strong roles for women do indeed exist if you look beyond Hollywood.

Number of times I checked my watch: 1

Released by Indie Rights.

Opens at Arena Cinema in Los Angeles.



Avl Offer

The NYC Movie Guru

themovieguru101@yahoo.com

Delusion, Dallas

For Filmmakers Chuti Tiu and Oscar Torre, It's A Family Affair

by [Shayne Freeman](#) - Feb 12, 2015

By: [Shayne Freeman](#) | Photo Courtesy: [Handle With Care Productions](#)



Oscar Torre & Chuti Tiu Filmming 'Pretty Rosebud'

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For husband and wife film team, Chuti Tiu and Oscar Torre, making movies is a family affair. Here, we sit down with the couple to discuss their award-winning film, 'Pretty Rosebud'.

Tell us how you each got into filmmaking?

Oscar: I got into film by mistake. I had one elective left in college, and so I asked my girlfriend at the time, if she would sign me up for a class. I didn't want an acting class because I was kind of shy, and so as a joke she signed me up for acting. (laughs) That's how I wound up in acting. I was failing the class and the teacher told me that I had to go up and do an exercise pulling from personal experience. So, I went up and did something very close to me, which was the death of my grandmother, and I felt very vulnerable but hooked at the same time. Soon after I started auditioning, I began working. I was a horrible actor (laughs) but, I figured since I was getting work it could only get better if I worked on my craft. Then, I moved to LA from Miami in a car that barely made it. My first few years out here (LA) were pretty rough, but then I booked a film called, *Ladrón que roba a ladrón*, which did very well. It was the first Spanish film ever made by an American studio. I just came back from shooting the sequel to that film, actually.

Chuti: I like to say that I've been a performer since I played Snow White in first grade. Having grown up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin I didn't think it would be possible for me to be cast as an Asian-American Snow White. (laughs) A few decades later, Oscar and I met in an acting class, and here we are. But, our film, 'Pretty Rosebud', is actually the first time that Oscar and I have had the chance to work together.

I think it's great that you guys are married and you get to work together. Let's talk about your film, 'Pretty Rosebud'. How did this film come about?

Chuti: Basically, I wrote this film for a number of reasons. It goes back to the days when I was cast as Snow White in first grade. I wanted to continue that multicultural casting tradition. Having been an actress who has had to audition for the typical, and even stereotypical, roles given to Asian-American females, I wanted to sink my teeth into something that is multifaceted and unlike anything you typically see on the big screen. I wanted to tell a different kind of story, and that's why I wrote the screenplay.

I wanted to illuminate the issues that many children of immigrants face in America; which is the clash of cultures taking place in these households. Both Oscar and I were born in the U.S., but our parents came here from other countries and cultures. So, there is this conflict of - Who are you? Are you an American? How American are you?

I wanted to illuminate the issues that many children of immigrants face in America; which is the clash of cultures taking place in these households. Both Oscar and I were born in the U.S., but our parents came here from other countries and cultures. So, there is this conflict of - Who are you? Are you an American? How American are you?

I knew that could reach a lot of audiences because, that's the kind of conflict that continues to this day. There are always people moving to the states.

You know, as a minority myself, I know how tough it can be to gain acceptance as just an American, as opposed to being filtered and funneled into a category of some sort? So, I love that you're addressing this often ignored issue. It's awesome that you're doing this.

Oscar & Chuti: Thank you!

Chuti: Even though, it's an Asian-American woman's story; if you look at the cast it's extremely multicultural. We literally have ever segment of the population in America represented. (laughs)



I know this film has won quite a few film festivals so far. How did the festivals help you guys in relation to getting 'Pretty Rosebud' into theaters?

Oscar: It's hard to put your finger on exactly where the film festivals have helped, but it definitely hasn't hurt us either. Getting the recognition and the awards, and just getting the film shown at these festivals helps to build up a following for the movie for sure. All of that stuff makes the industry take a second look, especially from distribution companies. **Chuti:** It generates some momentum and awareness for our film. Our footprint is very palpable. Not just word of mouth and at festivals, but also in the media which helps distributors and theaters see that, "Wow! People connect with this film. We'd like to represent it." Or, other film festivals would be like, "We'd like to have it in our festival." So, it needed to have the initial recognition and then it kind of became a domino effect almost.

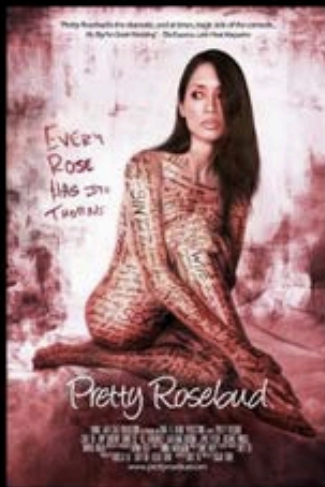
Oscar: Yeah! We submitted and then a couple months went by where we weren't hearing back, and then boom, we got into one (festival) and swept all of the awards in that one. Then, as that was happening, we heard that we got into another festival, and then another one. We got to the point that we were even having to turn down some festivals because of logistics or timing, or whatever it might have been at the time. But that first month, we were like, "Will we ever get into any festivals?" (laughs) You start wondering if maybe the movie's not as good as we think it is. It will make you question things a bit during that waiting period. It's like a parent and their child, you know? Their kid may not be all that good, but they think their kid is the best thing in the whole world. (laughs)

That's awesome that your "baby" has found its way and other people think the kid's got skills. (laughs) What other projects are you working on?

Chuti: We actually have a short that has a working title of "Man-Woman". It's a universal love story that has lots of twists and turns. It's in preproduction, and then we also have a thriller called, "Lunaticking", that Oscar and I wrote. Oscar will be the lead in that one. That one's a mix of "American Psycho" and "Office Space" together, so it's different. (laughs)



“Pretty Rosebud” – The Journey Of An Independent Feature



Every one of the 280 plus seats were filled at the historic Rustic Theatre for the Idyllwild International Festival Of Cinema’s 2014 awards ceremony this past January 11, and (much to the chagrin of the local fire marshal) so was every square inch of standing room at the back. The number of awards up for grabs was fully one third more than had ever been offered before. 33 in all, but the main excitement revolved around two feature films: Ireland’s main entry “The O’Briens”, and a film from the husband and wife acting team of Oscar Torre and Chuti Tui, entitled “Pretty Rosebud”. The “O’Briens” was an opening night favorite, and had pulled such high marks in the audience voting that it was hard to imagine any other film having a chance to compete. But, when “Pretty Rosebud” threw its hat into the ring with a packed house Thursday night screening, everyone at the party knew we had a horse race. At the end of the night “The O’Briens more than lived up to expectations by taking away two of the most prestigious awards: Best Ensemble Cast, and the top prize, The Jeff Stone Award for Best Of Festival. But “Pretty Rosebud” was the film that won the evening, taking away five Golden Coyote Paws, for Best Director, Best Actress for Chuti Tui (in a tie with “Red Wing’s” Breann Johnson), Best Screenplay (also handed to Chuti Tui for scripting the film), Best Cinematography, Best Director (for a fine first outing by Oscar Torre), and Best Feature Film. The previous record of four Golden Coyote Paws (held by two films from 2012 and 2013) had been bested, and “Pretty Rosebud”, became the highest awarded film in the history of IIFC. Now, the filmmakers have embarked on a nation wide (and Canada) campaign to drum up distribution interest internationally by taking the film on the road, with screenings at theaters in major cities coast to coast. Festival Director Stephen Savage (who has directed both Chuti and Oscar in his films “Legacy” and “Vertical” respectfully) had a chance to catch up with the two filmmakers and find out more about the journey of this great film.

1. Pretty Rosebud has had quite a string of screenings nation wide. For a film without a distribution deal in place yet, your movie is really getting a lot of attention. What was the process involved with setting up so many screenings in such varied parts of the country, and how did you get the word out to put butts in the seats?



We went through Tugg (Tugg.com), which is an innovative way to crowd source screenings. In a

nutshell, it's like Indiegogo or Kickstarter for film screenings. Tugg Inc. started in 2012, and there are other similar companies, such as Gathr and OpenIndie. Tugg acts like an intermediary and uses its contacts with movie theaters to get you a suitable date and location for your screening. Their website also acts as a hub from which people can buy tickets ahead of time. A threshold is set for the number of tickets to be sold, which would cover the theater's costs, Tugg's costs and the filmmaker's costs (the latter of which you, as the filmmaker, set yourself.) Once that threshold is met, the screening is triggered, meaning it's officially confirmed and going to occur. If the threshold is not met by the deadline set by the theater (which is typically one week before the screening date), then the screening is canceled, with no cost to the filmmaker.

This is a fantastic tool for us independent filmmakers, because to just rent a movie theater or other such screening venue, it can cost typically hundreds and often thousands of dollars up front. That's money that we filmmakers don't typically have. Companies like Tugg mitigate the financial risk, making the whole process more dependent on elbow grease than dollars.

Speaking of which, we knew we had to maximize our social network, so we concentrated on cities where we had the greatest strength of friends, family, and excitement about the film. You will need the efforts of friends and family to spread the word, amp up excitement, and put butts in seats. Oftentimes, people think it's a cinch to get bodies to show up, but the timing can be complex to orchestrate. In other words, people are not used to buying movie tickets weeks in advance. Just like with wedding invitations, you have to account for what I call the "flake factor." Something comes up, people can't find a babysitter, they're out of town, they get sick... lots of things come up. For all the people who tell you, "I'd love to come," expect 30-50% to come through. So you have to do a LOT of promotion. Individual phone calls, emails, texts and Facebook (or other social media) messages. A huge mistake people make is just simply posting on a Facebook page or sending out a general invite to all their friends on Facebook. That's impersonal. It also gets lost among other messages. We also worked with a phenomenal publicist, Cecilia Zuniga of MLC PR, to help get publicity in each market.

2. Chuti, you're the screenwriter. How long did it take you from concept to shooting script?

I originally started the project as a stageplay back in 1999. After workshopping and reworking the play, I realized the story would be better served as a film and converted it to a screenplay. Then the gestation period set in. Or shall we say... "no man's land." I had no idea how to get the film made, nor did I have the courage to get it done myself. So I procrastinated. I would revisit the screenplay here and there, look at it with new eyes, make changes here and there. In the meantime, I talked to people, asked them how they got their film made, learned from their mistakes, etc., but I couldn't pull the trigger. At one point, my husband (Oscar) said to me, "You'd better get this film made soon, or you'll be playing the mom of the lead character, not the lead itself." That woke me up; I got the ball rolling.

3. Was the idea to have your husband direct from the beginning, or did that decision happen later?

Originally, we were just looking for a director who would be suitable for the material and had the style we were looking for. Oscar and I would throw ideas back and forth, but no one seemed to fit just right. I'd hear Oscar describe in detail the kind of perspective he felt was right for *Pretty Rosebud*, and I began to think that Oscar would be ideal to direct. But I was afraid that he wouldn't be interested. Funny enough, a week or so later, he quietly suggested to me, "I'd like to direct *Pretty Rosebud*," and he told me of all his ideas, sketching them out, outlining every angle, and I was blown away... and super excited. Here was our director!

4. How was the film funded? Was it a more traditional approach, or did you take the crowd sourcing route?

We took the private equity route, more the traditional approach.

5. Oscar, how did you approach your shooting schedule? It's a pretty ambitious film, so I'm assuming location and daily page count was a huge concern from the start.

Rebecca Hu, one of our producers (who was also the line producer), was the one responsible for putting the schedule together. It was a very ambitious shoot. We had quite a few different locations, and sometimes they were far from each other (something I would not recommend), but we were getting them very cheap or free, so it was worth it. One of the challenges of shooting low budget films is that you shoot a lot of pages and you are always trying to make your day because you don't want to go over budget. I'm happy to say that at the end of the day, I always had what I needed to tell the story as best I could. We did have a few days that we had to move scenes around because we didn't make the day but I was determined not to move on from a scene if I didn't have what I needed.

6. And what was it like directing your wife? Some of the scenes are intense, and sexual. What was your approach to working with someone so close to you?

I wasn't sure how it was going to be directing her in the sexual scenes but it wasn't bad. When on set, she was an actor and not my wife, and it was all about the work. The most difficult part was getting the other actor to relax and not think of me as Chuti's husband directing them during a sex scene. I was focused on the scene, on getting the shot, just like any other scene in the film. Actually, the most difficult sexual scenes to direct were the ones I was in because I couldn't see the scenes until afterward. I would run to the monitor and watch the scenes and then give notes and jump back in and shoot it again.

7. Let me turn that question around to your lovely wife. Chuti, how did you feel working with a director whom you had to go home with every night?

It was a luxury! Because as artists, we don't get our ideas merely from 9 to 5, or 8 to 8, or just on set. For example, Oscar and I would be brushing our teeth, and we'd be discussing nuances of the script, or throwing around ideas for one of the characters. It was great fun, because we could find out everything that the other person was thinking and discuss. I can't imagine having that kind of accessibility and collaboration possible in any other situation.

8. How many days total was the shoot?

17 days, with 2 days for pickups.

9. And the editing process? How did you choose your editor, and how much input on a daily bases did you two have in the cut?

We interviewed numerous candidates and found the person with the best sensibility and style we knew Pretty Rosebud warranted. Donna Mathewson was by far the most prepared editor of all the ones we interviewed. And we were very involved with the editing process. Donna Mathewson (our editor) was fantastic to work with; she takes great pride in her work and we were amazed with what she did and how she'd take our notes and fly with them.

The editing of the film was a great collaboration between Donna, Chuti and myself. I had given her a copy of my notes when it came to the editing of the film. She asked us to let her put a rough cut together and build it from there. Some scenes she cut differently that I had envisioned, and when it worked it was really nice to see. She's a very talented editor, and I really enjoyed working with her and would do it again in a heartbeat. At times when we didn't agree we'd discuss the scenes at length, and it really made us think about why we weren't agreeing. All this introspection made it a better film, but at the end of the day, I as the director had the last word. We went back and forth a lot with a fine tooth comb; we wanted to make sure that everything that was in the film needed to be in the film.

10. What's next for the film? You have had a lot of press and exposure now. I would imagine the next few steps are critical to your landing a distribution deal.

We are still doing our film festival run and are possibly looking at a few more Tugg screenings, but the latter depends on our schedule. At present, we're in the process of negotiating distribution terms so I'm not at liberty to disclose any details. But we'll keep you posted on our progress.

11. Thanks a lot, guys. It was great having Pretty Rosebud at Idyllwild 2014. And congrats on winning five Golden Coyote Paws. A new record for IIFC. More than a full coyote, as we say at Idyllwild. Any last words of wisdom or advice for new filmmakers thinking of shooting a feature Film?

Make sure it's a project that you are passionate about because it will take a lot of time and effort, but don't sit around for the perfect conditions to shoot your film. Maybe you'll have to rethink your budget or even the script, but don't let that stop you from shooting it. I've known people who for years have been talking about a film that they would like to shoot, but they never get around to doing it because it's never the right time. Don't be one of those people. Make it happen.

WWW.Latin-Times.com | 1st Quarter 2015 | Volume 14 No. 1

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OSCAR TORRE
"The Boatman"

Meet Option C's
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**Actor/
Producer
Oscar Torre**



Latin Times Magazine:
Tell us about
"Oscar Torre"
and about
your Familia?

Oscar Torre: I
was born and
raised in
Miami, Florida
both my brother and I. My parents came from
Cuba at the beginning of the sixties before the
revolution, my whole family is there, I live in
California but I miss Miami.

Latin Times Magazine: What inspired you to be
an actor?

Oscar Torre: I kind of fell into it, I was taking an
elective class at Miami Dade Community College
and I asked my girlfriend at the time to sign me
up for a class so since the one I wanted wasn't
available, as a joke she signed me up for an
acting class and because of that decision I am an
actor today.

Latin Times Magazine: Tell us about any
struggles you have had being a Latino Actor.

Oscar Torre: The Struggles that I have faced are
the struggles any actor faces, I have been casted
in white roles but most of the time they would
make the role Latino, but when I went to LA,
California I struggled, took me six years until
finally I got the role in "Ladron roba Ladron" and
then I booked "CANE" with Jimmy Smits and **Rita
Moreno**, I went from zero to sixty in a month and
a lot of doors opened for me.

Latin Times Magazine: Hola Oscar, tell us about
the movie "The Boatman" and any other projects
you are working on.

Oscar Torre: The Boatman which is Directed by
Greg Morgan is a paranormal thriller where I
play the lead role as Miguel who is the coyote
who has the perfect record of helping people
across the river successfully and being an honest
man without being caught, but on the road I
keep running into people dying and they give me
their last dying wishes and I relay that
information to their families, Then I find a young
woman who actually survives and claims that she
knows me and changes my whole life, not only
that but there is the pressure from the Narcos to
giving them my secrets and routes, it's about life
and death and crossing the river. Then there is a
feature film I directed written by my wife, actress
Chuti Tiu in which she stars, called "Pretty
Rosebud" and I play a small part in. It's a story
about a women who is unhappy in her marriage,
forced by her religion, family, and culture to live
her life by their rules but she is not listening to
her own heart. People love this film and it has
already won awards.

Latin Times Magazine: What is your favorite
Latin Food and do you like Cuban Sandwiches?

Oscar Torre: I eat well and there a lot of Latin
Foods I like, but if I have to say one, when I go to
Miami I will have Arroz Blanco with *Frijoles negros*
and Plantanos maduros with Tostones or Lechon
and Fritas. In California you find a lot of Mexican
food but in Miami you fall and land in a Cuban
restaurant. Yes I definitely like Cuban
Sandwiches.

Latin Times Magazine: What kind of advice do
you have for young Latinos trying to make it in
the acting industry?

Oscar Torre: First of all if they really want to be
Actors and Directors, having the passion, work
on your craft, prepare yourself. Because of
technology today you can shoot your own films,
DON'T WAIT, create your own opportunities,
write your own projects, write your own stories,
this gives more work for Latinos and learn from
those who you admire that have been on the
screen for a long time.

Latin Times Magazine: Who in your life has
been your greatest inspiration and hero?

Oscar Torre: My Grandmother and my parents,
they are my heroes, they came onto this country
without any money, they weren't wealthy, but did
their best to raise me and my brother who is a
school teacher. They taught me to be
responsible and do the right thing, to be proud
of who I am and it has been invaluable to me.

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CANADIAN PREMIERE



PRETTY ROSEBUD

OSCAR TORRE

PROGRAMMED BY ALICE LI

Everyone thinks career-driven Cissy has an ideal life, but striving to be the perfect wife and daughter has pushed her to her breaking point. Her childless marriage to an unemployed architect has grown stale, and the cultural/religious pressures of her traditional parents propel her to defy societal taboos, awakening something so primal it is both shocking and revelatory.

PROGRAMMER'S NOTE

Flawed individuals and human frailty are at the heart of **Pretty Rosebud**. From first-time writer Chuti Tiu, the film is an intimate effort to showcase the cost of individual happiness under the pressures to be everything to everyone and the results of searching for answers in the wrong places. Director Oscar Torre's choice of a subdued visual tone aids in amplifying the lead character's starker side of a "perfect" life.



After years as an actor in film, television and on stage, Oscar Torre makes his directorial debut with the feature film **Pretty Rosebud**. Torre is best known to a wider audience in the *Hangover*—the hit film *Quarantine* and *Darkness*, and is *Warrior* (the *Hangover* II).

<p>EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JULIA JYR & JENNIFER</p> <p>PRODUCING PARTNER CHUTI TIU</p> <p>EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JULIA JYR & JENNIFER</p> <p>PRODUCER OSCAR TORRE</p>	<p>SCREENPLAY OSCAR TORRE</p> <p>CASTING CHUTI TIU</p> <p>PRODUCTION DESIGNER OSCAR TORRE</p> <p>EDITORS OSCAR TORRE & JENNIFER</p> <p>EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JULIA JYR & JENNIFER</p> <p>PRODUCED BY OSCAR TORRE</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JULIA JYR & JENNIFER</p> <p>CASTING CHUTI TIU</p> <p>PRODUCTION DESIGNER OSCAR TORRE</p> <p>EDITORS OSCAR TORRE & JENNIFER</p> <p>EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JULIA JYR & JENNIFER</p> <p>PRODUCED BY OSCAR TORRE</p>
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MEET OSCAR TORRE UP CLOSE AND IN PERSON
AT REELSPEAK, THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 7:00PM

ReelSpeak with Oscar Torre

One-on-one. Candid.

ReelSpeak delivers the unvarnished truth about how to be successful in the industry—on camera and off. This Canadian *Actor-Studio-Style* conversation with a successful artist and filmmaker is a must-attend for anyone working in the industry, or aspiring to.

ReelSpeak delves into the life of actor, director and producer **Oscar Torre** in front of a live audience. CTV Anchor and Reporter Andria Case will ask Torre about his career, and how he balances his personal time with a growing, vibrant career on screen. We also find out what drove him to step behind the lens with his directorial debut of the award-winning film **Pretty Rosebud**.

Oscar Torre's breakout role came when he was cast as Cuban refugee Santo on the 2007 CBS show *Cane*, a role for which he won a 2008 Fuego Award. Since *Cane*, the Miami-born actor has guest starred on numerous programs including FOX TV's hit series *Dollhouse* and CBS's top-rated shows *NCIS*, *Cold Case*, and *The Mentalist*. He received critical acclaim for his work in the film *Ladrón que roba a ladrón*, which at the time had the highest grossing weekend ever for a Spanish-language film.

Torre was also lauded for his performance as a Cuban political prisoner in the film *Libertad: The Dark Untold Story of Castro's Cuba*. In addition to roles in HBO's *Larceny*, *Counterpunch*, and *Hunting of Man*, Torre played a supporting role in the 2013 blockbuster film *The Hangover Part III* opposite Bradley Cooper, Zack Galifianakis, and Ed Helms.

In 2014, Torre made his directorial debut with *Pretty Rosebud*, a film that he also produced after he read and was "captured" by a script brilliantly written by actress and first-time screenwriter Chuti-Tiu. He felt compelled to tell the story with respect.



OSCAR TORRE, DIRECTOR
OF *PRETTY ROSEBUD*

Without a formal education in film production but with countless hours on set, Torre took on the challenge of telling the story of flawed and believable characters. The endeavour garnered Torre his first "Best Director" award, in addition to four additional awards from the Idyllwild International Film Festival (IIFC): Best Feature Film, Best Screenplay, Best Actress (Chuti Tiu) and Best Cinematography (Tarina Reed), a first in IIFC's history.

Pretty Rosebud is a passion project for Torre. It tells the story of career-driven Cissy, who everyone believes has an ideal life. But striving to be the perfect wife and daughter has pushed Cissy to her breaking point. Her childless marriage to an unemployed architect has grown stale, and the cultural and religious pressures of her traditional parents propel her to defy societal taboos, awakening something so primal it is both shocking and revelatory.

REELSPEAK AND SCREENING OF *PRETTY ROSEBUD*:
THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 2014 AT 7:00PM AT FAMOUS
PLAYERS CANADA SQUARE CINEMAS.

ReelSpeak and the special screening of **Pretty Rosebud** is presented by NBCUniversal.

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Screenwriter and star Chuti Tiu, as Cissy, is equally admirable in her faults and strengths. Photo courtesy of the filmmakers & AAIFF

BY SCOTT STIFFLER | Gently awoken by parental cooing, Cissy needs little prompting to join her mother in the singing of a favorite nursery rhyme about a blossoming youth, for whom the future holds limitless promise. The only flaw in that plan? The person being coaxed to emerge from the covers is a grown woman in her mid-20s, who's returned to the security of her childhood bedroom as a means of temporary retreat from a career in danger and a marriage on the rocks.

Husband and wife team bring nuance to tale of personal growth

At this pace, it's going to be a long time before she clears all of the hurdles set by her Chinese Dad and Filipino-Spanish mom — chief among them, the making of babies (a topic which has an increasingly oppressive way of factoring into conversation with relatives and friends). Every family meal Cissy and her brother are summoned to comes with a mandatory status report on success according to mom and dad. At least they have something to talk about. When dining with her chronically unemployed husband, their stilted conversation takes place as they sit on either side of a giant framed wedding photo that mocks the unfulfilled promise of that happy day.

*FILM | **PRETTY ROSEBUD***

At The Asian American International Film Festival

Written by Chuti Tiu

Directed by Oscar Torre

2014

Runtime: 81 minutes

Sat., July 26, at 1 p.m.

At City Cinemas Village East

Second Ave. & 12th St.

Tickets: \$13

\$11 for students/seniors/disabled

Visit aaiff.org/2014/schedule

Post-screening Q&A with the director & star

A skilled and nuanced take on the great expectations of family, religion, work, status and sexual desire, the unhappy marriage at the center of “Pretty Rosebud” is the product of director Oscar Torre and screenwriter/star Chuti Tiu — who, off screen, are husband and wife. Hopefully, they're both in possession of vivid imaginations. Otherwise, they've almost certainly chosen the long hours of the movie business as a way to avoid strife at the dinner table. That's where some of the film's most telling moments happen, thanks to Tiu's remarkable capacity to write in a conversational style that's mundane on the surface, but packed with subtle clues and savvy misdirection about a particular character's true nature. Nobody in this film is the saint or sinner we reasonably judge them to be — which eventually pays off in a manner that's remarkably civil and emotionally genuine, given the multitude of slights and betrayals (both real and perceived) visited upon the cast.

Forced by circumstances into the position of sole breadwinner, Cissy finds herself upending other gender conventions by cheating on her husband, initiating a trial separation and defying the wishes of a candidate whose congressional campaign she's been tasked with invigorating. “I don't get what I need from just one person,” Cissy says while seeking council from her family priest. Ostensibly talking about adultery, she might as well be describing her strategy for finding emotional support when she adds, “I go to different people.” As much an act of rebellion as the necessary expression of a healthy libido unsatisfied by her mate or her vibrator, Cissy's willingness to stray from the marital vow of fidelity earns our empathy, but not necessarily our sympathy.

After another dinner table session with her husband (during which they negotiate the terms of separation in a manner resembling corporate dissolution), a confrontation with her parents sheds new light on an old family squabble — revealing the depth of commitment demanded by marriage. Another scene, of mother/daughter retail therapy, is one of the film's best. Bel Hernandez, as Lettie Lam, has great chemistry with Tiu and enough comedic chops to merit far more screen time than she's given.

Emboldened by some new realizations, the stage is set for a symbolism-filled sprint to the ocean's cleansing waves. It's a clumsy metaphor, and one of the film's rare missteps — but when Cissy emerges from the water, newly baptized with the strength to cross or burn bridges as the situation requires, she does so with admirable speed and relative ease.



**La Fiscalía lle
contra la pare
a Raiza Villac**

REUNIÓN EN LA
Fiscalía lle contra la pareja de Raiza Villac. El fiscal general, Raúl G. Rodríguez, se reunió con el abogado de la familia, Juan Carlos Villac, en la oficina del fiscal general en la ciudad de Miami. El fiscal general, Raúl G. Rodríguez, se reunió con el abogado de la familia, Juan Carlos Villac, en la oficina del fiscal general en la ciudad de Miami. El fiscal general, Raúl G. Rodríguez, se reunió con el abogado de la familia, Juan Carlos Villac, en la oficina del fiscal general en la ciudad de Miami.

hollywood



ARCHIVO/Miami Herald

GABRIEL DE LERMA
Especial/el Nuevo Herald

A Oscar Torre se le escucha feliz, y no es para menos. Su primera película como director, *Pretty Rosebud*, en la que además ha sido productor y coprotagonista, se estrena esta semana en Miami, la ciudad en la que nació y de la que se marchó en busca de un sueño en 1998. Pero además, esta misma semana también se verá en las salas comerciales de la ciudad *Enie Meenie Miney Moe*, el thriller de Jokes Yanes que se exhibió con éxito en el Festival de Cine de Miami del 2013 y en el que tiene un importante papel de reparto.

“Me da mucha emoción porque nací y me crié en Miami, donde tengo amistades de muchos años y familiares, por lo que tener dos películas que se estrenan a la vez, es verdaderamente fabuloso”, dice entusiasmado. “Es un gran honor y me siento bendecido porque también fue una casualidad que salieran las dos a la vez. Uno hace estas películas y nunca sabe cuándo se van a estrenar. Lo digo especialmente por *Enie Meenie Miney Moe*, porque no tengo ningún control sobre esa película”.

En cambio, Torre, a quien hemos visto en películas como *The Hangover III* y en la serie *CSI Miami*, ha tenido un papel primordial en *Pretty Rosebud*, sobre todo porque se trató de un proyec-

to de familia. La protagonista no es otra que su esposa, la actriz norteamericana de origen filipino chino Chuti Tiu, quien también escribió el guion. El filme cuenta la historia de una mujer hastiada de la infelicidad en su matrimonio y la presión constante de sus padres de origen asiático para que quede embarazada, que decide tirarlo todo por la borda y romper con su imagen de chica decente. “Eso fue lo que me interesó de la historia, que es una mujer que rompe tabúes”, explica el director. “Es más socialmente aceptado que sea un hombre. ¿Pero qué pasa si es una mujer? ¿Cuál es la diferencia? No creo que exista ninguna. Esta mujer está tratando de vivir la vida de acuerdo a cómo la sociedad, la familia, su cultura y su religión le han dicho que debe vivirla. Y a veces cuando uno trata de hacer feliz a todo el mundo pierde su propia felicidad. La película en realidad es la exploración de quién es ella. A veces uno tiene que romper con su pasado y con la forma con la que se ha criado para poder vivir una vida nueva y reencontrarse a sí mismo”.

El filme fue invitado a participar en el Festival de Idylwild, en donde se ganó cinco premios, como Mejor Película, Mejor Director para Torre, Mejor Guion y Mejor Actuación para Tiu y Mejor Cinematografía. “Chuti escribió el guion hace muchos años, antes de que nos conociéramos”, relata Torre. Yo recuerdo haber leído la historia y pensa-

do que estaba bien escrita y si bien le dije que quería participar de la película, jamás me imaginé a mí mismo como director. Pero mientras pensábamos en distintas personas me di cuenta de que si iba dirigir mi primera película esta era la película correcta. Entonces le dije que me gustaría ser el director, aunque tenía miedo de decirlelo porque si las cosas no salían bien, iba a tener que seguir viviendo con ella”.

Hijo de dos cubanos que llegaron a Estados Unidos de adolescentes, y que se conocieron en su nueva patria, Torre es recordado en Miami por su papel protagónico en *Libertad*, el filme de Norton Rodríguez que narra la odisea de un balsero para escapar de la isla. Los buenos comentarios recibidos lo ayudaron a decidir por un cambio de ciudad, y desde entonces se mudó a Los Angeles. Cuando le llegó la propuesta de encarnar al dueño de un club nocturno en *Enie Meenie Miney Moe* no lo pensó dos veces, porque tuvo la oportunidad de regresar a Miami durante un tiempo. “Me pasé un mes y medio en Miami rodando la película, y eso fue retornar a mis raíces, a donde comencé como actor”, señala entusiasmado. “Lo interesante es no que solo está hecha allí, sino que es una historia de Miami. Y yo tengo la esperanza de que películas como esa ayuden a filmar más películas en mi ciudad”.



"Hangover 3" Actor Talks Directorial Debut

Miami native and Actor Oscar Torre tells 6 in the Mix Host Roxanne Vargas his directorial debut in, "Pretty Rosebud", and where you can catch it in theaters.



Chuti Tiu

Wednesday, May 7, 2014

Milwaukee native Chuti Tiu is an incredibly talented actress and writer. She recently won awards for Best Actress and Best Screenplay at the Idyllwild International Film Festival 2014 for her screenplay debut "Pretty Rosebud". The film also took home three other awards at the festival, including Best Feature Film. There is a special screening of this award-winning film on **May 7th at the Marcus Majestic Cinema.**

For more information on the film, visit PrettyRosebud.com.

Some of Chuti's previous work includes roles in the films Beautiful, The Specials, and The Internship, as well as television roles in Raising Hope, Weeds, The Closer, and 2 Broke Girls.





"Pretty Rosebud" Film Tackles Cultural Traditions

Published on May 2, 2014

ReelWorld

F i l m F e s t i v a l



Schedule

Thursday, April 3, 2014

7:00 PM

Famous Players Canada Square Cinema –
Theatre 6

ReelSpeak with Oscar Torre, followed by screening of **Pretty Rosebud**

ReelSpeak spotlights Actor Oscar Torre for a one-hour candid conversation where our special host asks the questions that aspiring and established artists want to know. Torre is a multiple award winner, and has guest starred on "Dollhouse," "NCIS," "Cold Case," "The Mentalist," and had lead roles in the Lionsgate films "Ladron Que Roba A Ladron" and "Counterpunch." He also played a supporting role in the 2013 blockbuster film "The Hangover Part III." Immediately following ReelSpeak, Torre 's award-winning feature film **Pretty Rosebud** screens.

Sponsored by: **NBCUniversal**

Synopsis: Everyone thinks career-driven Cissy has an ideal life, but striving to be the perfect wife and daughter has pushed her to her breaking point. Her childless marriage to an unemployed architect has grown stale, and the cultural/religious pressures of her traditional parents propel her to defy societal taboos, awakening something so primal it is both shocking and revelatory.



Director: Oscar Torre

Writer: Chuti Tiu

Principal Cast: Chuti Tiu, Kipp Shiotani, Dana Lee, Bel Hernandez, Wolfgang Bodison

Type of Premiere: Canadian

Genre: Drama

Language: English

Country: USA

Film Length: 82 mins

Programmed by: Aline Le

Classification: Restricted

Former Miss Illinois explores Asian stereotypes in her film

By Adrienne Samuels Gibbs May 3, 2014 10:36AM

Updated: May 4, 2014 2:33AM



Screenwriter Chuti Tiu also stars in her independent film "Pretty Rosebud" which explores cultural norms in Asian culture. | Michaela Ristaino photo

'Pretty Rosebud'

When: 7 p.m. Monday

Where: Landmark Century
Centre Cinema, 2828 N. Clark

Tickets: Sold out

Info:
www.tugg.com/events/8560

Shattering stereotypes.

That's what actress, screenwriter, Northwestern University grad and former Miss Illinois Chuti Tiu hopes to accomplish with her independent film "Pretty Rosebud." It's a movie about an ethnically mixed Asian woman who deals with three battling parental cultures (Chinese dad, Filipino-Spanish mom) also while enduring a boring marriage and a mid-life crisis parading as a sexual awakening.

Are you interested yet?

"Cissy [Tiu's character] has a lot of pressures to try and be the perfect woman and she basically cracks," says Tiu, originally from Milwaukee but who now lives in Los Angeles. She's also been seen on "Weeds" and "2 Broke Girls." "Cissy seeks answers and makes a ton of mistakes along the way, but eventually she finds the freedom to really listen to her own voice as opposed to listening to others."

It's a slippery slope, writing screenplays depicting Asian-American women as "cracking" under pressure. That's counter to stereotype and might irritate those with more traditional mindsets. Even though Tiu's own parents (one is Chinese and the other Filipino-Spanish) are not likely to embrace this film, which features a number of extramarital affairs, she felt it was an important story to tell. And so did, apparently, lots of other people. The film has won a number of awards, including best feature film at this year's Idyllwild International Festival of Cinema.

Much like a more somber "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," it seems "Rosebud" might be poised to be the next big relatable-to-everybody film.

"I've been getting a lot of feedback from people of different cultures: Persian, Greek, Latina, Cuban," says Tiu, whose husband (and the film's) director, Oscar Torre, is Cuban. "It's not just isolated to immigrants and their children. People are finally realizing that Koreans aren't Filipinos, aren't Chinese. So I wanted to bring out some of the idiosyncracies of the Filipino and Chinese culture and how there are conflicts sometimes."

Conflict one is the issue of an Asian woman married to a successful, good-looking Chinese architect who decides to have an affair despite the on-the-surface perfection of her husband. Conflict two is that Cissy still doesn't have children and is aggravated by people who ask. Conflict three is that she's the chief breadwinner in

her family — very fitting for many of today’s modern households. And last, her brother wants to date outside his race. That last point should prove interesting to audiences who are used to the idea behind Sidney Poitier’s famed 1967 interracial classic, “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner,” as historically black and white, not white and Asian.

One reviewer, Anne Thornley-Browne of the Toronto-based Reelworld Film Festival, adds this to the discussion: “It has been said that all families are dysfunctional to one degree or another. [‘Pretty Rosebud’] provides an opportunity to open the dialogue that is needed for shared understanding, reconciliation, growth and healing at the personal, familial and community levels.”

Tiu is ready for more dialogue. Men are oft-applauded for having affairs while women are called sluts, and she’s tired of that one-sided viewpoint. Additionally, she says, the gender and cultural issues are larger than just sex. Years ago, at a family event in the Philippines, everyone looked at her askance for ordering beer — something women apparently weren’t supposed to do at that particular time.

“Men had the freedom to order, but literally all 25 people [at the event] stopped and turned to stare at me. Look people, you’ve got to loosen up. These things . . . they just irk me. Through this film I wanted to show that women have the same rights as men.”

Miami Herald

LA VIDA LOCAL

Oscar Torre: Miami boy makes it big in Hollywood



Oscar Torre is living the dream. He's a working actor.

TV audiences may have seen him in the Jimmy Smits-led drama *Cane*, playing a street-smart Cuban immigrant. He's also guest starred in *The Mentalist*, *CSI: Miami*, *Cold Case* and *NCIS*. In 2013, Torre hung with the big-screen boys as a police chief in *The Hangover III*. And in just last month alone, the Miami native had two films playing in limited release, the crime thriller *Eenie Meenie Miney Moe* and his directorial debut, *Pretty Rosebud*, about a woman torn between being a good wife and a bad girl. The screenplay was written by wife, actress Chuti Tiu (*The Internship*, TV's *Miami Medical*, the upcoming *Rampart*).

We talked to Torre, who grew up in the Gables area and graduated from Brito Miami Private, about his recent success:

You have a lot of projects going on. Do you prefer acting to directing?

In a perfect world, I'd direct a film every couple of years and act the rest of the time. As a director you're responsible for the entire project, not just your role. I really enjoy that. Seeing my vision come to life and

know that I have a say from the colors of the walls to what the actors are wearing to where I place the camera to choosing a song. As an actor, I like to do a lot of research about the person I'm playing, learn as much as I can about his world and then make it mine.

What's next?

I'm starring in and directing a short film that I wrote and my wife will play the other lead role called *Man/Woman*. I'm also starring in a film that I co-wrote, *Lunarticking*. It's an emotional horror story, a mixture of *The Shining* and *King of Comedy* meets *Office Space*. The main character is about to turn 40 and feels like he hasn't accomplished anything with his life.

How is L.A. vs. Miami?

Los Angeles is much bigger and traffic is worse, although Miami is pretty bad as well! Out west, everything seems to be far away; it's a very big city. When I'm home seeing family, I love to drink my Cuban coffee at any time and in 15 minutes hear about everything that is going on.

How is working with your wife?

I knew I was getting an excellent actress, but I didn't know how she would take directions from her husband. I joke with her that while on the set, it was the only time she's ever listened to me! It was also great that she had

written the script. Whenever I had any doubts about what she was trying to say in a scene, I could just wake her up in the middle of the night and ask her [laughs].

What advice would you give anyone who wants to get into showbiz?

Don't wait for someone else to give you a job. Work on your craft, take classes, get involved in the theater, get together with some friends who are equally passionate, write your stories, pick up a camera and shoot your films. If you choose this career because you think it's glamorous and you want to be rich and famous, then do something else.

Who are some of your favorite actors?

Growing up, I was a huge fan of Sylvester Stallone, especially from the first two Rocky films. It made me believe that if somebody like Rocky Balboa could end up being champion of the world, anything is possible. Later, it was definitely [Al] Pacino and [Robert] De Niro, their commitment. I've read their biographies a million times. When I'm feeling a little lazy, I read about their preparation, and it reminds me to push myself.

How was working on the "Hangover III"? A blast?

I had been a fan of the first two films; I never imagined that I would be part of it. Working with the guys was a lot of fun; they are so good in these roles. It wasn't hard to believe the situation and just have fun while I was trying to intimidate them!

Madeleine Marr

Indiewire

LatinoBuzz: Interview with 'Pretty Rosebud' Filmmakers, Oscar Torre (Director/Producer) & Chuti Tiu (Writer/Actor)

BY JUAN CACERES

JUNE 11, 2014 8:15 AM

FEATURES



Oscar Torre Directing Chuti Tiu

As artists working with your significant other can only go two ways: The kiss of death or the most beautiful collaboration. There really is no in-between and nor should there be. It should ever be an "Ok" experience. If it was, there was no passion brought to your project. Oscar Torre felt inspired by his wife Chuti Tiu's screenplay enough to inspire her back and both took a deep breath and embarked on making it a reality. That film is the award winning "Pretty Rosebud". Oddly enough it's about the difficulty that is marriage and the importance for communication and interaction.

LatinoBuzz: Chuti/Oscar: Where did your love of film come from?

Oscar: With me it started as a child, going to the theater and being totally transported but also walking out of the theater thinking I was the protagonist in the film and reenacting the scenes.

Chuti: E.T. I liked movies before that one, but I thank E.T. I remember being moved so deeply, laughing so hard, and crying profusely - I never knew film could move people like that. Those are the films I love the most - the ones that deeply affect me. The ones where I feel as though I've been invited into a story, not just observing it. A more recent example is El Secreto de Sus Ojos (The Secret in Their Eyes) - I cried so hard my heart hurt.



Dir. Oscar Torre

LatinoBuzz: Chuti/Oscar: You are both actors, where did the idea to make a feature film come from?

Oscar: The idea was all Chuti's, I just helped giving her a little push to actually shoot it - she can tell you all about how it started better than I can.

Chuti: Years ago, I started learning the craft of screenwriting in the efforts to become a better actor, understand the filmmaking process, and to create my own acting work. "Pretty Rosebud" is one of the scripts I wrote, but it sat on the back burner for several years, until Oscar read it and said, "This is really good. But you better get this made soon, or else you'll be playing the Mom role instead of the lead." That put a fire beneath my butt to get moving!

LatinoBuzz: Chuti, where did the story come from and what did you want to say?

Chuti: There were several themes I wanted to explore with "Pretty Rosebud." I wanted to write a story that highlighted the cultural challenges that arise between immigrant parents and their Americanized children. One theme that we touch upon is how families keep secrets, and in doing so, things are often made worse, miscommunications occur and people get hurt. Also, I wanted to illuminate the tensions that come from within a marriage when the wife is the main or sole bread-winner and the husband isn't pulling his weight; some married women in this situation have been taught to work really hard, be self-sufficient, prove themselves and fight for equal pay only to find themselves bearing the brunt of financial and household pressure alone. Lastly, I wanted to show that there isn't a good or bad guy in a divorce; both parties bear responsibility, and forgiveness is key to moving on.

LatinoBuzz: Was the casting collaborative between you both?



Chuti Tiu

Oscar: Definitely! We cast a lot of actors who we were friends with or had worked with at some point. Chuti and I had lengthy conversations of who would be best and why for each role.

LatinoBuzz: Do you want to continue directing? What stories would you like to tell?

Oscar: I plan to. I am not married to any particular genre. I am more interested in projects that capture my imagination and move me in a way that I can spend a year of my life working on it.

LatinoBuzz: Did the screenplay you wrote translate on screen as you imagined it?

Chuti: "Pretty Rosebud" ended up being even better than what I had initially conceived when I first wrote it. I had imagined every detail of each location, but of course, what we ended up with was different than what I made up in my head. Somehow, making things concrete flushed things out so much more, adding layers and complexity. For example, the marketing office that Cissy (the main character) works at is so much more interesting than what I'd envisioned. That goes to show you how the input and creativity of every member of a film crew can elevate a project to a higher level. We were blessed to have the crew we did.

LatinoBuzz: Was there a pressure to do the film justice being that your wife wrote it?

Oscar: I normally don't need any help to put pressure on myself but there was additional pressure because it was a film she always wanted to shoot and I wanted to tell this story as best as possible. When I told her that I'd like to direct it, I had already given it a lot of thought and honestly I felt that I was the best person for the job, plus I was cheap.

LatinoBuzz: What was the fund raising process?

Oscar: We financed a big part of the film through private equity and then found additional financing but it all started with

us having enough faith in our film to put some of our own money into it (something that you're always told not to do) but it gave us the confidence to be able to ask others for money. We weren't asking for something that we weren't willing to do ourselves.

LatinoBuzz: What has been the most meaningful question you have been asked at a Q&A?

Chuti: Actually, it a question that's been asked several times, including in this interview, which is, "What are you trying to say?" Because all filmmakers have something to say, and our challenge is to get the message across effectively.

LatinoBuzz: What's next?

Chuti: We are in talks regarding the distribution of "Pretty Rosebud" across numerous platforms and are continuing our film festival run (our next one is the Asian Film Festival of Dallas in July.) I'm continuing to write several projects, one of which I've co-written with Oscar. I also star in a film written and directed by Cassie Jaye that shoots the end of the summer.

Oscar: I'm starring in a film called, "The Boatman", directed by Greg Morgan and once I wrap up with that, Chuti and I plan to star in a short film that I wrote and will also be directing it, Man/Woman. We also have another feature film, "Lunarticking" that we co-wrote with a friend and we plan to star in it at the end of 2014.

For more information at: <http://prettyrosebud.com/>





Pretty Rosebud: Chuti Tiu and Oscar Torre Discuss Emotional Film



[James Wood](#), Yahoo Contributor Network

Apr 5, 2014

While working on various film and television projects, actress Chuti Tiu was motivated to write a story about the reflecting values of women in Asian-American culture. Together with actor/director (and real-life husband) Oscar Torre they've brilliantly captured that vision as well as the essence of crossing from one stage of life to the next with their emotional new film, *Pretty Rosebud*.

In *Pretty Rosebud* Tiu plays the role of Cissy Santos, a career driven woman desperately searching for what will truly make her happy. In the process, she makes questionable decisions and encounters family rebellion in her quest for self fulfillment. Moving and at times controversial, the film explores the traditional roles of women in immigrant culture and what happens when those expectations are ignored. *Pretty Rosebud* also stars Kipp Shiotani as Cissy's out of work husband Phil, himself going through a transitional struggle of his own.

In addition to his supporting role, Oscar Torre shines in his directorial debut. With no formal education in film production but having spent countless hours on set as an actor, Torre delivers a true sense of Tiu's flawed, believable characters going through transition. A coming of age for adults and a passion project for both Tiu and Torre, *Pretty Rosebud* takes a personal, intimate look at family rebellion and infidelity. More importantly, it's a story about about striving to find your own voice.

The film is set to premiere at the Reel World Film Festival in Toronto, Canada in early April to be followed by a theatrical run in select cities across America. More festival and release dates will soon follow to make this must-see film accessible to all.

I spoke with Tiu and Torre about the making of *Pretty Rosebud* and more.

What inspired you to write the story?

Chuti Tiu (Tiu): In terms of values, I really wanted to explore the conflict between immigrant parents and first generation American born children. As children, we're taught to follow the sometimes stereotypical pressures from family tradition, religion and culture. It's only when we become adults that we realize it might not be something we want. Then there's the idea of infidelity. When a man is unfaithful, society doesn't seem to be as antagonistic as much as if it were a woman. I wanted to explore that as well.

Oscar, did you always plan to direct the film?

Oscar Torre (Torre): Originally, I hoped to just have a part as an actor, but as we started looking at directors and thinking about what we were looking for I began to think that it might be something I could do. I had never directed anything before and wasn't sure if I wanted to take on that pressure and responsibility. Finally, I just threw it out there and to Chuti's credit, we were both on the same page.

Tiu: I remember the first time Oscar read the script. He really loved it and wanted me to make it. Then as our

relationship grew, he encouraged me more and more. I have to credit his encouragement and belief in me that it got done.

What was the filming process like?

Torre: It was the most stressful thing I've ever done but also one of the most rewarding. I really enjoyed the creative aspect of putting it all together. From story boarding, to determining camera shots and even choosing colors for the walls. Then being able to go out and actually shoot a film that had already been inside my head for months. There were some challenges along the way when things didn't work out the way I had originally envisioned, but I really enjoyed the process of overcoming them.

What was it like working with Kipp Shiotani?

Tiu: Kipp was wonderful and was really involved in the creative process. For us, it was almost like playing tennis. You're really able to volley back and forth when you find someone who is just as passionate as you are about the craft and story.

What can you tell me about the film's upcoming theatrical run?

Tiu: We'll have our Canadian premiere in Toronto next month and will then be having showings in LA, Salt Lake City, Chicago, Milwaukee and Miami.

Torre: We've also been chosen for the Big Island Film Festival in Hawaii at the end of May and have a few more festivals lined up. Then we'll be looking into a larger theatrical release and VOD.

What other projects are you currently working on?

Tiu: I'm currently writing a project of my own that has to deal with the issue of death and how we wrap our heads around it. I also play Nurse Lailani in a series called Chasing Life which premieres this summer on ABC Family.

Torre: I play a lead role in a film called "Eenie Meenie Miney Moe" that's coming out April 15th on Red Box. I also have a script for a short film that I'll direct and also star in with Chuti. It's the story about two characters from two different worlds who have nothing in common but meet once a week in a motel room. There are a few twists in the story as well. Then there's Lunarticking, which is a film Chuti and I co-wrote along with a friend. It's an emotional thriller that we hope to start filming at the end of the year.

How does completing this film compare to some of your other projects?

Torre: It's much more rewarding. In a way, it's like having a child. You don't know what he or she is going to grow up to be like or how they'll be perceived by the world, but you're proud with each step that you take. Having people come up and tell us they identify with the characters is the real gift. It was our vision, but it took the help of a lot of people behind the scenes to make it happen. As an actor and director you often get a lot of credit, but if you don't have a great team bringing their own creativity and input you don't have a film. Our cast and crew was extremely diverse in background and it was important to have that kind of family to work with. They're all part of this journey and its been fantastic.

Tiu: As an actor, I always thought of myself as one of the colors being used for an amazing painting. For this project, Oscar and I have been the painter and the canvas as well as some of the colors. It's been our baby from the blank page on up and it's great to see that we've been able to move and inspire people. It's why we create art in the first place.

Oscar Torre & Chuti Tiu -- Award Winning Filmmakers

Posted: 04/28/2014 2:36 pm EDT | Updated: 04/28/2014 2:59 pm EDT

Oscar Torre directs Chuti Tiu in "Pretty Rosebud." Oscar has been chosen to speak about his directorial debut recently at a one hour event Reel Speak. Oscar and writer wife, Chuti Tiu, love that the film is racially diverse both in front and behind the camera. "Pretty Rosebud" [Website](#) [Twitter](#): @ChutiTiu @OscarTorreActor @ProsebudMovie



Frustrated by the stereotypical portrayal of Asians in mainstream media, actress Chuti Tiu was motivated to write a film that reflected a more accurate and layered depiction of Asian-American culture. Her husband, actor Oscar Torre, decided to wear the Director's hat and the outcome: an award-winning film that's moving, controversial and taking the film circuit by storm.

Chuti, How did you come up with the name "Pretty Rosebud?" What's the title mean?

"Pretty Rosebud" is an old nursery rhyme my Mom taught me when I was little; we actually sing the song in the movie (but we altered it and changed the tune/music.) The lyrics are symbolic of the journey Cissy (the main character) goes through - which is personal growth.

As writer AND actor in the film, did you find you criticized yourself more, or worked differently as an actor, than in your other roles such as in "Weeds" and "2 Broke Girls?"

By doing both, I found that I was able to delve deeper into the character as an actor, because I knew the entire backstory that I had developed as a writer. Oftentimes, we as actors create the entire circumstances around a character that may not be explicitly stated in the text. A process of extrapolation. But it was so much more fun, having more to work with, and knowing the whole universe that the story takes place in.

How do you keep in such great shape?

I'm a Jack (or a Jane?) of all trades when it comes to health and exercise. I swear by my Lifepak Nano (anti-aging multivitamins) and I also take Chinese herbs from my acupuncturist. I try to work out at least three times a week but I have to admit, I've been slacking off with my crazy schedule lately! There's what I call "Pilates on crack" - it's Sebastien Lagree's SPX workout, an ultra intense form of Pilates that makes you want to keel over after 15 minutes. I also like the elliptical machine, taking walks, and doing light weights. Dancing around the house like a madwoman whenever I'm inspired. And meditation, prayer - the spiritual/psychological side is just as if not more important than the physical.

You're married to Oscar Torre. How did you meet?

Oscar and I met in acting class. I remember seeing him come in his first night, and I was thinking, "Oooh! Who's that cutie? He looks a little dangerous. I like dangerous."

You played "Mae" in a few episodes on the TV series "24" with Kiefer Sutherland in 2003. Describe your audition and what it was like working on such an action packed show.

My whole "24" experience was ideal - one that I'd like to happen more often. I didn't have to audition! The casting directors knew my work from other projects, so they referred me to the producers at "24." I met with Joel Surnow, chatted about the character, and that sealed the deal. Love it when that happens.

During filming of "Pretty Rosebud," did you do any re-writers?

The rewrites we did stemmed mostly from time and location constraints - and yep, I did all of them. I learned that sometimes, as a writer, you have to learn to throw in the towel - for example, we lost one location on the day of the shoot, so we had to improvise like crazy. Eliminating lines, adding others. There were other times when we had to move out of a location, so we completely axed out parts of scenes or even entire scenes which interestingly enough, made the film work even better.

Anything else you'd like to say?

Tugg, the service that we're using to do our screenings, has a great mechanism where we can also raise money for a cause that we're close to. So we're able to raise money, completely separate from the film screening proceeds, to give back and spread the "love" in various communities, so to speak. There are two charities that I've been involved with - one is WriteGirls, which is a creative writing and mentoring organization that promotes creativity, critical thinking and leadership skills to empower teen girls. The other is Nourish the Children, which aims to obliterate child starvation all over the world. We've also been able to help a dear friend who is bravely fighting a protracted battle with cancer.

Oscar, without any knowledge in film production, what gave you the confidence to take on the role of Director in your new film "Pretty Rosebud?"

Well, being an actor for a long time, having the opportunity to have worked with many talented directors and paying attention to what they were doing, was my first step towards directing. I think what gave me the confidence that I might be able to pull it off was preparation. I watched as many films with similar subject matter or even scenes that were similar to "Pretty Rosebud" and observed how the directors would shoot the scenes, camera angles, etc. I also read voraciously and embarked on a lot of self-study. My goal was to tell this story as simply and honestly as I could.

For "Pretty Rosebud," what were your daily duties as Director?

I was involved with the casting of all the roles in the film. Many of the leads were actors that both Chuti and I had worked with in the past or were friends with. We were blessed that they wanted to be part of our journey. I was also involved with hiring most of the above the line along with Rebecca Hu (producer) and Chuti. One thing that I tried to do was to hire as many women as possible. It's a woman's story, told through her point of view and I wanted to have that energy on the set for this particular story.

Seriously, how did you land such a beautiful wife, Chuti Tiu?

I guess I got lucky, but don't tell her that. We met in an acting class and were paired off to do a scene from the play Modigliani, based on the painter and his relationship with his muse. So I guess I need to thank Modigliani for my marriage.

Now that you've had a taste behind the camera, which do you prefer -- behind or in front of the camera? Why?

I prefer both. In a perfect world I would direct a film every couple of years and act in projects that I'm passionate about. I believe that being an actor made me a better director and definitely having directed made me a more well-rounded actor. I really enjoy the process of putting a film together as a director and seeing your vision coming to life while collaborating with others. As an actor, I love the whole discovery process of getting under the character's skin and learning things about myself as well.

“Pretty Rosebud” Screening at Marcus Majestic

Husband and wife Oscar Torre and Chuti Tiu are in town to screen their award-winning film tonight at the Marcus Majestic. *BY MACK BATES 5/7/2014*

Milwaukee native and actress-screenwriter, Chuti Tiu, is in town tonight to screen *Pretty Rosebud*, a micro-budget feature film she not only stars in but also wrote.

Tiu has made the pilgrimage back to Southeastern Wisconsin along with her actor-director husband Oscar Torre (*The Hangover Part III*) in order to screen *Pretty Rosebud*, a long-gestating passion project of Tiu's that also serves as Torre's feature film directorial debut. The screening is tonight, 7:30, at the Marcus Majestic.

Torre also plays a supporting role in the film which is centered around Cissy (Tiu), an unhappily-married woman slowly crumbling under the pressure of family obligations. She's the chief breadwinner and resents being put in that position by her immature husband, and she's constantly hounded by her own family and in-laws about when she'll finally get around to adding motherhood to her long list of duties. As a result, she has a series of flings in order to escape her stress-filled life.



Chuti Tiu on the set of Pretty Rosebud

Tiu's professional acting credits date back to the late 1990's, including roles in film and TV projects ranging from Oscar winner Sally Field's feature directorial debut, *Beautiful*, starring Minnie Driver; last year's Vince Vaughn-Owen Wilson comedy *The Internship*; FOX's *24*; and ABC's *Dragnet* remake with Ed O'Neill.

Tiu is a graduate of Divine Savior Holy Angels, a college preparatory high school in Wauwatosa. She spoke about how her time there shaped her.

"I have to say that because of who I was at that time, I think it was a really good idea that I was in a single-sex school environment," Tiu says. "I was one of those people who could very easily have been sidetracked by some cute boy. It made me focus on my studies. Being there instilled and solidified a lot of core values I still adhere by, including female empowerment."

Tiu knew that she wanted to be a performer from an early age.

"In general, I have always loved performing," she said. "I've always liked taking people on an emotional journey. I used to do it through virtue of classical piano. That's where my love of storytelling and giving to an audience really started. Mrs. Clara Saler, an amazing piano teacher, taught me a valuable lesson when she said, 'You're always telling a story in whatever piece you're playing.' I literally would visualize not just an emotion but main characters and what happens to them, and what I was trying to convey with the Beethoven sonata I was playing or with the Chopin nocturne I was playing. My love of performance and storytelling definitely started there."

Her love of music (she plays both the piano and the trombone) and live performance eventually led her to take the leap into theater work. She got her big break when she was cast as "Eliza" and served as the principal dancer in a high school production of "The King and I" that went onto play the Pabst Theatre after winning an award for excellence in theater.

Like many professional actors who attended college, Tiu didn't major in theater arts or performance. She earned her Bachelor's degree from Northwestern University with a double major in economics and political science.

"I really, really wanted to take acting lessons and continuing performing, but I knew that my parents would not condone me majoring

in acting or theater,” she shared. “I was definitely led to do something else that was more practical. And the thing that looked good on paper was -- and now this going to sound funny -- at some point I wanted to be one of the first female presidents of the United States.”

Tiu shared what drove her political aspirations: her love to help and inspire people, and her love of public speaking. However, she realized that a career in the political arena wasn't in the cards. “I like to try to make as many people as possible happy at one time,” she continued. “As you grow older, you realize that politics is not the way to do that!” Tiu considered law but found out it was far more fun to play a lawyer than to be a lawyer. “I managed to find ways to feed my acting bug while in college.”

Tiu came up with the story for *Pretty Rosebud* in 1999 and originally intended for it to be a play. As she workshopped the material, she came to the realization that it would be better suited for the screen than for the stage. Then what followed was a long gestation period, or as she prefers to label it, “the chicken period.”

She was in a state of limbo as to how to get a film project off the ground. And she admits she let the lack of know-how stop her. She hoped that at some point funding would miraculously appear and she'd be able to make the film. Her husband, Oscar Torre, gave her the reality check she needed to proceed full speed ahead on the project a couple of years ago.

“He told me, ‘You know honey, if you don't get this film made soon, you're going to have to play the mom role,’” she said. His words calmed whatever doubt she had. “I didn't devote all this blood, sweat and tears over all these years for someone else to play the lead role.”

Suffice it to say, they both got to work and made it happen.

Pretty Rosebud has been making the rounds across North America and racked up an impressive five jury wins (best feature film, best director, best actress, best screenplay and best cinematography) earlier this year at the Idyllwind International Festival of Cinema in California. The film was also honored at the ReelWorld Film Festival in Toronto, Ontario, Canada last week.

The film will be the closing night film at the Big Island Film Festival in Hawaii later this month. It has played to sold-out capacity crowds in Salt Lake City, Miami and Los Angeles in recent weeks. And, if all that weren't enough, Tiu and Torre are in the process of securing distribution for the film which will play the Cannes Film Market this month during the run of the world-renowned Cannes International Film Festival.

The couple has several projects in the works, including a starring vehicle for Torre.

When asked whether she would consider filming a project here in Milwaukee or the state, Tiu said, “I would love to! I think it would be great to actually capture the culture, the topography, the architecture, the diversity of people and events of Milwaukee on film or television. Milwaukee is an awesome city.”

Pretty Rosebud screens tonight, Wednesday, May 7, at the Marcus Majestic in Brookfield at 7:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at comeseemymovie.com



LATIN POST

Hollywood and Latinos, Past and Present: Cubano Actor Oscar Torre Talks the Hollywood Hustle [VIDEO]

0 Comments

E-mail Print

By Nicole Akoukou Thompson (n.thompson@latinpost.com)

First Posted: Apr 03, 2014 01:40 PM EDT



"Latinos' representation in film has gotten much better, also; we're no longer just playing criminals. Before, if you were Latino, you'd either have to play a criminal or you'd have to play a waiter. That's pretty much all it was," Torres stated. (Photo : Oscar Torre)

Linked to two thieves looking to scam another thief, the nervous, sweat-soaked thespian Miguelito uses his skill set to rouse picketers, pose as a waiter, and aid in securing a fortune large enough to undermine the efforts of the thieving, ruthless TV infomercial guru who grew his wealth from peddling worthless health products to poor Latino immigrants.

The actor playing the nerve-wrecked Miguelito in *Ladrón que roba a ladrón* is Oscar Torre; the Cuban actor who is best known for his breakout role on CBS' *Cane*, where he portrayed Santo, alongside an all-star cast that included Jimmy Smits, Rita Moreno, Nestor Carbonell, and Hector Elizondo.

Torre was born in Miami, Florida to Cuban-born immigrant parents, who came to the US as teenagers. At home, with his parents, Torre spoke Spanish, but when he was outside, in the world, he spoke English --able to access the best of both worlds, and walk between cultures like many acculturated Latinos who possess the knowledge and understanding of their parent's home nations and the customs of their American surroundings.

In his youth, Torre wanted to be a baseball star. He played often, invested time and energy into the sport, but lacked the skill and speed to make that dream a reality. Yet, becoming an actor was accidental for the motivated and eager film and screen star.

"I fell into acting by chance," Torre stated with honesty during his interview with Latin Post. "I had one more credit left in college... an elective. And, my girlfriend at the time, I asked her to sign me up for a class. And, as a joke, she decided to sign me up for acting class ... though, I was quite shy."

"When I was in the acting class, I pretty much sat the whole semester without going up or doing anything on stage. The teacher pretty much left me alone, but then at the end of the semester, my teacher... Maria Rojas told me that I needed to go on stage and say something, otherwise I wouldn't pass. So, at that point it was about passing, and not hurting my grade point average. I didn't want to take the class again, or another class."

Forced from his seat, Torre took to the stage while receiving directions from the heartening teacher.

"She said, 'bring something from your personal life onto the stage.' So I did the moment that my grandmother passed away, which was a couple of years before," Torre said, then paused briefly. "I did that moment in the hospital where I was waiting to see her, before she was going to pass ... so that I could say my goodbye. So, I went up on stage with that idea ... I knew what I planned to do, I knew what

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planned to say. So, I went up on the bare stage ... where there was nothing ...and there was no one there," Torre recalled, entranced by the memory of his first true acting experience. "I walked toward where my grandmother was supposed to be on the stage ... and suddenly the place transformed. It was magical; it was just me and my grandmother. I wasn't on stage, and I wasn't in front of an audience. There was no one around; there was just me and her. Everything I planned to say, acting-wise; everything that I actually said to her when I was saying goodbye ... nothing came out. I began to shake, and I hugged my grandmother who wasn't there. And, when the activity was over, I felt like I was standing nude on stage, and everyone could see through me. But, it was also a high."

When the applause ended and the class was over, Professor Rojas approached Torre, telling him that he should take acting more seriously. She stated, "Perhaps there's something there." She then invited the then 22-year-old to acting classes that she hosted in the evening, where more seasoned actors attended.

Just a few years later, in 2000, Torre won the lead role in the political drama *Libertad: The Dark Untold Story of Castro's Cuba* (directed by Norton Rodriguez), after making smaller screen appearances in television series such as *Miami Shakedown*, *Marielena*, *Morelia* and *Lawless*. In *Libertad*, Torre portrayed Fidel Jimenez Morales, an artist who was born and raised in Cuba, longing to use his creative talents to sustain him; he is then told by Cuban authorities that his work does not fit their political agenda, and they forbid him from painting. When Morales flees from Cuba on a homemade raft, he's captured, accused of being a C.I.A. operative, and he is sentenced to 15 years in one of the island's most notorious prisons.



"*Libertad* had a small theater release in Florida and in L.A. And, at that point, I knew that acting was something that I wanted to do for a living. It was my passion. So, I moved to L.A.," Torre said. "But, moving to L.A., it was like starting all over again. In Miami, there were very few casting directors, but in L.A., there are hundreds, if not thousands, of casting directors. And, I had to do all kinds of jobs when I got there. My first job was telemarketing, which I was horrible at. Nothing against telemarketers ... but, I hate it when they call my house. Imagine: there's someone who's calling your house, and at the beginning of the call, they're already apologizing for calling your house," Torre said with a laugh. "I'd get bored, so I'd do different voices, different characters, and pretended to be from different places, but I didn't do that job for too long."

"Then, I did catering," Torre said, musing. "I didn't like catering; you're not supposed to eat the food that you're serving. There's no story there, but I did that for a while. For a very little while, I did construction. It was hard work. And, I worked as an interrupter at the children's hospital in L.A. And, I did that for some time."

Entirely committed to the Hollywood hustle, Torre did not shy away from small jobs and odd opportunities, and while being Latino loomed as potential threat to his oncoming success in Hollywood, Torre could look to celebrities such as Anthony Quinn, Rita Moreno, and Edward James Olmos, who opened doors in tinsel town and made respectable Latino roles more accessible for himself and for future generations.

"Things are a lot different for Latinos now. When I moved to L.A. things weren't that bad compared to what others went through long before I came along. So, I can't even compare. I can't even imagine what it was like for Latinos out here when there weren't that many Latinos, and directors didn't really know what to do with them..." Torres said. "All of these people made it a lot easier for my generation, for our success. And, the younger ones coming in now are finding that things are a lot easier now than they were for me. And, I've only been here in L.A. for 15 years. Now, there are a number of shows starring Latinos...not as many as there should be, I think ... but there's a few. There are Latino characters in films. And, the fact that there are more Latino writers helps a lot. Before, writers would think 'Latino' but they didn't know what they wanted. When I moved out here, directors wanted you to be Latino...but from where? They didn't know if they wanted you to be Mexican, or something else."

"If you think about Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, you know that they speak differently; you know that they have different experiences in life. And, Puerto Ricans are different from Argentinians and Spanish... they really didn't know, and that still goes on."

Torre recalled times when he's gone into auditions, which requested "Latino Male," but didn't specify what type of Latino. When he entered auditions, casting directors would sometimes state, "Oh, we were looking for someone Mexican-looking," though they hadn't previously made that clear. Also, sometimes a Mexican person would come in, but they're looking for a Cuban, and so on.

Nonetheless, Torre maintained that conditions for Latino actors are much better than when he first moved to L.A.

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"Latinos' representation in film has gotten much better, also; we're no longer just playing criminals. Before, if you were Latino, you'd either have to play a criminal or you'd have to play a waiter. That's pretty much all it was. Now, they're more open to Latinos in other roles, such as lawyers...in fact, Rick Gomez plays an Assistant U.S. Attorney on Justified; Benito Martinez is on House of Cards and plays a senator; and Jimmy Smit played the first Latino president on The West Wing. So, there are much better roles," Torres stated.

Torre then proceeded to say that more Latinos and Asians need to be represented, however, asserting that if you go to a hospital, you'll see that a great deal of employees working there are Asian and Latino. But, if you were to see any of the shows about hospitals on television, you'll see perhaps one Asian person or one Latino; which doesn't reflect what this country looks like, Torre asserted, hospitals and other institutions have a large Latino presence in reality.



Fighting gender and race role disparity blooms into "Pretty Rosebud"

Published May 7, 2014 at 9:02 a.m.



Milwaukee-born actress Chuti Tiu stars in "Pretty Rosebud," which she also wrote and co-produced.

Milwaukee-born actress Chuti Tiu – most recognizable as the overstressed Yo-Yo's overbearing mother in last summer's Google comedy "The Internship" – first got the taste for performing all the way back in first grade, playing Snow White at St. Matthias Parish School in West Allis.

Her latest role in "Pretty Rosebud," however, finds her playing anything but a perfect Disney princess. And considering she's the film's writer, she has only herself to thank.

Tiu stars in the independent drama as Cissy, a career-driven woman whose veneer of a perfect life starts peeling away. Her marriage has become strained. The cultural divide between Cissy and her traditional Asian parents – who make no secret of their desire and expectations for grandchildren – has only gotten wider.

And while she feels like a disappointment to her friends and family, her life is even more of a disappointment to herself. Faced with an identity crisis, Cissy moves down a darker path, starting up secret affairs in the hopes of reawakening her seemingly empty life.

"What I wanted to delve into was the dark or shadowy side of a woman stuck in a situation where she feels like she's between a rock and a hard place," Tiu said. "There's no way out, no feasible option, which makes her feel claustrophobic. Household expectations, parental expectations, cultural pressures, religious pressures, things at work, the economy; I think a lot of people feel that."

The idea for the film – directed by Oscar Torre, Tiu's husband and an actor himself ("The Hangover Part III") – came to the actress as she was building her career out in Los Angeles. Though her resume was growing, she was finding herself disappointed by the seemingly limited types of roles being offered.

"As an Asian American actress, sometimes it's a little frustrating when I get thrown very similar, typical and sometimes stereotypical roles," Tiu said. "It threw me for a loop when not only the roles I audition for, but the ones I see on TV and film tend to be kind of mono-dimensional. They don't have a lot of depth. They might be a sidekick or something like that, but you don't really get to dive into idiosyncrasies and the flaws of that person's life."

Seeing almost nothing but the same types of roles being offered to herself and to other Asian American actors – as well as other minority actors – Tiu decided to take a stand.

"I think Steven Spielberg said something around the lines of don't wait to be in somebody else's project; make or write your own," Tiu said. "Let's say you have a Caucasian male writer. I cannot expect him to really know what I know and vouch for what I've gone through. If I want a story that captures some of the things that I understand and can vouch for, I'd better write it myself. So it's kind of like taking control of my own destiny."

The resulting screenplay was "Pretty Rosebud," which provided Tiu with the kind of meaty, flawed and fascinating character she wasn't finding as compared to most of the scripts being offered in Hollywood.

It wasn't just for herself either. Tiu wrote the story to feature a very multicultural cast in the hopes of creating more strong roles for other minority actors and actresses underserved by most big studio productions.

"In the world I live in – and the world that lots of my friends live in – just because you're Asian doesn't mean all your friends are Asian," Tiu said. "Just because you're white doesn't mean all your friends are white, and so on. We constantly work with, come into contact and become best friends with people of completely different backgrounds. So I thought it was important to portray that."

Tiu also noted that Torre, the other key main creative force behind "Pretty Rosebud," comes from a very different background himself – while Tiu is an Asian American, Torre is a Cuban American – helping to add a different perspective to the feature as well.

However, race and ethnicity are not the only topics that were on Tiu's mind while writing and filming "Pretty Rosebud." Women – oddly viewed as a minority, niche audience by most major studios – have traditionally been ill served by many major Hollywood scripts, in both quantity and quality of strong, challenging and complicated roles.

"In mainstream media and culture, the whole theme of a man cheating on a woman seems to be a pretty commonplace thought, whereas the opposite seems much more rare and taboo," Tiu said. "It always bothered me, this whole idea of 'Oh, he's the man. That's just what they do. You have to forgive him for that,' but if a woman does that, it's the whole scarlet letter on her chest. That's so hypocritical in my mind. If you cheat, you cheat; it hurts somebody no matter the gender, and one gender shouldn't be more forgiven than the other. It just kind of got under my skin, so I wanted in my mind, in my own little way, to balance the score of the story there. Let's flip the script a little bit."

The film screens tonight at 7:30 p.m. at the Marcus Majestic Cinema, 770 N. Springdale Rd., in Brookfield. The showing is technically sold out according to the event's Tugg page, but Tiu noted that some seats will likely become available as the screening approaches.

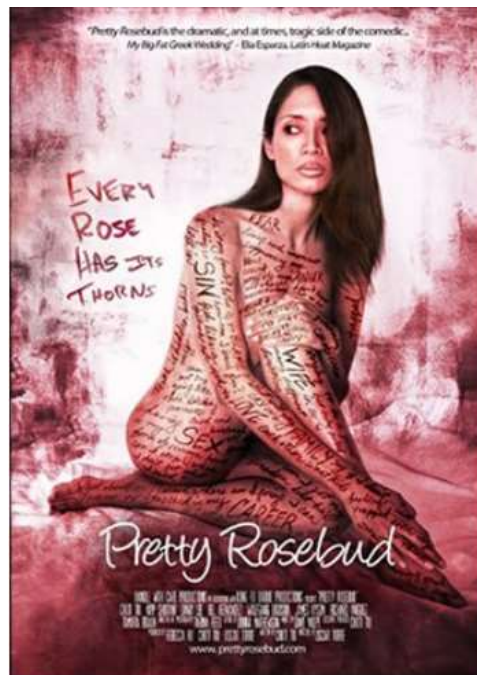
Even if it is sold out, "Pretty Rosebud" is currently touring the nation on the festival circuit, picking up buzz and hopefully wider distribution, so it may make a return to Milwaukee soon (the movie's website and Twitter page are updated with news of future screenings). As a Milwaukee native herself, Tiu certainly wouldn't mind finding a reason to return home again.

"(L.A.) is definitely a lot of fun, but I can tell you I often miss my Milwaukee roots. It's definitely a more grounded, more down to Earth existence there in Milwaukee."

AUDREY MAGAZINE

The Struggle of Asian American Women: Chuti Tiu's 'Pretty Rosebud'

by Audrey Magazine | May 28, 2014 |



Story by Jeline Abutin.

She's seen in films such as *The Internship* with Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson as well as the Spirit Award-nominated film *Rampart*. Now, Chuti Tiu has released her very own screenplay *Pretty Rosebud*.

Pretty Rosebud, directed by Oscar Torre, is a film about a frustrated, career driven woman who is stuck in an unhappy marriage. Bound by cultural, religious and family traditions, Cissy, played by Tiu, breaks societal taboos in search for her true path in life.

"The film definitely deals with what is right and what is wrong and a lot of times in life we like to put the blame on other people," said Tiu. "In this film, what [the director] and I really strived to do was to make sure that even though you kind of root for the main character Cissy, we didn't want to make her husband the bad guy. So the challenge was to treat both of them fairly and show that in any marriage that is falling apart, there's not just one person to blame. It takes two."

In the film, Tiu's character tries her hardest to be a good daughter, a good wife and a good worker. Striving to achieve perfection is something Asian American women and Asian Americans in general can somewhat relate to, said Tiu.

“Traditionally, our culture holds excellence in such high regard – in music, in sports and in grades. In everything,” said Tiu. “There’s also the guilt of how good of a child you are to your parents. I think all cultures have it, but I really think our culture has a very strong tie. Sometimes I’m very proud of it and [other times] I think it feels like such a burden. The idea of disappointing your parents, whom you love, feels like such a huge weight.”

Rarely seeing films that reflected an Asian American woman’s experience, Tiu took matters into her own hands with *Pretty Rosebud*.

“I think that we have a very special voice,” said Tiu. “What I want people to come away with is a story you can relate to and finally feel like ‘yay, my culture, my experience, my stories have been given a voice’ and for people whose background isn’t very similar, hopefully they will be enlightened on this aspect of Asian American culture and they’ll also find things they can relate to.”

Pretty Rosebud has been accepted to the Big Island Film Festival in Hawaii May 22-26 and will also be shown in The Asian Film Festival of Dallas on July 10-17.



AUDREY MAGAZINE

21 Questions With Chuti Tiu

by Audrey Magazine | May 28, 2014 |

Story by Jeline Abutin.

Most known for her roles in *The Internship* and *Rampart*, Chuti Tiu is back with her very own screenplay *Pretty Rosebuds* –read more about it here! Get to know the talented Tiu with these 21 Questions:

1. **Favorite form of exercise:** Pilates.
2. **Least favorite mode of transportation:** Car — I'm so stressed out with traffic!
3. **Recent song I'm obsessed with:** "Let It Go." I'm so obsessed. I wake up with it! I'm singing it constantly!
4. **TV show I can't get enough of:** *House of Cards*.
5. **Go to food:** Pho.
6. **Most used social media site:** Facebook.
7. **Greatest fear:** Being laughed at in a derisive way.
8. **One thing you might not know about me:** I absolutely adore cats, I think I'm becoming one.
9. **Favorite drink:** Super, super dirty vodka martini with extra olives.
10. **Least favorite food:** Liver.
11. **Habit I need to break:** Pursing my lips
12. **Guilty Pleasure I'm not so guilty about:** Super duper dark chocolate. 70% dark chocolate, anything more than that I don't like.
13. **Favorite clothing store:** H&M and Forever 21.
14. **Go to pair of shoes:** Comfort: Sketchers slip-ons with fur on the edge. Had them for over 5 years. Fashion: Pair of simple silver high heeled sandals from Aldo. They go with everything
15. **Hidden talent:** Classical Pianist. I also have perfect pitch!
16. **Must have this summer:** Sunblock. I use SPF 50, cannot leave home without it.
17. **Favorite part of my culture/heritage:** The food! There's so much I love about it, but I have to say the food.
18. **Always makes me laugh:** My husband.
19. **Last thing I ate:** Kale Chips that I made!
20. **My job in another life:** Dolphin trainer, veterinarian, something with animals.
21. **Asian American Actor/Actress I admire:** Lucy Liu for her career, her talent, her attitude and flexibility. She produces things that aren't typical.





Pretty Rosebud

by Bree Marie

Actress and screenwriter Chuti Tiu has appeared in a number of films, including one of last summer's most anticipated movies - The Internship, starring Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson. In January 2014, she was awarded Best Actress at Idyllwild International Festival of

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This American Journey

by Bree Marie

British actor Paul Blackthorne, who plays

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Welcome To The Fishbowl

by Brian Petti

I am not a celebrity, nor do I have any ambition to

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Pretty Rosebud

by Bree Marie

Actress and screenwriter Chuti Tiu has appeared in a number of films, including one of last summer's most anticipated movies - *The Internship*, starring Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson. In January 2014, she was awarded Best Actress at Idyllwild International Festival of Cinema for her leading role in Oscar Torre's film *PRETTY ROSEBUD*. The film took home a total of five awards, including Best Screenplay, Best Cinematography, and the coveted Best Film Award. Chuti, who wrote the screenplay for the film, worked alongside her husband - actor and director Oscar Torre - who is most recognizable from his roles in movies like *The Hangover III* and *Libertad*. I was fortunate to talk to both Chuti and Oscar about *Pretty Rosebud*, their careers, their work relationship, and their plans for the future.

In our interview, Chuti explained that *Pretty Rosebud* is steeped in issues that many women have to deal with today: "Most people, regardless of background, feel the pressure to succeed, to please one's parents, to make something of themselves, and that's an especially powerful pressure when [you are] a first-generation American - which I am, and so is Oscar. There's a divide, more like a chasm, between what is considered acceptable behavior by older generations and their children. Things like honesty vs. keeping secrets, freedom vs. obeying rules... I wanted to highlight the combustible pairing of inter-generational conflict - especially between immigrants and their Americanized children - and the complexities of marriage. Another situation I wanted to explore is one I've seen more and more frequently, and that's the challenging situation where a wife is the primary breadwinner, and [where there is] inactivity or a sense of limbo on the part of the husband. Lastly, I wanted to portray how we all pass down patterns of behavior and the issues that come with them."

In *Pretty Rosebud*, Chuti's portrayal of the main character - Cissy - is powerful, emotional and revealing. Cissy strives for perfection to please those around her - a theme Chuti and I both agreed is far too common today - which often causes people to be torn between what they are taught they should be, and who they desire to be. Chuti explained: "Striving for perfection is an impossible pursuit. There are many different types of expectations that women face - to get married, have children, juggle a career and family, the list goes on. What happens when a woman doesn't want that? Or "fails" to achieve that? Or changes her mind along the way? The expectations - and limitations - of women are firmly entrenched in society, which can thwart the potential of women and in effect, [of] society as a whole. Women can end up feeling torn between the role they [feel they] are supposed to fulfill and the life they desperately want to live."

Oscar, who made his directorial debut with *PRETTY ROSEBUD*, took home the Best Director award at Idyllwild this year.





He confided that the transition from acting to directing was not an easy one: "Directing is probably the hardest thing I've ever done - and also the most rewarding. My experience as an actor was my film school. I've had the pleasure of working with a lot of good directors, so being on their sets and watching them work was invaluable to me. I went about my work as a director in the same way I go about my work as an actor. I like to prep a lot. That way, when I'm on the set, I have the freedom to deal with the unexpected - which on a film set, you should always expect. I really loved the process of putting together a film, then going out and executing it and seeing my vision come to life, while also getting to work with a team of talented collaborators who are essential to making everything come together."

The first time in a director's seat can be daunting enough, but this film was particularly close to Oscar's heart: "I hope [viewers] go away discussing the film - thinking about their own lives. It's the story of a woman who makes a lot of mistakes along the way while discovering who she really is. Life is complicated, and at times, messy... but if we're able to forgive ourselves, we might learn something along the way. I guess loving ourselves despite our imperfections is one of the keys to happiness. I hope [viewers] leave thinking about some of these things."

While Hollywood couples are quite common, the working dynamic between Chuti and Oscar is nothing short of magical. Sure, the awards speak volumes about their talent, but their affection and respect for one another say so much more. When asked about the time they spent together in production, Oscar replied: "When we started, [I really didn't know] how it would be - working with my wife. The one thing I was sure about was that I had a solid script and a strong lead actress, so the real pressure was for me not to mess up directing the film! I thought that it might be difficult, since any issues that arise on the set might continue at home. The truth was that I couldn't have asked for a more professional actress to work with. She was always ready to go, very prepared and took direction really well. We joke that shooting the film was the only time she ever listened to me. I can't wait to work with her again - which will [be] soon."

Chuti added: "Oscar was amazing to work with! He seamlessly and patiently juggled all of the hats he needed as a director while executing his vision. His preparation astounded me. Every decision he made, from wardrobe choices to camera angles to lighting to blocking to editing, was purposeful and thoroughly thought through. Also, Oscar had such an incredible grasp of the characters and the story. I was amazed from the get-go [to see] how in tune he was with what I was trying to convey in the script. It was such a blissful creative experience, like jumping off a cliff to hang-glide for the first time. Once we jumped, we were in sync, flowing, like we were dancing together. By the way, Oscar doesn't dance. So this is saying a lot."

Oscar quickly pointed out: "I like how eloquently Chuti just said what I was trying to convey. That's why she's a writer."

With the success of *Pretty Rosebud*, and with multiple international premieres coming up this spring, Chuti and Oscar have decided to come together to work on another production entitled *MAN/WOMAN*. Oscar described the film as follows: "It's a short film that I've had in mind for a while but had not put on paper. On New Year's Eve, I decided to write the script so I could go into 2014 with some momentum. It's a love story about two diametrically different people who meet once a week in a motel room, and in a way, they have a more meaningful relationship than some people who've been together for years. The film also has a few twists that I hope the audience doesn't expect."

While discussing *Man/Woman*, Chuti gave me a glimpse into the couple's off-set dynamic, and how it flows into their work together: "It's about relationships. The intricacies and idiosyncrasies of relationships. It's funny, but Oscar and I talk about that all the time. We love to wax philosophical until the wee hours of the morning like college kids at a slumber party - and it comes out in our films."

Note: *Pretty Rosebud* will have its Canadian premiere at the ReelWorld Film Festival in Toronto on April 3, 2014, where Oscar Torre will be the keynote speaker at the annual ReelSpeak event. There will also be screenings in Salt Lake City on April 17, in Miami on April 24, in Los Angeles on April 30, and later on in May in Chicago and Milwaukee. To top it off, *Pretty Rosebud* will be screened at the Big Island Film Festival in Hawaii in May 2014. For a full schedule, please go to: <http://prettyrosebud.com/>

To purchase tickets, please go to: <http://www.tugg.com/titles/pretty-rosebud>

For more information about the ReelWorld Film Festival, please go to: <http://www.reelworld.ca/Home.aspx>

**Anne Thornley-Brown**

Anne Thornley-Brown, President, Executive Oasis International

ReelWorld Film Festival Explores Cross-Cultural Connections

Posted: 04/06/2014 2:45 am EDT | Updated: 04/09/2014 10:59 am EDT

It's easy to perceive differences between cultures and conclude the challenges of our own cultures and families are unique. ReelWorld Film Festival provides an opportunity to explore the similarities between families and cultures around the world.

ReelWorld was started by Tonya Lee Williams, the professional actress of Jamaican heritage who launched her career in Toronto and eventually landed the role of Dr. Olivia Barber Winters on *The Young and the Restless*. The annual film festival, now in its 14th year, provides a showcase for Aboriginal, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, South Asian and West Indian filmmakers.

The films represented a range of cultural perspectives yet, a number of them explored similar themes including conflict between couples, family dynamics and the proverbial skeletons in the family closet.

It took personal sacrifice by their creators to bring to the screen *Destiny*, a feature produced and directed by Jeremy Whittaker, a Jamaican filmmaker living in Toronto, and *Pretty Rosebud*, the work of Cuban-American actor Oscar Torre (*Hangover II*, *Eenie Meenie Miney Moe*) and his wife, actress Chuti Tiu (*Chasing Life*, *Raising Hope*). *Destiny* was primarily financed by Jeremy Whittaker and his family. *Pretty Rosebud* was self-financed by the husband and wife team. The screenplay was written by Chuti Tiu (who also played the lead role of Cissy Santos) and produced and directed by Oscar Torre.

Both films had multi-cultural casts and crews. For example, the female leads of both films are of mixed heritage. Raised in Canada, Jamaican-born Karian Sang, who plays Lisa Collen in *Destiny*, is of African, Chinese, Scottish, and Cuban heritage. Like Cissy, the lead character she plays in *Pretty Rosebud*, Chuti Tiu is of Chinese and Filipino heritage.

Legendary Jamaican actor Munair Zacca who is of Syrian heritage, plays Mr. Baxter, the lawyer in *Destiny*. Kerstin Whittaker, who plays Lisa's aunt, is a White Jamaican actress and writer.

In *Pretty Rosebud*, Phil, Cissy's husband, is played by Kipp Shiotani, an American actor of Japanese heritage. Her father is played by Dana Lee, a Chinese- American actor.

...

Pretty Rosebud

Pretty Rosebud explores the strained relationship between Cissy, an achievement-oriented woman marketing professional and her husband, Phil, an unemployed architect who has lost his drive for success. Aching from the lack of fulfillment in her loveless and childless marriage and trapped in a role reversal that she does not desire, Cissy engages in a series of extra-marital affairs. She finally confronts her father about his infidelity which her parents had gone to great lengths to conceal.

A crisis is precipitated when Phil follows Cissy one night and jumps to the incorrect conclusion that she is cheating with a co-worker. Cissy assumes that Phil has discovered her "real" secret. In desperation she throws her self into the ocean and thrashes about in the waves, a metaphor for her personal struggles. The couple decides to end their marriage and marks it with a ceremony of dissolution.

It has been said that all families are dysfunctional to one degree or another. ReelWorld has selected a number of films that are an important reminder that, despite our perceived cultural differences, couples, families and communities around the world face similar challenges and struggles. It is reassuring and a source of optimism that, in both *Pretty Rosebud* and *Destiny*, faith and spirituality were a source of comfort to the protagonists and their families. These films provide an opportunity to open the dialogue that is needed for shared understanding, reconciliation, growth, and healing at the personal, familial and community levels.

ReelWorld Film Festival continues in Markham from April 11 - 13, 2014. *Destiny* will be screened again on Saturday, April 12, 2014 at 2:30 PM at Cineplex Odeon First Markham Place.



INTERVIEWS

JUNE 13, 2014

Oscar Torre and Chuti Tiu talk Pretty Rosebud

— Posted by Ryan

Pretty Rosebud is a film catching a lot of buzz on the indiewire right now. Screenings have been selling out and audiences seem to be very pleased overall. I had the chance to speak with Director Oscar Torre and the film's star and writer Chuti Tiu about everything from the film's inception to the mechanics of finalizing Pretty Rosebud. Take a look at the trailer below and then read what they had to say.



Ryan: So, let's talk about *Pretty Rose Bud*. Can either of you give a brief synopsis from your perspective.

Chuti: Ok. Basically *Pretty Rose Bud* is about an unhappy, career driven, woman who is stuck in a smothering marriage that's gone stale. And she has pressures from her family, her spouse, her parents, her culture, her religion and her work. [She is] supposed to be a perfect wife, future mother, worker, etc. and she crumbles under the pressure. She starts breaking societal taboos and making questionable decisions all in her search find what truly makes her happy.

Ryan: So, I'm curious about the title. How is the title of the film determined?

Chuti: Well, pretty rose bud is the nursery rhyme that the lead character cindy and cindy's mom sings, (just once), in the film and its neat because it's a nursery rhyme that talks about growth. And that's, basically to sum it up, that in order for a pretty rose bud to grow into a fully blossomed rose it needs to grow. And funny enough that's what Cindy, the main character,

has to do throughout the film is learn to grow and learn to listen to her own voice.

Ryan: That's very interesting and an interesting way to tie in the theme as well. So, Chuti you wrote the film and you star in it. As you said, it focuses on a woman kinda feeling trapped. Maybe inhibited by the monotony of life. As a female, and writer, yourself why do you think that sexual expression has become a common act of rebellion and release for women in these types of main characters.

Chuti: Now that's interesting that you should mention that idea of it being a common act of rebellion. I am not sure how common it is because I... it's interesting. I know that there are [some] coming of age stories or what have you where people may be experimental sexually, or whatever, to find themselves. But especially because this is done within the kinda package of a marriage and that character, the wife, who does the stepping out as opposed to the husband stepping out. I felt it was a different story than what you typically see portrayed in the media. I think it's changing but I know it's a very typical story too... you know for example "The Good Wife"...

Chuti: Then there's a movie that's out right now, *The Other Woman* with Cameron Diaz, which has the guy cheating on the chick. And so, I felt that I wanted to kinda express a different angle on sexual relationships.

Oscar: And I think this film is also the reversal of roles that I found interesting. The husband is unemployed. She's more interesting than he is. He's the one that's home, so I found that interesting because I don't know if I had seen it put that way before.

Ryan: And I can definitely see where its more empowering for a woman moreso as well, it just kinda raises the question to me that if the main character were a man do you think the film would have a risqué sense that it does and do you think the character would be held to maybe the same level of scrutiny from society? I know that's a common issue with male and female.

Oscar: You hit the nail on the head.

Chuti: You definitely did Ryan, actually. That's why I wrote it like this because Cindy could have use another form of escape, lets say 'Alcoholism', being a shopaholic...being a workaholic, something.

Oscar: You mean the crux, that whole fight.

Chuti: Yeah, exactly. Running to her girlfriends or what have you. This felt like a story that needed to be told because we know it happens it's just I never saw it expressed. I think its more rare. I shouldn't say never, it's interesting when doing research while writing the script I think I said "There's gotta be more stories". Because I just wanted to make sure I didn't copy anybody, you know I wanted to have a best requested and best plot and there were very few on which to draw. You know Ryan, you did hit the nail on the head. I think there's a different set of standards that men are held up to and women are held up to. And not just in the sexual arena but definitely when it comes to cheating. And men even, for example the whole thing of cooking in the marriage and who is the bread winner and that's one of the other things that is addressed in the film is that Cindy and her relatives they're all... you know they're having children and she doesn't feel that she can because she's the bread winner. Her husband is just unemployed and not doing anything. And it just makes for a very challenging time for that main character.

Oscar: I think there's a certain... also the way we explored in the film when she's stepping out on the marriage it's not something she can share with friends or... there's a certain isolation and I think there's a double standard for that.

Oscar: While we were shooting the film, actually, a funny thing happened to me while we were shooting the film. I caught, I don't know if you know this but we're married Chuti and I...

Ryan: Oh, no, I didn't.

Oscar: oh ok, we're married. I directed the film and she wrote and starred in it. So one day I'm on the phone with her and I called her Linda. That's my nickname for her. Which is her name, Linda, which also means in Spanish "Beautiful/Pretty".

Oscar: But, I was talking on the phone in front of a friend of mine. And he heard me say "Linda" so he thought I was talking to a different woman...

Oscar: And his look... the look on his face like "huh.. hey, what's going on man?" Almost like he wanted me to share the gossip and almost like he was celebrating like "Hey! Heeeey!! You got somebody else also!" That kind of thing. And of course I explained to him "no, no... that's what I call Chuti. I call her Linda. And right away he's like "oh, no no no. Just wanted to make sure right, you know that's wrong of you. But that wasn't the way he was asking me at first. And it made me think because we were working on the film and it made me think of the double standard. I wonder what it would have been like if a woman thought that Chuti was cheating on me. If she would have had the same "heey! Way to go". I think it probably would have been a little different.

Chuti: Yes, it would have been different but more judgemental or shame attached to it and that's definitely something that we wanted to highlight.

Ryan: Yeah, its definite display of the gender divide. Chuti, as writer and the main character how much of yourself would you say that you put into the role? How much can you relate to the main character? What aspects of your own life could you see that relate to that character?

Chuti: now im going to quote, I believe it was Jack Nicholson, I forget...

Oscar: 75 percent...

Chuti: 75 percent, yeah, it's Jack Nicholson...Oscar and I are constantly talking because we're both actors and we love talking about our process. Jack Nicholson said something to the effect that 75 percent of any character is you. You can find them in you because it's a universal experience. You get it. There's something in your own life that you'll really be able to relate to. And then around 25 percent where you literally have to go outside yourself, outside your sphere of experience, and do research. Use your imagination, make it up. Whatever. So that you could really really hone the character to essence. Now, because I wrote it I think that the percentage was probably a little higher in terms of what I was truly able to relate to. Especially the cultural aspects... you know, I drew as a writer very much on my culture. What I saw going on around me. In fact I have to tell you quite a number of my Asian friends were just laughing because they could totally relate. They're like "Oh my gosh! I know that character! I know that kind of person in my family". You know what I mean? That was actually a joy to write.

Oscar: But I got the same. My background is Cuban, but I got the same thing from my friends they're like "Hey, that's my family right there". Which, in her case, is an Asian family but I think it's a universal theme when it comes to family and of course the portion. I think it's very universal the dynamic of the family. And while I enjoyed about the script when I read it, when I was deciding if I was gonna direct it, was that even though there's some things about the parents that you know senior person, it's not stereotypical. The father is not the stereotypical father that you see a lot of times in... that I've seen in some Asian films are very stern, no sense of humor, set in the old ways, and yes it does have some of those elements but at the same time the guy is funny and he likes the way... he's the loudest voice in the party...

Chuti: He loves to sing karaoke. Tell wild jokes.

Oscar: the mom is quiet but at the same time you can tell she's probably wearing a mask at the end of the day. Which I think is more realistic. At least where I come from.

Chuti: Yeah. There are so many more complex layers to each character as opposed to just the stereotypical mom and dad. And in fact, at the screening that we had in Miami. In fact all of our screenings have been sold out, which has been incredible. Los Angeles, Miami, Milwaukee,



Chicago, and Salt Lake City. At the screening in Miami I... literally, some of... I told one person's cousin that I know this is about a Asian family but really that's my family. And this person was totally white, they were Cuban American, it was pretty neat to hear that it resounded so universally.

Ryan: Well, Oscar, I need to ask you is the family aspect what drove you toward directing this film being your directorial debut.

Oscar : What about it is that I'm an actor first and foremost so what interested me was the relationships in the film. The dynamics of the relationships including the parents. As a character, telling the story from the characters point of view. Her world. I think that's what intrigued me to explore as a director.

Ryan: Well, as an actor and a director in this film would you say there was difficulty transitioning between the two. Especially with this film being your directorial debut?

Oscar: Was it difficult to direct myself or just make the transition in general?

Ryan: Lets go with both.

Oscar: Ok. I think the challenges I that I had as a director were probably many of the challenges many directors have. Just in general, you know, things that come up when you film. I had never directed before but luckily I've been blessed to have been working as an actor for a while now. And I have worked for a lot of good directors. So I would say that was pretty much my film school

Oscar: Being in a lot, seeing and taking notes of what works and what doesn't work. What I enjoyed from the directors that I have worked with. And what I didn't enjoy or when something went wrong you learn more about that than "what wrong, why did it go wrong, oh maybe you could have done this...". And I tried to bring that to my process as a director. And then of course my strength is that I'm an actor. So I know actors and I know how to talk to actors and at the same time I know when to be quiet. I think that's an advantage maybe I had as an actor knowing when to be quiet, knowing when not to give direction.

Oscar: Let the actors find their own way. So I think... I do a lot of prep. I know it's my first film so I did a lot of prep overall, all angles to try to anticipate the things that surprise me. And that gave me the freedom when things go according to plan which you need to plan on because that always happens on a set. Be ready to be able to deal with that. And I think that putting a good team around me, I knew that would be key. You know when I say 'Good team' it's a good team. Not only a good team of the most talented people I could get on the crew but the most talented people I could work with. I've been... and that's one thing I was very certain of. I've been on a lot of sets that involved people on the set that lost control of their cinematographer and we realize "who's directing this film, the director or the cinematographer?" and I definitely wanted to make sure that was not going to happen to me.

Oscar: So I think that was part of the process. Making sure you are hiring the right people. Not only the right people for your film, but the right people for you.

Ryan: Sure, definitely.

Oscar: But yes, I think that made life easier for me. Of course there's always the challenges of directing a film that's low budget and all that but that was never something that... and I made it a point to tell the crew that that would never be an excuse in the making of this. I've been on sets, also low budget stuff, and they said 'oh, this is low budget'. And I said "I don't want to hear that because when an audience goes to see a film they don't care what your budget is. The movie is either good, or not". They're not gonna say, "oh it was okay for the budget." No, when you're paying for a film you don't care what the budget is.

Ryan: Well, let me ask you both a very cliché question but its always one that's rather interesting for me. For both of you, if you could describe Pretty Rose Bud in one, or a few, words how would you describe it?

Oscar: The story of a woman finding her happiness and all the challenges that she runs into in her journey.

Chuti: In a nutshell? It's about finding your true voice.

Oscar: Putting your life on your own terms. Living your life on your own terms.

Ryan: So after this, what do we have to look forward to? Is there anything else that you're looking forward to yourselves that's upcoming?

Oscar: Right now, well, we're in the process of getting distribution. The film is being screened at the Cox film market on May 18th. And we're planning next week the Big Atom film festival on Sunday of next week, not this week. So we're gonna watch for that.

Chuti: and then in July we'll be at the Asian film festival of Dallas. So we're excited about that as well. And then in terms of occupationally and what we're moving on to together, Oscar and I are working on a short that Oscar wrote called 'Man/Woman'. And we're also working on a feature that we both wrote that he worked on "LunarTicking". We have a lot of projects in the works. And then at the same time starting at the beginning of June is the lead in a film called "The Boatman" so, we're definitely juggling a lot of stuff.

Ryan: Well I'm looking forward to seeing the film myself. It sounds great. Sounds like a lot of character development and is very character development driven which is my thing for film in general. And I wish you both the best and hope to hear from you guys in the future.

Chuti: Absolutely! Ryan thank you so much!

LATIN POST

'Ladrón que roba a ladrón' Star Oscar Torre Talks Hollywood and His Directorial Debut with 'Pretty Rosebud' [WATCH]

By Nicole Akoukou Thompson (n.thompson@latinpost.com)

First Posted: Apr 03, 2014 01:40 PM EDT



"Directing a film takes a whole year. Between pre and post, that's at least a year. I would love to direct, and then be able to perform on TV and film. My first passion is film. Directing is great though, because you have your hand on everything. You have your hand on directing, you have your hand on editing, and you have your hands on what color you want the walls to be." (Photo : Oscar Torre)



"Pretty Rosebud is about a career driven woman who's trapped in a loveless marriage. She's a career woman who's born to immigrant parents. The character is Filipino and Chinese. And, she breaks societal taboos in her struggle to find her true path in life," Torre said. (Photo : Oscar Torre)



Taken with the film industry and all it's offered him, Torre opted to experience the other side of it by becoming a director. His directorial debut, a film called *Pretty Rosebud*, which Torre's wife Chuti Tiu wrote and stars in, is his latest project. (Photo : Oscar Torre)

Oscar Torre has played everything from a police officer to a bartender; and, when asked to discuss his favorite role, he confessed that whichever character he's portraying at the moment, happens to be his favorite role at the time.

"It changes, but I've been very blessed. *Libertad* was my first lead role -and it was about a man in a political prison in Cuba. The film was very close to my heart. My grandfather was a political prisoner in Cuba, so a lot of things I did in that film, he actually lived. That was very personal to me. It was very good acting ... and, it was the film that gave me confidence, letting me know that this is something that I could really do."

Ladrón que Roba a Ladrón (*To Rob a Thief*, 2007) directed by Joe Menendez, made by Panamax Films and Narrow Bridge Films, and distributed Lionsgate was a film experience that he spoke of fondly. The "nervous actor character," was the role that Torres most identified with, and it's a film that the Latino community loves, greatly due to his contribution.

"It's the film that people most recognize me for. When people see me in the street, they remember me because I was a comedic character in the film. And, it was the first time that I played a comedic character in film. I played a comedic character on stage, but never on film," said Torre, who most recently appeared as Officer Vasquez in *The Hangover Part III*. "I played a very nervous actor and a conman involved in a heist. So, that's up there for me [as one of my favorites]."

"My role in *Cane* opened a lot of doors. It allowed a lot of people to see my work. It was a complex character, who, depending on where you were standing, could be either good or bad. He was loyal to Alex Vega, who was Jimmy Smit's character. [My character] was a funny guy, but at the same time ... he'd kill you. That was a great role, because he was very unpredictable," Torre said, expressing that he enjoyed taking on roles that were a contrast to his own personality.

Taken with the film industry and all it's offered him, Torre opted to experience the other side of it by becoming a director. His directorial debut, a film called *Pretty Rosebud*, which Torre's wife Chuti Tiu wrote and stars in, is his latest project.

"*Pretty Rosebud* is about a career driven woman who's trapped in a loveless marriage. She's a career woman who's born to immigrant parents. The character is Filipino and Chinese. And, she breaks societal taboos in her struggle to find her true path in life," Torre said about the film which has already won Best Screenplay, Best Film, Best Cinematography, Best Actress and Best Director awards from the Idyllwild Intl Festival of Cinema: 2014.

Torre looks forward to proceeding with different audiences, and has kept in mind that even *The Godfather* and cinematic masterpieces have had opposition; some protesting that certain films were too violent, too loud, or offensive in some way. The Cubano actor expects that some may not like the film, while others will love it, like any film; but promises that the film is moving. He clarified that the worst thing is indifference.

"If people hate the film, or if they love the film, then that's fine. But, if audiences are like, 'Meh,' then you're in trouble... strong feelings one way or another are better than indifference," Torre stated.

The freshman director said that he loves acting and directing equally, and would love to balance both professions equally. As a director, he enjoys directing his own vision, even with the responsibility that the tasks demands; and he enjoys the freedom that it permits. He admitted that he'd love to direct one film a year.

LATIN POST

"Directing a film takes a whole year. Between pre and post, that's at least a year. I would love to direct, and then be able to perform on TV and film. My first passion is film. Directing is great though, because you have your hand on everything. You have your hand on directing, you have your hand on editing, and you have your hands on what color you want the walls to be. As an actor, you have very little control. You come, do your role, and you go home, but I love the preparation for acting. Every role I play is a whole new different world. It's a whole different family, a different experience. It's an entirely different way of looking at the world," Torre stated, also saying that he enjoys the journey of acting and directing; directing giving him more context about things that he's asked to do as a performer.

The talented actor also mentioned how the internet and live streaming has sparked more opportunities for Latinos. He cited *Orange Is the New Black*, *House of Cards*, and *East Los High* for having complex Latino characters that were previously unknown to the screen, and marveled at the new access that viewers have to those series and characters.

"It's a very exciting for films," Torres stated simply.

Torre plans to give an hour-long talk at the Reel Speak event in Toronto, where the film will be premiered. The film will be introducing the film to other artists, directors and a general audience.

Next on Torre's roster is the Redbox-release of the crime drama *Eenie Meenie Miney Moe* on April 15, and will be made available later in the year.

Pretty Rosebud will have special screenings in theaters via Tug Screenings in Milwaukee (April 15), Salt Lake City (April 17), Miami (April 24), Los Angeles (April 30), and Chicago (May 5), and those tickets can be accessed by clicking [here](#).



<http://www.latinpost.com/articles/9974/20140403/ladr%C3%B3n-que-roba-a-ladr%C3%B3n-oscar-torre-talks-hollywood-directorial-debut-pretty-rosebud-watch.htm>

Pretty Rosebud: Chuti Tiu and Oscar Torre Discuss Emotional Film



James Wood

Allentown Movie Examiner

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March 27, 2014



While working on various film and television projects, actress Chuti Tiu was motivated to write a story about the reflecting values of women in Asian-American culture. Together with actor/director (and real-life husband) Oscar Torre they've brilliantly captured that vision as well as the essence of crossing from one stage of life to the next with their emotional new film, *Pretty Rosebud*.

In *Pretty Rosebud* Tiu plays the role of Cissy Santos, a career driven woman desperately searching for what will truly make her happy. In the process, she makes questionable decisions and encounters family rebellion in her quest for self fulfillment. Moving and at times controversial, the film explores the traditional roles of women in immigrant culture and what happens when those expectations are ignored. *Pretty Rosebud* also stars Kipp Shiotani as Cissy's out of work husband Phil, himself going through a transitional struggle of his own.

In addition to his supporting role, Oscar Torre shines in his directorial debut. With no formal education in film production but having spent countless hours on set as an actor, Torre delivers a true sense of Tiu's flawed, believable characters going through transition. A coming of age for adults and a passion project for both Tiu and Torre, *Pretty Rosebud* takes a personal, intimate look at family rebellion and infidelity. More importantly, it's a story about about striving to find your own voice.

The film is set to premiere at the Reel World Film Festival in Toronto, Canada in early April to be followed by a theatrical run in select cities across America. More festival and release dates will soon follow to make this must-see film accessible to all.

I spoke with Tiu and Torre about the making of *Pretty Rosebud* and more.

What inspired you to write the story?

Chuti Tiu (Tiu): In terms of values, I really wanted to explore the conflict between immigrant parents and first generation American born children. As children, we're taught to follow the sometimes stereotypical pressures from family tradition, religion and culture.

It's only when we become adults that we realize it might not be something we want. Then there's the idea of infidelity. When a man is unfaithful, society doesn't seem to be as antagonistic as much as if it were a woman. I wanted to explore that as well.

Oscar, did you always plan to direct the film?

Oscar Torre (Torre): Originally, I hoped to just have a part as an actor, but as we started looking at directors and thinking about what we were looking for I began to think that it might be something I could do. I had never directed anything before and wasn't sure if I wanted to take on that pressure and responsibility. Finally, I just threw it out there and to Chuti's credit, we were both on the same page.

Tiu: I remember the first time Oscar read the script. He really loved it and wanted me to make it. Then as our relationship grew, he encouraged me more and more. I have to credit his encouragement and belief in me that it got done.

What was the filming process like?

Torre: It was the most stressful thing I've ever done but also one of the most rewarding. I really enjoyed the creative aspect of putting it all together. From story boarding, to determining camera shots and even choosing colors for the walls. Then being able to go out and actually shoot a film that had already been inside my head for months. There were some challenges along the way when things didn't work out the way I had originally envisioned, but I really enjoyed the process of overcoming them.

What was it like working with Kipp Shiotani?

Tiu: Kipp was wonderful and was really involved in the creative process. For us, it was almost like playing tennis. You're really able to volley back and forth when you find someone who is just as passionate as you are about the craft and story.

What can you tell me about the film's upcoming theatrical run?

Tiu: We'll have our Canadian premiere in Toronto next month and will then be having showings in LA, Salt Lake City, Chicago, Milwaukee and Miami.

Torre: We've also been chosen for the Big Island Film Festival in Hawaii at the end of May and have a few more festivals lined up. Then we'll be looking into a larger theatrical release and VOD.

What other projects are you currently working on?

Tiu: I'm currently writing a project of my own that has to deal with the issue of death and how we wrap our heads around it. I also play Nurse Lailani in a series called Chasing Life which premieres this summer on ABC Family.

Torre: I play a lead role in a film called "Eenie Meenie Miney Moe" that's coming out April 15th on Red Box. I also have a script for a short film that I'll direct and also star in with Chuti. It's the story about two characters from two different worlds who have nothing in common but meet once a week in a motel room. There are a few twists in the story as well. Then there's Lunarticking, which is a film Chuti and I co-wrote along with a friend. It's an emotional thriller that we hope to start filming at the end of the year.

How does completing this film compare to some of your other projects?

Torre: It's much more rewarding. In a way, it's like having a child. You don't know what he or she is going to grow up to be like or how they'll be perceived by the world, but you're proud with each step that you take. Having people come up and tell us they identify with the characters is the real gift. It was our vision, but it took the help of a lot of people behind the scenes to make it happen. As an actor and director you often get a lot of credit, but if you don't have a great team bringing their own creativity and input you don't have a film. Our cast and crew was extremely diverse in background and it was important to have that kind of family to work with. They're all part of this journey and it's been fantastic.

Tiu: As an actor, I always thought of myself as one of the colors being used for an amazing painting. For this project, Oscar and I have been the painter and the canvas as well as some of the colors. It's been our baby from the blank page on up and it's great to see that we've been able to move and inspire people. It's why we create art in the first place.



Pretty Rosebud effectively explores double standards of gender roles

Culture Spotlight 2014/04/28



Family roles are evolving, but many times double standards stay the same, a topic so evidently displayed at the Canadian premiere of the feature film *Pretty Rosebud* during the ReelWorld Film Festival.

The modern feature film highlighting the role reversal of couples and its effects on the success of marriage had many in the audience gasping during the 82-minute feature at the actions of lead character Cissy, played by Chuti Tiu, who also wrote the screenplay for the film.

Tiu's husband, established actor Oscar Torre made his directorial debut behind the lens with the flick proving the two to be a film power couple.

CTV anchor and reporter, Andria Case conducted the NBCUniversal sponsored ReelSpeak interview with Torre before the premiere screening of *Pretty Rosebud*, attempting to prepare the audience for the significance of the film.

“The story itself is a little provocative. It’s a reversal of roles. It is in many ways, the female role is the role that you will see a man in and it will be more acceptable for a man,” Torre says.

Torre also took the opportunity to take attendees on his journey through the movie industry. He describes his experience transitioning from his career as a substance abuse counsellor, to stumbling upon an acting career where he met his wife, Tiu. The two met in acting classes. Oscar eventually decided to take on the role of director for the film written by his wife.



Throughout the film, Tiu’s character is the sole provider in her family, striving for perfection to please her husband, her parents and her boss, but her unhappiness leads her down a path of unfaithfulness. She steps outside of their marriage with a number of men along the way. The actions of the female lead seemed almost taboo, but the film toiled with the acceptance of a man making the same decisions, leaving a deep afterthought.

Directing his wife during these scenes may have been difficult for Torre, but he and his Tiu displayed amicable professionalism to tell a story so relevant in a day and age of disintegrating lines between the roles of a wife and a husband.

“When you’re acting, you are very vulnerable, so all your insecurities come out and it looks different with other people. I really had no idea what it would be like working with my wife, because I had never worked with her on film,” he says.

“It worked very well. Not just because she was my wife. She was everything that you could ask for from an actor.”

The film itself, garnered a passionate reception from the ReelWorld audience, proving that although shocking, the topic needed to be tackled.

Words & Photos by Samantha O’Connor

DIGITAL JOURNAL

Actors Oscar Torre and Chuti Tiu Grow a 'Pretty Rosebud' SPECIAL



Oscar Torre and Chuti Tiu not only have a successful marriage but successful careers in the entertainment business as well. They recently pooled their considerable talents to work on the film *Pretty Rosebud*, which was written by Tiu and directed by Torre.



The film *Pretty Rosebud* was written by actress Chuti Tiu (*Beautiful, The Specials*). Tiu has plenty of experience working in front of the camera but had no formal education in film production prior to starting the project. It didn't matter. Her script and the film, which was directed by actor and Tiu's husband Oscar Torre (*Libertad, Hangover III*), resonated with many, garnering praise from critics and viewers alike. It was honored with five awards at the Idyllwild International Film Festival: Best Feature Film, Best Director (Oscar Torre), Best

Screenplay (Chuti Tiu), Best Actress (Chuti Tiu) and Best Cinematography (Tarina Reed). This was a first in IIFC's history.

I recently interviewed the couple about what it took to get this project off the ground, their careers, and how they keep their marriage strong while working in the entertainment business.

Chuti, after working in the business as an actress for many years, why did you feel now was the time to branch out and write a screenplay?

I had actually written this first as a play over 10 years ago, then converted it to a screenplay. It's always important to branch out and employ other mediums for storytelling- it gives me a more global perspective of the whole filmmaking process. I knew it was time to get the film made when Oscar (then my boyfriend) said, "You'd better get this film done now; if you wait too long, you'll have to play the role of the mom!"

Please tell us about the film. What is its premise and what would you hope your audience will take away from viewing it?

Pretty Rosebud is about an unhappily married career-driven woman, Cissy, who tries to please everyone, but the pressure of it all causes her to crack. She ends up exploring some dark places in her efforts to find her true path.

This is something that I know a lot of people can relate to - trying to please others, to be liked. And in doing so, people end up not truly being themselves. It's a kind of inhibiting fear. I want people to have the courage to say, do, or be who they really are, regardless of any rejection or shunning they may experience.

Did a particular incident in your life inspire you to write this story?

I get inspiration from all over when I write: the newspaper, the television, even just people-watching and asking "what if?" So there wasn't a particular incident per se, but I had been in a marriage that ended up in a divorce, and that's never easy. Add to that being Catholic, and Filipino no less (the Philippines is one of the two countries in the world where divorce is illegal - the other is Malta). Talking with a lot of women and men who were in similar situations, I was able to glean a lot of interesting vignettes and characters. Also, with being the child of immigrant parents, there's always a push and pull in terms of culture, beliefs and identity. Given all this, I had a wonderful cauldron of influences from which to draw upon when writing a script.

Oscar, you not only direct the film but you act in it as well. What sort of challenges did it present taking on this double role?

I knew it was going to be challenging, so I made sure to play a role that didn't have a lot of days of shooting. Thank God for monitors and the ability to playback the scene I just did. When you're in the scene as an actor, you only know how the scene felt but that is not always accurate. For example, in one of my scenes I had like five takes because I felt like I wasn't getting the performance out of myself that I wanted. But when we (the editor Donna Mathewson and myself) were editing the scene, we realized that my first take was the best of all five!

Who are the principal cast members in the film and was it difficult to cast this project?

Chuti and I are very blessed to have friends who happen to be excellent actors, so when it came time for casting, it was just a matter of them agreeing to be in our film. We had a few roles that we couldn't find in our pool of friends, so we did some casting, but for the most part it was people whom we had worked with in the past and are now friends.

Speaking of challenges, how was it working with your spouse on a project so close to your hearts?

In truth, it was very easy to work with Chuti - going into it, I really didn't know because I had never worked with her and thought that it might get a little weird, but luckily it wasn't at all. She was so professional, always very prepared and took directions very well. I joke with Chuti that while we were shooting the film, it was the only time that she ever listened to me! The most challenging part for me was that this was a film that Chuti had beautifully written, and I didn't want to mess it up by doing a bad job as a director.

Chuti, now that you've had critical success with this project, would you like to write more screenplays or, perhaps, novels?

Absolutely! I'm currently writing several other projects now, all screenplays. Don't think I have the patience for novels! But never say never, right? Basically, I am drawn to projects that have a message and illuminate some part of the human condition; I figure if I'm moved by something, there must be someone somewhere out there that will be moved, too.

Oscar, was this your directorial debut? If so, did you enjoy being behind the camera and would you do it again?

It was the most stressful thing I've ever done but also the most rewarding. I really enjoyed how creative the job is - having control of every detail that helps bring the vision to light and at the same time having talented, creative collaborators (from cast to crew) who are there to help you tell the story as best as possible.

On a more personal note, how do you find time to separate your professional pursuits from your family life?

It's really hard to separate the two, because any little thing might spark an idea and at that moment you either want to write it or share it with your partner, but we do try to take some time off and go on date nights or get away and try to not talk about the business.

Do either or both of you have any special plans or goals for the future?

Oscar: I am planning to direct a short in the summer that I wrote and will also be starring in it with Chuti [as well as] a couple other projects that Chuti is writing. Hopefully she'll let me direct. But at the moment, we are doing the TUGG screenings with *Pretty Rosebud* and playing at film festivals - which has been very exciting and rewarding to actually see the audience embrace the film and be moved by it. In the end, that's biggest reward you can have as a filmmaker.

Chuti: I confided in my friends that after finishing principal photography for *Pretty Rosebud*, I could die a happy person. It was this feeling of having accomplished a dream, gloriously giving life to a story...there's this electricity of creation. I will keep on creating, as an actor, a writer, and whatever else calls me, because that's what I was put on this earth to do.

Pretty Rosebud TICKET INFO & VENUES can be found [here](#).

Contact Oscar and Chuti on Twitter: @ChutiTiu @prosebudmovie @OscarTorreActor



No Good Roles for Women of Color? Tiu Writes Her Own

By John Black

Like a lot of actresses, especially actresses of color, Chuti Tiu had experienced a lot of frustration in her career over the kinds of stereotypical roles she was being offered by Hollywood.

Unlike a lot of actresses, Tiu decided to do something about it.

“Most of the roles being offered to Asian American actresses are very one dimensional,” Tiu said in an interview with Color magazine. “The producers are looking to put an Asian spin on their story, like having a detective work a case in Chinatown, so they offer you the role of convenience store owner or maybe a beat cop who can show the detective the ‘real’ Chinatown. At best, you play a cliché.”



Rather than accept what he was being offered – or leave behind the profession she loved – Tiu decided to write a script for herself, one that presented a modern Asian American woman, based on her lifelong experience of living as one, as fully developed and interesting as any lead character in a movie. The result, *Pretty Rosebud*, is a film that explores the traditional roles of women in Asian-American culture and what happens when women defy expectations.

In the film, Tiu plays Cissy, a Filipino/American woman whose struggle to be the “good girl,” at home and at work, has left her on the verge of a breakdown. Stuck in a childless marriage to a handsome architect (Kipp Shiotani) has gone stale, while questions about babies pepper every well-meaning conversation with family and friends. The cultural abyss dividing Cissy and her traditional Asian parents drives her to a desperate act of survival, defying societal taboos... awakening something so primal it is both shocking and revelatory.

“I should be clear that although the film was inspired by experiences I have been through, it’s not an autobiography,” Tiu explained with a laugh. “That’s one of the great things about the film, for me. Even though it’s a specific story about one woman’s life, there’s a universality about her story that audiences are identifying with. A lot of the scenes in the movie take place around meals, for example, which to me is a very Filipino thing; we eat when we talk. But the same thing happens in other cultures, too. Italian people gather around a meal to discuss family problems the same way we do.”

Asked if there were any cultural moments in the film that people outside the Filipino community just wouldn’t understand, Tiu thinks carefully before answering. “I’m sure there are, but I never wanted to make a ‘thing’ about them,” she said. “Pointing them out, to you now or within the film, would be to separate the audience from the story. Filipino people will see certain behavior and identify with it on a different level than non- Filipino audiences, just as women will identify with the story in a different way than men will. The challenge for me from the start is to give every audience that comes to see it something they can identify with.”

Pretty Rosebud is currently playing in film festival around the world. To keep up with the latest news and information, including local screenings, visit prettyrosebud.com.

http://www.colormagazineusa.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1123:no-good-roles-for-women-of-color-chuti-tui-writes-her-own&catid=53:feature

Chuti Tiu's "Pretty Rosebud" Ignites Human Vulnerability When Battling Cultural Traditions

Posted By [Eesparza](#) On May 7th, 2013 05:38 PM | [Film News](#), [Spotlight](#)

After watching *Pretty Rosebud*'s movie trailer and interviewing the film's director Oscar Torre, we just had to catch up with the film's writer and star, Chuti Tiu – who also happens to be married to the film's director! We also got some insight from co-stars Bel Hernandez and Richard Yniguez on their experience working on this emotionally raw and at times humorous film. Check out what the cast and director has to say about *Pretty Rosebud*.

Latin Heat: *Pretty Rosebud*'s theme hits us in the heart because a lot of us can relate. Was it hard to write such a story our womanly vulnerability contrasting with our strengths?

Chuti Tiu: For me writing about human frailty is an emotional process because we have to dig deep to reach the level of emotions needed to write a good story. I found it exhilarating to write a character with both good qualities and flaws – it's more interesting, more real. The more I worked on the story, the more I wanted to uncover the rawness and unease we often feel with the darker parts of ourselves. It can be easy to just gloss over or even ignore aspects of our psyche that cause us shame or embarrassment. By 'letting it all hang-out,' it ends up being a holistically cathartic experience, for those making the film and those watching it.

LH: How was it working with your hubby?

CT: I can't wait to work with Oscar [Torre] again! Having worked with all sorts of directors, I was impressed by the ease with which Oscar did the directorial dance, juggling the creative decisions needed for every department. An image that springs to mind was one time when I approached Oscar to ask a question about a scene, he was surrounded by the costume designer, the director of photography, the set designer and our line producer, each one asking him a different question that desperately needed to be answered. As I waited my turn, Oscar expertly handled each issue with a calm confidence. It was inspiring to watch.

I was blessed to work with Oscar as a director. He is the captain of the *Pretty Rosebud* ship, and I had to trust in his leadership. His main objective was always to protect the story, so he was extremely well-prepared. What attracted me to having Oscar direct is that he has the insight and sensitivity to capture the woman's point of view.

LH to Bel Hernandez: I thought you were done with acting, Bel [actor and president/CEO of Latin Heat Entertainment]?

BelBH: I haven't acted in over 15 years. It took Oscar [Torre], who was making his directing debut with *Pretty Rosebud*, and who in addition to being a talented actor, and is a dear friend. He lured me in to the audition, then convinced me I had to do it. I am so glad he did. It is a sweet and powerful film of a young woman coming into her own and I was proud to play the mom opposite the talented Chuti Tiu, who not only stars in the film, but also wrote it.



RYLH to Richard Yniguez: You play a priest, a pivotal role in the story, tell us a little something about it.

RY: It was such an honor to have been offered a role in this most poignant story of what we all go through at some point in our lives. The loss of love, lack of confidence, self-esteem! We find ourselves searching for answers in the wrong places, until we reach bottom and then some have the power to turn it around and make a difference. When I read Chuti's screenplay I was blown away by her writing courage and how much this project could make a difference in so many lives. The joy of having a talented actor directing the piece even made my journey with this project that much more enjoyable. Oscar [Torre] is a jewel in the raw, unassuming and gentle in his approach! It was very much appreciated and knowing he knew what I was going through in my process to perform made it that much more interesting and a challenge. Then the day came to stand toe to toe with the gorgeous, star and wonderful writer of *Pretty Rosebud*! We had a blast with some difficult yet touching moments as the character starts to reach out...I had a blast working with such a pro!!



Chuti & Oscar

Director: Oscar Torre

Writer: Chuti Tiu

Cast: Chuti Tiu, Kipp Shiotani, Dana Lee, Bel Hernandez, Richard Yniguez, Tamara Braun, Wolfgang Bodison, James Kyson

Pretty Rosebud is currently exploring the film festival circuit and looking for distribution.

Special Movie Trailer Comment from Mary Chuy:

Just like Chuti Tiu in her role as "Cissy" to say in one the scenes: 'Why spend a minute or your life, waiting to live it?'

I personally can relate. I grew up in a very small town in Mexico and with Catholic parents in a home where I was taught how to clean, make tortillas from scratch, cook and wash — not only my laundry but everyone else's! I was not allowed to talk back or ask questions, and forget about talking about sex or complain about anything that was bothering me! It was like my opinion, person did not matter. I heard the same words from my Mother probably one thousand times! 'Tienes que aprender a cocinar y a lumpiar bien para que cuando te cases, tengas a tu esposo feliz, si no el te va a departe.' I grew up thinking that was my only job in life, to please others!



"Cissy" does, is to risk becoming 'La oveja negra de la familia' the black sheep and bringing shame to her parents... is that the cost to gain self-happiness? Thank you Chuti Tiu for writing this wonderful story... Many people who are faced with cultural traditions and pressures will get your film.

When I was 16 my parents told me, 'Hija tienes que dejar de ir a la escuela, para que nos alludes con los gastos' they also expected me to fulfill their only dream for me of 'Verme casada de blanco con un Machista de por aya'. So this is what I did. First, I stopped going to school, then, I left home and immigrated to the U.S. at 16. Then I got pregnant, later I became an actress, got married and divorced and married again. All this because of the pressures of cultural traditions and never having been instilled confidence in my person that I was worth something more than to just be a dutiful wife and mother. Don't get me wrong, I love my Mexican culture just as "Cissy" loves her Chinese traditions. But when the woman is independent, smart and strong, towing along the cultural tradition lines becomes a burden, a cross too heavy to carry and mistakes are made. To go out on a limb like

Oscar Torre: Directorial Debut Unlocks Deep Emotions in “Pretty Rosebud”

Posted By [Eesparza](#) On May 7th, 2013 05:37 PM | [Film News](#), [Spotlight](#)



In his directorial debut, actor Oscar Torre (*Hangover3*, *Cane*, *Ladron Que Roba a Ladron*, *Counterpunch*) has superbly captured the visual essence of *Pretty Rosebud*'s story of a woman struggling to find happiness living in a fishbowl, where cultural and religious traditions are smothering a young woman dying to be free.

Written by Chuti Tiu, who also stars as Cecilia “Cissy” Santos, a woman drowning in an unhappy marriage to an unemployed architect (Kipp Shitoani). Not helping matters are her culturally traditional parents (Bel Hernandez and Dana Lee), economic pressures and her religious beliefs— and Father Antonio (Richard Yniguez) continues with his pressures for Cissy to be the perfect wife and hopefully, a wonderful future mother. Whether you are Latino, Asian Pacific, African-American, Filipino, or any other ethnicity, being a woman of color, assimilated to American traditions,

which usually clash with everything you’ve grown up to believe as sacred—you will relate to *Pretty Rosebud*.

Pretty Rosebud is the dramatic, and at times, tragic side of the comedic side to *My Big Fat Beautiful Greek Wedding*. In Chuti’s story Cissy is a trapped woman, a ticking time bomb and instead of confronting her parents, priest and cultural society, she rebels by doing everything she is not supposed to be doing as a traditional Chinese-Filipino young wife.

How did it come about that Chuti’s *Pretty Rosebud* script got made into an indie film? Well, it really helps to be married to a successful actor who happened to be looking for the right script to turn into a film... an indie that would serve as his directorial debut. The busy Oscar Torre made time to talk to me about *Pretty Rosebud*.

Latin Heat: For months I’ve heard so much about your film, what was the motivation to turn this particular story into a film that marks your first directorial debut?

Oscar Torre: *Pretty Rosebud* was a story that my wife [Chuti Tiu] had written a few years ago. I had read it a while back and really liked it, but at the time I wasn’t thinking of directing. Finally, we decided to shoot the film and we discussed other directors. But, the more I read the script, the more I felt I understood the characters and story. That’s when I stepped in and decided to make this my first film as a director. I was attracted to the story because I liked that the film’s protagonist is flawed and makes many mistakes on her journey to find herself.

LH: What has the directing/filmmaking process experience taught you?

OT: I think it has made me a better actor and artist. I’m much more appreciative of the amount of work it takes to make a film. Many times I now know what the director is trying to accomplish and the challenges he or she is facing. I knew it in concept but had never actually done it.

LH: Aside from directing, you’re playing double duty also acting in the role as Alejandro, what’s his role about?

OT: I play Alejandro an ex professional boxer who was almost the champion of the world and is now a personal trainer at

a gym where Cissy [Chuti] works out. It's a small character but important to the story. I didn't want to play a bigger role because of the amount of work... directing a film keeps you a little busy [he laughs].

LH: Any advise to up and coming Latino filmmakers, writers, actors?

OT: Go after your dreams with passion, knowing that you are going to have obstacles along the way but we are fortunate to be in a profession that everything that happens in our lives feeds our artist's creativity, so make sure you learn from everything and everyone.

LH: Acting, directing, are you heading into working behind the scenes more than in front one day?

OT: Hopefully, I will be able to do both. I'm passionate about acting. I love working on a character and finding out what makes them tick – what their reason is for waking up in the morning. As a director, I like that I have control of the whole story. I like the idea of telling a story in a simple but entertaining way. In the future, I can see myself possibly directing more than acting, but I'm not there yet.

LH: Since you first started in Hollywood, how has it changed from the time you got hired on your first gig to where you are now making your own movies?

OT: Although I now get to play and audition for roles that I would never have in the past, it still feels the same to me in many ways. I still get nervous before an audition and with every role. I always have doubt at some point in the process of getting ready — of whether I'll be able to pull it off. Making our own movies is a way of taking control of our careers and getting to play roles or tell stories that we might not be able to unless we do it ourselves. I do realize that I've been very blessed to be able to do something I truly love and am passionate about.

LH: Ever since Latinos reelected the president last November, the power of Latinos became evident... yet there are still hurdles. In your opinion, what is the biggest obstacle Latinos still face in Hollywood?

OT: I think our biggest obstacle, or challenge is having more Latinos in positions of power: studio executives, producers, writers, and directors. People who know our stories and what's interesting and unique about each one of us... Latinos working in film and television decision-making positions with power green lighting projects that are well told and that appeal to everyone, not just Latinos. Then our next challenge is getting Latino audiences to go out and buy the tickets and support the films.

LH: How was it working with your wife?

OT: I really had no idea of what it would be like directing her because at home she never listens to me [he laughs]. It was really a great experience. On the set, she wasn't my wife but the lead in my film. I've been a fan of her work for a long time but I had never worked with her, so I really didn't know what it was going to be like. Seeing her prepared and actually working on the set was inspiring to me. I saw an actress giving a performance that was raw, vulnerable and at times humorous. Even though her character at times could be unlikeable in the wrong hands, she made her very human and because of that we end up rooting for her. I believe *Pretty Rosebud* is the best work of her career and I'm really excited to see what the future has in store for her, because she can only get better – she just needed an opportunity.

Thank you, Oscar Torre. We can't wait until *Pretty Rosebud* premieres... the trailer promises us a story many women of color will relate to.

Pretty Rosebud has recently completed and is currently exploring the film festival circuit and looking for distribution.

FRONT ROW FEATURES

EXCLUSIVE: Actress Chuti Tiu Branches Out with 'Rosebud'

By ANGELA DAWSON
Front Row Features

HOLLYWOOD—Chuti Tiu is a talented and versatile actress who has guest starred on TV shows including “24,” “Weeds,” “The Closer” “Southland” and “Days of Our Lives,” to name a few, as well as the Sally Field-directed dramedy “Beautiful,” along with supporting roles in the Vince Vaughn-Owen Wilson comedy “The Internship,” and the police drama “Rampart,” starring Woody Harrelson.



Frustrated by the stereotypical portrayal of Asians in mainstream media, Tiu wrote a screenplay that reflects what she perceives as a more accurate and layered depiction of Asian-American culture. “Pretty Rosebud” is a drama that explores the traditional roles of women in Asian-American culture and what happens when they defy expectations.

In “Pretty Rosebud,” Tiu plays Cissy, a public relations professional, who is trying to be everything to everybody. She supports her husband, whose career as an architect has nose-dived, and he seems less and less inclined to look for work. Meanwhile, she tries to placate her critical parents and be a good sister to her only brother. With personal and professional responsibilities starting to overwhelm her, Cissy finally indulges her herself, and realizes for the first time that she needs to look after her own needs above all else.



Chuti Tiu stars in PRETTY ROSEBUD. ©Pretty Rosebud.

Despite the odds of getting a little indie film made, with an Asian-American character at the center of the story no less, Tiu won support for the project, in which she also stars. Helmed by her husband, actor Oscar Torre, making his directorial debut, “Pretty Rosebud” premiered at the Reel World Film Festival in Toronto earlier this month, and it is rolling out in theaters around the U.S. in the coming weeks.

Born in Milwaukee, Tiu was raised in the Midwest with a strong work ethic. She attended Northwestern University, where she majored in economics and political science. During that time, she dreamed about becoming an actress, but the university frowned on non-theater arts majors auditioning for roles and taking acting classes. A natural beauty, she entered pageants and was the first non-Caucasian to win the title of America’s Junior Miss. Later, she was Miss Illinois in the Miss America pageant, where she won a talent award with her classical piano performance.

After nearly two decades in show business, Tiu says she is proud to add “screenwriter” to her list of achievements.

Q: What inspired you to write “Pretty Rosebud?”

Tiu: I write like I cook. I figure out what ingredients and tastes I want to incorporate, then throw it all together and see what happens. I wanted to tell a story that I hadn’t seen often in movies or on television, that broke certain stereotypes about women, men, and Asians in particular—one that shows the difficult road that a marriage can take, and how there’s no one reason why a relationship turns sour. There were a lot of elements I wanted to include, like the strange limbo first- and second-generation Americans can find themselves in as Cissy, the main character in “Pretty Rosebud,” does, trying to combine American culture and that of their heritage.

There's also what can happen when the economic tables are turned and it's the wife who is earning more or supporting the husband—the resentments, the backlash.

Q: What was the biggest challenge for you?

Tiu: One thing I had to address was the differential treatment in stories that men and women can get when it comes to sex. I would get sick and tired of seeing stories where the wife/girlfriend was cheated on, over and over, and I'd think to myself, "Yeah, right, like women never cheat." It's as if women aren't allowed to have libidos. Why is it that if a woman likes sex and sleeps around, she's a slut; a man does it, and he's a stud? He's "got game?" I just had to tell a story that swung the pendulum in the opposite direction a little bit. The bottom line is that human beings have libidos, and both men and women have to be responsible, be honest and do no harm.

Q: What have you found to be the secret to a happy marriage, especially with both you and your husband being actors?

Tiu: I don't know about the "secret," but I do know that we constantly work at it. We definitely go through our ups and downs, but through it all, there's a deep and growing love, coupled with commitment to making it work, and communication. Oh, and forgiveness. Grudges are not effective; this one I'm working on. Each of us was married once before, and we've learned from those experiences. I think every couple develops a blueprint for their particular relationship. It might not work for everyone, and it doesn't have to. It just has to work for that couple. When one of us feels like something is off, we communicate and see if we have to alter or clarify the blueprint. I have to say, I feel so blessed to have him as my husband. He's literally my life playmate.



Chuti Tiu stars in PRETTY ROSEBUD. ©Pretty Rosebud.

Q: How did your involvement with pageants help you in your career?

Tiu: People sometimes say that acting is so tough because there's so much rejection. But in pageants, you're so much more vulnerable because you're not putting forth a made-up character in a story; you're showing yourself, your beliefs, your body, your talent—you. Take that for rejection. Having gone through pageants helped put acting auditions in perspective. I remember being a pageant judge a few times, and there were times when I really liked a contestant, but she wasn't right to represent that particular pageant. It's the same way in show business. It's not personal. It's not a judgment on you. You just might not be right for a particular role, but you'll be awesome for a different one.

Q: When did you know you wanted to be an actress?

Tiu: I sat in on Professor Bud Beyer's acting class (at Northwestern) and knew I just had to sign up. I thought, "I wanted to study this!" So I camped outside his door. Bud was really popular, and before registration, people camped outside his door in sleeping bags the way they do for concert tickets or the latest iPhone. I was third in line, and I pleaded with him to let me in his class, but I wasn't a theater major. I was double majoring in political science and economics. He all but kicked me out of his office, saying that there was no way he was letting in a non-theater major into his class, when so many theater majors wanted in. It totally made sense. I was extremely disappointed, but took as many Performance Studies classes as possible. They jointly focused on analysis and performance of literature, and didn't require me to be a theater major. This was my compromise, since I knew I couldn't change my majors. My parents would've hit the roof if I'd gotten a major in something as non-sensible as theater.

Q: Are you working on another screenplay?

Tiu: I don't like to talk too much about it, since it's all just glimpses and ideas floating around in my brain, but I've been stricken by the idea of death and how it's such an odd, jarring concept for us to comprehend. When death comes, the fact is that we have no control and sometimes no warning. In this day and age, we have DVRs to rewind, Photoshop to correct images, so much technology to alter our perception or experience of things. But death—it's quite traumatic. How do we make sense of it? How can we heal? In the past year, I've lost two beloved cats, Adobo then Mojo. Each time, we had them put to sleep, and it felt so profoundly sad to be holding them one moment, communicating love and goodbyes and seeing life in their eyes, to having them gone, and all that's left is a body, molecules, fur, bones and flesh. It's something along those lines.

Q: Is there more "24" in your future?

Tiu: "24" was a lot of fun, and I have to admit, once I worked on it, that's when I became a fan. I would love more "24" in my future.

The film is set to premiere at the Reel World Film Festival in Toronto, Canada in early April to be followed by a theatrical run in select cities across America. More festival and release dates will soon follow to make this must-see film accessible to all.

I spoke with Tiu and Torre about the making of *Pretty Rosebud* and more.

What inspired you to write the story?

Chuti Tiu (Tiu): In terms of values, I really wanted to explore the conflict between immigrant parents and first generation American born children. As children, we're taught to follow the sometimes stereotypical pressures from family tradition, religion and culture. It's only when we become adults that we realize it might not be something we want. Then there's the idea of infidelity.

When a man is unfaithful, society doesn't seem to be as antagonistic as much as if it were a woman. I wanted to explore that as well.



Oscar, did you always plan to direct the film?

Oscar Torre (Torre): Originally, I hoped to just have a part as an actor, but as we started looking at directors and thinking about what we were looking for I began to think that it might be something I could do. I had never directed anything before and wasn't sure if I wanted to take on that pressure and responsibility. Finally, I just threw it out there and to Chuti's credit, we were both on the same page.

Tiu: I remember the first time Oscar read the script. He really loved it and wanted me to make it. Then as our relationship grew, he encouraged me more and more. I have to credit his encouragement and belief in me that it got done.

What was the filming process like?

Torre: It was the most stressful thing I've ever done but also one of the most rewarding. I really enjoyed the creative aspect of putting it all together. From story boarding, to determining camera shots and even choosing colors for the walls. Then being able to go out and actually shoot a film that had already been inside my head for months. There were some challenges along the way when things didn't work out the way I had originally envisioned, but I really enjoyed the process of overcoming them.

What was it like working with Kipp Shiotani?

Tiu: Kipp was wonderful and was really involved in the creative process. For us, it was almost like playing tennis. You're really able to volley back and forth when you find someone who is just as passionate as you are about the craft and story.

What can you tell me about the film's upcoming theatrical run?

Tiu: We'll have our Canadian premiere in Toronto next month and will then be having showings in LA, Salt Lake City, Chicago, Milwaukee and Miami.



Torre: We've also been chosen for the Big Island Film Festival in Hawaii at the end of May and have a few more festivals lined up. Then we'll be looking into a larger theatrical release and VOD. What other projects are you currently working on?

Tiu: I'm currently writing a project of my own that has to deal with the issue of death and how we wrap our heads around it. I also play Nurse Lailani in a series called Chasing Life which premieres this summer on ABC Family.

Torre: I play a lead role in a film called "Eenie Meenie Miney Moe" that's coming out April 15th on Red Box. I also have a script for a short film that I'll direct and also star in with Chuti. It's the story about two characters from two different worlds who have nothing in common but meet once a week in a motel room. There are a few twists in the story as well. Then there's Lunarticking, which is a film Chuti and I co-wrote along with a friend. It's an emotional thriller

that we hope to start filming at the end of the year.

How does completing this film compare to some of your other projects?

Torre: It's much more rewarding. In a way, it's like having a child. You don't know what he or she is going to grow up to be like or how they'll be perceived by the world, but you're proud with each step that you take. Having people come up and tell us they identify with the characters is the real gift. It was our vision, but it took the help of a lot of people behind the scenes to make it happen. As an actor and director you often get a lot of credit, but if you don't have a great team bringing their own creativity and input you don't have a film. Our cast and crew was extremely diverse in background and it was important to have that kind of family to work with. They're all part of this journey and its been fantastic.

Tiu: As an actor, I always thought of myself as one of the colors being used for an amazing painting. For this project, Oscar and I have been the painter and the canvas as well as some of the colors. It's been our baby from the blank page on up and it's great to see that we've been able to move and inspire people. It's why we create art in the first place.



'Pretty Rosebud:' Chuti Tiu & Oscar Torre Fight Stereotypes With Film & More [EXCLUSIVE]

By Anna Halkidis, ENSTARS
on Jun 03, 2014 05:25 PM EDT



Actress Chuti Tiu. (Photo : Courtesy Photo)



Actor Oscar Torre. (Photo : Courtesy Photo)

A little over a decade ago, actress Chuti Tiu asked Oscar Torre to read a personal script she had written after the two met in an acting class. Years later, they are not only married, but the couple has joined forces to turn the script into the award-winning film *Pretty Rosebud*.

While Tiu also stars in the film as Cecilia "Cissy" Santos, Torre took the role as the director for the first time in his lengthy career. Although he was initially unsure how it would be directing his wife, Torre boasted about the experience and explained how effortlessly they collaborated together.

"I like to joke that it's the only time she ever listened to me," Torre, *The Hangover 3* actor, told Enstars. "I'm looking forward to doing it again, not because she's my wife, but because it was exactly what you want from somebody who you are collaborating with and I thought it worked out great."

The film focuses on Cissy, whose marriage with her good-looking architect husband, Phil Santos (Kipp Shiotani), isn't working out. Simultaneously, Cissy also has to battle with her very traditional Asian parents, which pays a toll on her.

"Cissy is a woman with the best intentions at heart. She loves her family, her husband, her friends and she's a hard worker. She tries to do her best, but she fails," Tiu said. "Her problem is that she doesn't love herself enough and she doesn't listen

to herself enough. That's what she needs to learn to do."

Working with her husband, Tiu was also able to bring a number of relatable themes to the big screen, including the cultural divide often found between first-generation Americans and their parents.

"Like you see the immigrant parents being very old world traditional and you see the American-born kids being like, 'Well, that's not exactly what we like to do,'" Tiu, a daughter of Asian immigrants, said.

Using her character, she also aimed to battle the many stereotypes about Asian Americans found in the media, such as the idea that they are always submissive and obedient in relationships. Tiu also pointed out that many roles written for Asians in TV and film are monotonous and lack substance.

"It's gotten so much better recently and of course there's room for improvement," she said, referencing newer roles with Asian actresses like Ming-Na Wen in *Agents of Shield* and Lucy Lui in *Elementary*. Tiu will also play a "character with a twist" on a new ABC series, *Chasing Life*, this summer. "But especially growing up, what I saw, was not very representational and so that was kinda a fire beneath my butt."

Another major theme Tiu wanted viewers to grasp is that one person can never be fully blamed for a failed relationship. "In any breakup or divorce it is never just one person's fault," she said. "It always takes two sides of a story."

Pretty Rosebud is quickly gaining the recognition Torre and Tiu could only hope for. It's received five awards at the Idyllwild International Film Festival this year -- Best Feature Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay, Best Actress for Tiu and Best Cinematography for Tarina Reed.

Aside from their awards, Torre and Tiu said they are also elated with the feedback they've received from the general public. They mentioned emails they've opened from people who said they related to elements in the film and others who simply enjoyed the story itself.

With the help of Tugg.com, a website that hosts movie screenings in local theaters, Tiu and Torre have been able to show *Pretty Rosebud* in Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami and Milwaukee. Each screening was sold-out.

"It's been really, really amazing," Tiu said. "It just feels like such a blessing to be acknowledged on so many fronts."

As the couple is continuing the film festival circuit, fans can also request to see the film in their area via Tugg.com.



<http://www.enstarz.com/articles/38945/20140603/pretty-rosebud-chuti-tiu-oscar-torre-fight-stereotypes-with-film-more-exclusive.htm>

THEME FOR GREAT CITIES

A tale of more than two cities: part memoir, part travelogue, part "Sex and the City", part entertainment bible

Thursday, May 15, 2014

Pretty Rosebud Breaks Free

*"O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:
Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy."*

-- *The Sick Rose* by William Blake

As you might have guessed from the above invocation, today's blog is penned not by our illustrious columnist, but by his friend Nancy, whom Jeremy has graciously permitted to be a guest contributor.

Keeping in harmony with the themes and spirit promoted in Theme for Great Cities, the subject on which I am writing today is *Pretty Rosebud*, a new movie written by, produced by and starring my very dear friend, Chuti Tiu (*The Internship*). *Pretty Rosebud* won numerous awards at the Idyllwild International Festival of Cinema, including Best Film, Best Actress and Best Screenplay. On May 18, *Pretty Rosebud* will be screened at the Cannes Film Market (*Marché du Film*).



Chuti and I first met in the mid-'90s, when we were across-the-hall neighbors in Los Angeles. I liked her from the start. A recent New York transplant, I tried to get in and out of my apartment unseen. This went on for a matter of weeks. Eventually she intercepted me. Introducing herself with the same beautiful smile that had persuaded the state of Illinois to give her a title, Chuti handed me a UPS box containing some kitchen items I'd purchased at Bloomingdale's for which she had signed. I then met her tortoiseshell cat, Diva, whom Chuti had rescued from abandonment.

On getting to know her, I learned Chuti was kind and friendly to everyone -- even this half-crooked, ill-tempered old woman in our building whom the rest of us avoided. I also learned Chuti was a feminist and a Northwestern grad, and that she had recently moved here herself from her native Midwest. With a shared love of cats and a fondness for Frangelico, she and I became fast friends. So now that she is starring in a new movie, I am helping her to spread the word.

Pretty Rosebud is the story of Cissy, a woman who is enduring, rather than living, a life. Like the subject of Blake's poem, her exterior beauty masks a corrosive interior pain. In Cissy's case, the pain is caused by her inability to express how she feels. To the outside world, her life seems perfect (handsome husband, good job, loving family). The reality is, of course, quite different. Yes, her husband is a looker, but being out of work for two years has made him depressed and withdrawn. Yes, she is successfully marketing an up-and-coming politician, but his consistent advances are wearing on her. Yes, she has devoted parents, but their incessant pushing their "Rosebud" to "have little rosebuds of your own" is irritating at the very least.

Why doesn't Cissy bonk the womanizer over the head, kick her husband in the butt and tell her parents to F-off? Because that's not what good girls do, certainly not those from a strict, Asian, Catholic household. Such girls do not speak out, unless it is to the family priest (indeed, the confession scenes are some of the best in the movie).

In Cissy's case, she instead acts out by having extramarital affairs. Not soft, gentle sex: Sweaty sex with a guy who works in her office building -- in his car. Gritty sex in the locker-room after a kick-boxing lesson with her instructor (played by Chuti's real-life husband, actor Oscar Torre (*The Hangover Part III*), who also directed the movie). The story is how and if she can break free of the repression, of the self-loathing; in short, to become a rose that is not sick.

The movie left me with a lot of questions, so I sat down with Chuti for an interview. Here is what she had to say:

It was hard for me to watch this beautiful woman in such pain. Did you want to make people uncomfortable?



"One of the things I hope people understand are Cissy's and Phil's [her husband's] avoidance tactics. He sleeps, plays video games, gambles. She acts out sexually, but her form of acting out just as easily could have been shopping or alcoholism. She takes no pleasure in it; it comes from an angry place. The first time, okay, maybe fun, but cheating becomes more and more unpleasant to watch.

These are two people on a path that is totally diverging; they're similar but both lost. They aren't reaching out to each other anymore. She tries in the beginning, but he doesn't respond. Had he reciprocated, there'd be some hope. At least they'd still be playing. But if the balls just drops... It's a very uncomfortable place."

So many of Cissy's problems come from men hitting on her. Most women don't have that problem. Do you think unattractive women can relate to Cissy?

"I hope so. I'm not sure. I have faith in women in general -- women feel each other's pain more than men can. The situation is that Cissy's miserable, and she's in an unhappy marriage -- that's something I think a number of women can relate to. On top of that, she's the sole bread-winner and feels as if there's too much responsibility placed on her shoulders; that's something that both men and women can relate to.

And I don't think everyone has to have the same experience to relate. A friend of mine who is gay saw the movie and told me that he was a 'recovering Catholic.' He'd been told all his life how being gay was wrong, which made it so much more difficult to come out. Regardless of age or gender, everyone needs to find their true calling. It's about finding and listening to your gut."

You're a former Miss America contestant and America's Junior Miss. You once told me that due to your pageant training, you felt you couldn't be yourself around people. You couldn't speak your mind. How much of Cissy's repression comes from your pageant background?

"One percent. Ninety-nine percent of it was being Asian.

Pageants were a great vehicle for expression of what was already there. Always put your best foot forward. No matter how bad the situation, you must set an example. That is part of the Asian culture as well. It's about proving yourself, about excelling. Being Asian in the Midwest was also an issue. There weren't tons of us, definitely not commonplace. I felt the need to prove things to prove that I fit in."

Oscar mentioned at the premiere that it was important to make Cissy likable.

"We worked at that. We did things like cut out moments where she cried, because she couldn't cry throughout the entire movie, even though she was in a lot of pain. We didn't want her to look melodramatic."

Did you like Cissy?

"I want to say yes. I felt sorry for her and her pain, the growth she needed to go through. As an actor, I don't choose to like or dislike my characters. I don't want to judge them.

A friend came up to me after one of the screenings, and she couldn't stop crying. She said that she saw so much of her life: her family, her culture and its drama and secrets. I told her that I wrote the story for people like her, so that her story could be shared, and that other people could listen."

Why make this movie now?

"I couldn't have made it sooner. With new technology, we were able to shoot the movie in 2011 for a lot less than if we'd done it ten years ago, even five years ago. We shot it on the Canon 7D and 5D over sixteen days. I started writing the script as a stage play in 1999 and converted it to a screenplay in 2001. Plus, I didn't know the people who helped me to make the movie back then. I met our producer Rebecca Hu in 2009, when I was working on a documentary called *I [heart] Hollywood*, which is about actresses wanting to make their dreams come true."

Having made the movie, how do you feel now?

"After principal photography, I had a huge sense of self. This is a milestone that I had to accomplish to be happy with myself. Now that I've gotten the first film under my belt, making more movies is less daunting. I'm excited to keep creating."

“Pretty Rosebud” directed by Cuban actor Oscar Torre sets an example

BY NIKOLETA MORALES+ IN FILM/CINEMA · INSOMNIA — 15 MAY, 2014



Not all movies leave a mark in your life but “Pretty Rosebud” is one of those deep movies that does. An independent film, directed by actor Oscar Torre (“The Hangover 3”) and written by his wife, actress Chuti Tiu (“The Internship”), it sets the tone for the real issues we face in life, such as the dilemma of divorce, parent issues, career vs. family, and much more. Everyone thinks Cissy (Chuti Tiu) has the perfect life – except her. A childless marriage to a handsome architect (Kipp Shiotani) has gone stale and Cissy is trying to mask the pain with promiscuous behavior. She has to face the pain in a way that she never thought she would have to before.

By entering its first movie festival this year, Idyllwild International Film Festival, the movie won five awards for Best Screenplay, Best Film, Best Cinematography, Best Actress, and Best Director. “Pretty Rosebud” is going to be screened in more festivals, such as Cannes Film Market, The Big Island Film Festival and more.

EXTRA sat down with Torre and Tiu to get the behind-the-scenes scoop for this deeply emotional movie.

EXTRA: What motivated you to write the script for “Pretty Rosebud?” Is it based on a real experience?

Chuti Tiu: Some, but it’s not based on my life. I thought about it a lot and I did a lot of research. I never mentioned this in an interview before, but at one point I was terribly unhappy [in my marriage] and didn’t know what to do. I went to Barnes and Noble and got a thousand books like “Divorce For Dummies.” One woman came down and started talking to me and she said what she was thinking about divorce, then another woman came in and the three of us had a pow-wow talking about what was going on in our marriages. We had different situations but the same concerns and fears—friends choosing between you and your husband, parents disowning you or not talking to you forever, church, and that made me feel like I wasn’t alone. Through the script I wanted to make sure that women and men weren’t alone when they are facing this decision. No matter how modernized people are, divorce is still a difficult decision to come to.

Oscar, what was your experience with divorce? Did you put your personal experiences into directing the movie?

Oscar Torre: It affected how I directed the actors and certain scenes. Maybe it wasn’t my experience at times but it was always something I was aware of or feeling. Thoughts like: maybe I haven’t worked hard enough in

this marriage? Am I giving up? Am I making a big mistake? Will I regret this? These are the issues we (Chuti and I) discussed in preparation for the film. Some people think the husband in the movie is a loser, but that's an opinion. I think he was as stuck as she was. But he was going about it in a different way, almost as if he was frozen, afraid to take any steps with work, life, career, trying to escape. Cissy (the main character) and Phil (the husband) weren't even fighting anymore in the movie. For example, we saw an older couple having dinner at a restaurant and they didn't say a word to each other the whole time. I knew I wanted to capture that in the film and that's how I wanted the dinner scene to feel like – how uncomfortable I felt looking at that old couple.

How did you pull the film together in 16 days?

Oscar: I hired the best people possible for the film. Since I knew the exact shots I wanted for the film, I storyboarded each and every shot in detail, with diagrams, illustrations and photos. You need to be very prepared - that's a key to doing it.

Where are you trying to get "Pretty Rosebud" to?

Oscar: What I want the most is to reach as many people as possible. Hopefully, it will touch a few people's hearts. If this movie makes a difference in one person's life, it's worth it. You want the movie to make money but at the end of the day none of these things you can take with you. It's precious when you get to touch somebody's heart.

Actress from West Allis Writes, Stars in Film About Struggle

By ELEANOR PETERSON & BONNIE NORTH



Actress Chuti Tiu is from West Allis.
Credit: chutitiu.com

 Listen

15:50

Lake Effect's Bonnie North speaks with actress Chuti Tiu.

West Allis native and actress Chuti Tiu has been making a name for herself in Hollywood. She's had parts in the films *Beautiful* and *The Internship*, and has had recurring roles on highly rated TV shows as well, including *Weeds*, *The Closer*, and *Southland*. But her newest starring role is as a screenwriter.

Pretty Rosebud has already won a number of awards at film festivals, including best actress for Tiu and best screenplay. *Pretty Rosebud* tells the story of Cissy, a young Asian-American woman who seems to have everything, but is struggling to find her way. The film is screening around the country now and will be shown at the Marcus Majestic Cinema in Brookfield on May 7th.



NOW LISTENING TO OSCAR TORRE AND CHUTI TUI



Tony and Eddie interviewed Actors Oscar Torre and Chuti Tui talking about their movie "Pretty Rosebud", Chuti wrote it and Oscar Directed it.



Thursday, 17 April 2014 17:34

Pretty Rosebud's Oscar Torre and Chuti Tui Break Boundaries



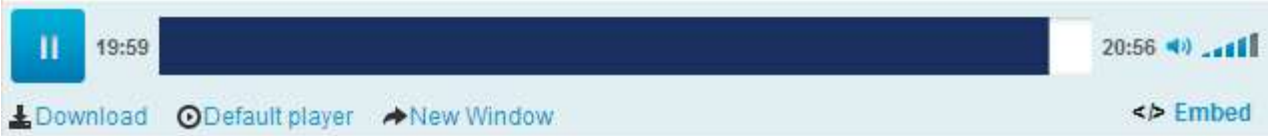
L to R: Chuti Tui and Oscar Torre

Husband and wife **Oscar Torre** and **Chuti Tui** discuss their how their award winning, emotional film **Pretty Rosebud** made them both push the limits.



ARTISTS ON DEMAND

Oscar Torre and Chuti Tiu from Pretty Rosebud



Oscar Torre and Chuti Tiu from the movie *Pretty Rosebud* join Artists On Demand to talk about the movie, the premiere at Reel World Film Festival, and what viewers can expect. Director: Oscar Torre. Lead role: Chuti Tiu.



Actor & Filmmaker Oscar Torre



Actor Oscar Torre has shared the screen with some of the acting talent in the business. He co-starred in the TV show "Cane" opposite Jimmy Smits, and appeared in the movies "The Hangover 3" and "Counterpunch".

Torre turned his focus to directing with his new film "Pretty Rosebud", which has garnered several awards from the "Idyllwild Film Festival".

Torre will be showing his film and taking questions at the Reelworld Film Festival in Toronto, sponsored by NBCUniversal.

We will talk to Torre about his award winning film and the transition from acting to directing.



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