

Wee Li Lin

The maverick female filmmaker behind upcoming romantic comedy *Forever* talks to **Zul Andra** about her love of movies and where she looks for inspiration.

I really feel I was raised by movies, by VHS rentals at my favorite video library every weekend. And going to the cinemas was nothing short of a religious experience. But I never thought of being involved in film as a career.

I started filmmaking while I was in college and shot my first short film myself. I guess I was about 20, and something just “clicked” in me. It felt really, really right.

The university I went to did not have a film department, so I had to become an Art Semiotics major in order to do more film classes.

In school I learned to think laterally, turn clichés on their heads and that eating too much turkey causes drowsiness.

My relationship with my family was a bit distant and as with lots of families, a bit dysfunctional. But when I graduated from college and moved back home, my relationship with my family slowly blossomed. Probably explains why I’m married and still living at home!

My handful of best girlfriends have shaped my character, some of whom I’ve been blessed to have in my life since I was in primary school. I love and admire them greatly.

I’ve found a gratifying and creative outlet for my OCD tendencies, without which, I would likely become like Joey, the eccentric love-a-holic lead in *Forever*.

My husband’s talent as a visual artist inspires me to be a better filmmaker and his honesty inspires me to be a better person.

I perceive myself as hardworking and goofy but I guess the world perceives me as privileged and goofy.

The most interesting moment in my life was when I was about seven, my father was very good friends with Matthew Tan, a Singapore country and western singing sensation. One day, my dad told me that he was in fact Matthew, and he moonlighted as the Singapore cowboy at night and went to work in the day at a tire factory.

They kind of looked alike and I was somehow convinced and thrilled that my father had a double life. But shortly after that he told me he had been bluffing and I was really disappointed.

The challenges of filmmaking in Singapore seem to be getting less and less, and I’m feeling optimistic. There seems to be a groundswell to ensure filmmakers with worthy projects get a chance to realize their stories and attain some form of distribution.

Audiences are warming up to local movies due to several excellent Singapore indie and studio films being released these past two years. This is encouraging.

My peeve is that there seems to be this pressure to define what a Singaporean film is with tiresome clichés.

My films are not perceived to be very “Singaporean,” but I don’t think that’s a bad thing.

The way our local film industry can grow is when we focus more on the people and less on the pizzazz.

The most important thing needed to succeed is to love what you do and never get cynical about it.

Eating too much turkey causes drowsiness

