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Lamorinda Welcomes Independent Filmmakers

By Cathy Tyson



Julie Rubio instructs young actors at the Theatre Square fountain. Photo Doug Kohen

"It was nice to be asked," said Chih-Chun Fang of Republic of Cake. He turned off the ovens and fridge to keep quiet on the set while filming. Producers were looking for cupcakes with deep pink frosting. Because they were just for show, food coloring was added to the frosting to intensify the color - Fang said they normally don't use it. Unfortunately the sugar-based pink frosting wouldn't "smush" properly for the film. So he spiked a fresh batch of their strawberry buttercream frosting with food coloring - which did the trick.

The owners of Loard's opened the shop at 5:00 a.m. so they could film before regular business hours. Entourage Salon and Spa donated space for wardrobe, hair and make-up.

Food was donated from Shelby's, Lava Pit, Peet's coffee, Casa Gourmet and more.

The film focuses on a single last day of innocent fun that Elijah Stevens, played by Rubio's son Elijah Stavena, and his four best buddies have before they learn about life-changing news that evening which will mark a turning point in each of their lives.

Rubio reflects that she really wanted to capture the purity of these adolescents at this transitional age and show them in a positive way. She sees a need to have more kid-friendly places in town and encourages residents to support those businesses that help create a feeling of community.

Residents may remember Rubio from her well-received film, "Six Sex Scenes and a Murder," that was part of the California Independent Film Festival at the Orinda Theater this spring. If you missed the screening, look for it on Netflix.com

Rubio and Maramonte are close friends and live in Orinda - both have kids in the film: Elijah Stavena, along with Tyler and her sister Tonii Maramonte. All of the teen actors are local except one actor who flew up from Los Angeles. "The kids are finding out it's a real movie," said Maramonte - which translates to long hours, doing several takes of a scene, and some down time between takes.

More information on the film can be found on several kinds of social media - Twitter, Facebook and Youtube under "tooperfectmovie" or try their blog at tooperfectmovie.blogspot.com.

Lamorinda has rolled out the welcome mat to the cast and crew of "too perfect" (intentionally lower case) a coming of age film by local independent filmmakers. Writer, Director, Producer and Executive Producer Julie Rubio, along with Producers Ramona Maramonte and Jody Yvette Wirt, said the merchants around Theatre Square, The Lafayette Car Wash and Miramonte High School, where the film was shot could not have been more accommodating and generous.

The team started pre-production in June and handed the film over to its editor in Los Angeles last week. "Tight schedule, tight budget - but it's all coming together," said Wirt, "Lots of twelve hour days. The kids have been awesome." Rubio's tentative plan is to have the film screened at a film festival in January and release it no later than June, "hopefully at the Orinda Theatre."

"Principal Adam Clark of Miramonte High School was amazing, getting a permit from the City of Orinda - amazing and very quick," said Maramonte of their good fortune putting the movie together. She adds that Theatre Square Management, the Orinda Police Department and a number of businesses supported the project wholeheartedly.



Filmmakers at Miramonte High School, from left Ramona Maramonte - Producer, Christine Gilb - Assistant Director, Julie Rubio - Writer, Producer, Director and Executive Producer, Jody Yvette Wirt - Producer. Photo Doug Kohen



Cast and crew on location at Miramonte High School Photo Doug Kohen

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