

Interview: Kathy Wu & Director Wong Hing Fan of 'I'm Livin' It'

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- [AMC River East 21](#) [2]
- [APUC](#) [3]
- [Asian Pop-Up Cinema](#) [4]
- [China](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [Hong Kong](#) [7]
- [Interview](#) [8]
- [I'm Livin' It](#) [9]
- [Japan](#) [10]
- [Kathy Wu](#) [11]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [12]
- [Season Ten](#) [13]
- [Sophia Wong Boccio](#) [14]
- [South Korea](#) [15]
- [Taiwan](#) [16]
- [Wong Hing Fan](#) [17]

CHICAGO – How do you communicate Hong Kong's homeless situation in a fresh and relatable way? Wong Hing Fan's new film "I'm Livin' It" takes on not only poverty, but the shortage of housing for professional and working class people. The main setting is a 24 hour burger restaurant – with the sly marketing slogan of "I'm Livin' It!"

Once a star in his finance firm, Bowen (Aaron Kwok) now spends his nights in that fast food joint, which allows the homeless an overnight respite area, and he encounters other "roommates" who are in a similar predicament. There is a child and her mother (Cya Liu) – who has taken out high interest loans to cover her mother-in-law's debt, an old man (Alex Man) who is too afraid to go home, a young runaway (Zeno Koo), and a singer (Miriam Yeung) who was part of the financier's past. When Bowen hears from his sister (Kathy Wu) that their mother (Nina Paw) is dying, he must decide whether to go be with them or stay with his "new" family.



Actor Kathy Wu

Photo credit: Kathy Wu

The actor Kathy Wu was recently in Chicago to represent the film at its Season Ten screening at the Asian Pop Up Cinema (APUC). Her background is of scholarship – her grandfather was a prominent University professor in China – and beauty, as she competed in the Miss Asia Pageant as a U.S. representative, after her family had moved to the States. This boost led her to acting, and with the help of her mentor Nina Paw (her “I’m Living It” co-star) she began to work in Asian TV and film.

A chance breakout in the martial arts film “Lady Bloodfight” got her noticed in the Los Angeles industry, and she has since moved there to make it her base for both American and Asian movie/TV roles. She has appeared in the TV series “Pure Genius” and “Counterpart,” and had a role in the Dwayne Johnson film, “Skyscraper.”

In a Podtalk with Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com, Kathy Wu talks about the cultural adaptations she made to become an actor, and what it takes to split time between the Asian and American industries.

On Page Two, an interview with director Wong Hing Fan of “I’m Livin’ It.”

HollywoodChicago.com talked to writer/director Wong Hing Fan (through an interpreter) about his the origin of “I’m Livin’ It” and his first film as the main director, after several years of being an assistant director.



Scene from Director Wong Hin Fan's "I'm Livin' It"
Photo credit: APUC

HollywoodChicago.com: Since you were the main director for the first time, what was different while you were filming that you never encountered before in your long career as an assistant director?

Fan: Well, I found out that when I was an assistant, I didn't have to hear a lot of things that the boss or main director has to hear and deal with, and now I was on the front line. Not only was I speaking with the actors more, but I also had to interact with their managers. [laughs] That's a harder conversation to have than the actors, and was completely new for me.

HollywoodChicago.com: What do you think the Hong Kong film industry does overall that no other country does or can do?

Fan: From what I have observed about filmmaking in other countries, the Hong Kong system is much faster from initial pitch to production. There is not as many layers to go through ... the decision is made and the filming process begins. The person in charge of the decision just gets it done, and then we go shoot our movie.

Due to the pandemic situation, Season Ten of the Asian Pop-Up Cinema will postpone to Season 11 in Fall of 2020. For a complete statement and an overview of APUC, [click here](#). [18]



[19]

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- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/interview.html>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/i-m-livin-it>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/japan>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/kathy-wu>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/season-ten>

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