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A Peek Behind the Curtain: Asian Americans on Screen and Behind the Scenes

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A Peek Behind the Hollywood Curtain: Asian Americans on Screen and in the Entertainment Industry

Abstract:

For the majority of Hollywood's existence, the faces fronting films and the storylines being told are white: white creators, white actors, and made for a white audience. In rare adaptations made about people of color, specifically Asian Americans, films are often whitewashed and tone deaf to racial stereotypes. Some well-known examples are *Dr. No* (1962), *The Face of Fu Manchu* (1965), *The Last Airbender* (2010), *Aloha* (2015), and *Dr. Strange* (2016). Scholars in Asian American studies, film studies, and other academic fields have analyzed Hollywood's lack of diversity with actors, producers, directors, and even storylines. This study analyzes prominent Asian American creatives, focusing on how they gained recognition and efforts to change how Hollywood operates. Research has shown that this network among American actors, directors, and producers helps them fight against Hollywood's barriers and change the industry from the inside.

Keywords:

Leukocentrism, Hollywood, Asian Americans, Whitewashing, Networking, Independent Films

Introduction

Hollywood has lacked minority representation, specifically Asian Americans, since the industry's inception in the 1920s. As a result, minority groups in the United States cannot participate in notable projects, and their stories and voices are silenced. From my perspective, some actors were able to make on-screen appearances but at the expense of contributing to the misrepresentation of Asian Americans in the United States. This inaccurate portrayal may benefit Hollywood but has far-reaching implications into how Asian Americans are perceived in American pop culture.

Within this paper, I will examine 1) how Hollywood's Leukocentric and whitewashing practices impact Asians and Asian Americans; 2) how Hollywood's casting of actors of non-ethnic Asians are preferred to gain more profit and success in films; 3) how successful Asian American actors and directors made a name for themselves; and 4) how gaining fame and

recognition opened them to more opportunities for other projects. Overall, Asian American actors, directors, and producers in the Hollywood industry are subjected to racist and discriminatory practices. For actors, directors, or producers to make a name for themselves, they needed to start with smaller projects before transitioning into more prominent roles; thus, creating a network with other Asian Americans within the industry. Additionally, once they gained their fame and platform, actors, directors, and directors moved onto other projects that created opportunities for other aspiring Asian American creatives that would not have been available previously.

Methodology

I wanted to explore how Asian Americans can gain fame in an industry that is predominately white and does not have many opportunities for people of color. I wanted to examine changes in the industry throughout Asian American participation and portrayal in various Hollywood films, as well as examining how this helped create a strong network of Asian American creatives in the industry. To begin this research process, I researched current journal articles and novels that discusses limited and stereotypical Asian Americans in the entertainment industry. From the existing literature, I researched more in-depth about the films that were mentioned and used industry periodicals (Hollywood Reporter, Variety, Deadline, Rolling Stone, The New York Times, and The Washington Post, etc.) that helped me discovered common themes and issues to support my argument. The films mentioned in this paper that were being criticized for white washing were selected based on A-list actors who appear to be of white race, and Hollywood portrayed them as Asian descent for movie profits and popularity. These films do not focus on a specific period or a range of time; rather it was selected based on what I felt was

the best for this paper. Although there are numerous examples that depicts Hollywood inaccurately portrays Asian American characters and storylines, I chose these films that I felt best supported my argument and that happened to be more recent films within the twenty-first century.

For Asian Americans actors and directors, I chose Asian Americans who I felt used their fame to further opportunities for other Asian Americans or other minority groups. I selected actors based on Asian Americans that traversed nontraditional routes to help others. I looked at actor's movie credits and cross referenced with other works to create a web of common collaborations by using IMDB as a main source. The web of common collaborations allowed me to discover similarities and differences from actors' early carriers through present day. Additionally, I watched and listened to many interviews on how Asian Americans entered Hollywood and any help they received from other Asian Americans in the industry. Lastly, I chose Asian American directors that were prominent in the Asian American community. I selected actors who worked on low budgeted small films before transitioning to working on bigger budget films and television products. I selected these actors based on who was prominent in the twenty-first century and who I felt had an interesting career before gaining name recognition.

Current Research

Current scholarship on Asian Americans in Hollywood has concluded that this group is significantly under- or misrepresented in the film industry. Hollywood has a history of casting white actors to play ethnic characters, justifying this whitewashing by claiming the films will appeal to a larger audience (Byun, n.d.). When Hollywood does employ non-white actors for

on-screen characters, such roles often portray stereotypical accents and features of the racial group, (Davé, 2017). Consequently, audiences in the US may believe most Asian Americans speak with an accent. The lack of diverse characters on-screen implies that Asian Americans are foreigners and, thus, do not belong (Besana et al., 2019).

Despite these preconceived notions about Asian Americans, some scholars have examined Asian Americans who broke through the challenges within Hollywood. Notably, film director Justin Lin produced many independent films that specifically focused on Asian American storylines. However, Lin was not a well-known director until he produced several films in *the Fast and Furious* franchise (Okada, 2015). However, despite the previous research about Asian Americans in Hollywood, little research exists on how connection is formed among Asian American actors and producers. Therefore, I will examine how struggles in Hollywood force Asian American actors, producers, and directors to form a strong collective to help one another become successful.

Leukocentric Ideology

The film and entertainment industry consists of predominantly white actors in Hollywood, while Asian Americans are marginalized. Research shows that lead actors in films, from 2011 to 2020, are over 50% white actors, while minority groups make up the remaining percentage (Hunt & Ramón, n.d.).¹ One reason for this is that Hollywood adopts the idea of Leukocentrism, wherein it is "operating under the false belief that a film requires whitewashing to make it more profitable, universal, popular and socially meaningful" (Magnan-Park, 2018). The term "whitewashing" is often used in the entertainment industry, and it refers to "the

¹ I acknowledge that over the years the percentage of white actors has decreased from 2011 to 2020. However, since they are still the majority currently, the statistical research still helps support my argument.

portrayal of Asian characters by white actors" (Byun, n.d.). Therefore, when Hollywood produces a film based on an Asian American storyline, they cast well-known A-list actors to portray these Asian American characters, who often are white.

The term A-list actor or actress is subjective, but I will use James Ulmer's scale to define the term for my argument. The Ulmer Scale ranks from A+ list to a D lister out of one thousand actors based on bankability. According to Ulmer, bankability has three different categories low (\$1-\$8 million), medium (\$8-\$30 million), and high (more than \$30 million). Moreover, the scale is also based on other factors, like actors' performance, professionalism, acting range, and bankability. ("The Ulmer Scale," 2009). Consequently, this scale often consists of many white actors within the upper half, while Asian Americans and other ethnic minority groups are on the bottom half. With this ideology being used in Hollywood, many ethnic Asian Americans are unable to break through the film and entertainment industry barriers, which gives limited opportunities to showcase their talents.

The concept of leukocentrism and whitewashing in Hollywood can be seen in many films throughout the years, like *Dr. No* (1962), *The Face of Fu Manchu* (1965), *Maharlika* (1987), *Batman Begins* (2005), *The Last Airbender* (2010), *Aloha* (2015), *Dr. Strange* (2016), and *Ghosts in the Shell* (2017). However, I will specifically focus on *Aloha* (2015) and *Dr. Strange* (2016).

In the film *Aloha*, directed by Cameron Crowe, Emma Stone portrays Allison Ng, "a feisty fighter-pilot of Hawaiian-Chinese-Swedish descent" (Singh, 2015). However, Stone's casting as Ng as a mixed white person has sparked criticism. One is that Stone lacks Asian or Pacific Islander ancestry. A critic called Crowe a "hūpō-haole (clueless Caucasian/foreigner) who can only engage with the world solely via his myopic, parochial leukocentric world view" (Magnan-Park, 2018). Additionally, Crowe's depiction of Hawaii gives audiences a false sense

of Hawaii's reality, using the state as a scenic backdrop but excluding the native Hawaiians on the island. According to Guy Aoki, president of Media Action Network for Asian Americans (MANAA), though 60% of Hawaii's population is Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, with only 30% of the population comprising white people, "from watching this film, you'd think they made up 99 percent" (MANAA Condemns Sony Pictures).

Aloha's storyline is a familiar example of Hollywood's whitewashing, as Crowe casted white actors like Emma Stone, Bradley Cooper, Rachel McAdams, and John Krasinski as the leading ensemble and deprived an opportunity for ethnic actors to be cast in these roles. Furthermore, some critics have stated that actors like Olivia Munn, Sandrine Holt, or Janel Parrish would have been better suited to play Alison Ng because they have Asian mixed-race ancestry (Singh, 2015). However, since the leading ensemble was taken from the top half of Ulmer's A-list actor's list, Crowe and Hollywood clearly prioritized an actor's fame and bankability over a culturally accurate telling of their film. Thus, this whitewashed film is just one of many instances leukocentric ideology in Hollywood.

Similar to Crowe's blatant whitewashing of an Asian storyline for American consumer appeal, *Dr. Strange's* whitewashing was also for supposed profit maximization. When the film was released in 2016, many people were outraged by the casting choices of Dr. Strange and Ancient One. In the comic book in which the film was adapted from, Dr. Strange was described as someone with "slanted eyes, forked eyebrows," and "yellow skin." Nonetheless, Benedict Cumberbatch, a white English actor, played the leading role in the live-action film. The film's casting directors were criticized for seemingly deliberately giving the character "Caucasian features to reverse [his] Asianness" (Magnan-Park, 2018). Furthermore, Tilda Swinton, another white English actor, portrayed Ancient One, written in the source material as a "Tibetan Male"

(Magnan-Park, 2018). Hollywood casting these renowned English actors was a play for the film to attract a wider viewing audience from England, the United States, and many western countries, justifying such whitewashing as a means to an end to earn profit.

The filmmakers furthermore changed the locations from the comic book. The Ancient One is described as someone from Tibet in the comic book. However, the film portrayed the character as being from Nepal. Hollywood changed the geographic origin for Ancient One in that they needed to make this film more universal. Christopher R. Cargill, one of the screenwriters, justified this by stating, "if you acknowledged that Tibet is a place and that he is Tibetan, you risk alienating one billion people" (Wong, 2016). Hollywood felt showing a film that references Tibet would be controversial for the Chinese government and local political issues at the time. Therefore, for Hollywood to bypass the Chinese government's potential censorship, they needed to change the original storyline to gain as many viewers as possible. Thus, *Dr. Strange* was not only an example of whitewashing of the characters but also of making the film more supposedly universal. It is insulting for Hollywood to change locations from Tibet to Nepal, indirectly implying that an audience will not notice the difference because these cultures are erroneously treated as one. Hollywood is neglecting that Asian countries are diverse and vast, adopting instead a "one size fits all" mentality that ignores geographical and cultural differences of many countries in Asia.

Misrepresentation on Screens and its Impacts on Asian Americans

Regardless of Hollywood's usage of leukocentric ideology, sometimes Asian American actors are on screen but with a caveat. For Asian American actors who were successful in breaking barriers in Hollywood and portraying minority roles, such characters were nonetheless

often racially insensitive or downright offensive. For instance, the Netflix series *Master of None* is a comedy based on creator Aziz Ansari's real-life experiences as an Indian actor navigating Hollywood industry. In the show, Ansari's character Dev Shah "question[s] himself and others about whether or not he should do a 'funny Indian accent' to land a role" (Davé, 2017). The show satirizes what is often too true about the Asian American experience in Hollywood: that they need to play stereotypical roles to survive and advance professionally. Consequently, since performing with accents was enjoyed by many consumers in the US, it has become normalized in Hollywood, stripping away an actor's individuality and reducing an entire culture to the most base set of experiences (Davé, 2017).

Even with actors performing accents for survival, accents have created an inaccurate association for many ethnic and racial minority groups in the US. The character Dev Shah speaking English with an Indian accent, "creat[ed] an inaccurate and offensive image in the minds of the indifferent majority" (Murthi, 2015). Stereotypes include depicting Asian Americans as a "model minority", "typical doctors," and Pakistani and Afghan Americans as "terrorists" (Ramos, 2017). Negative depictions on screen influence the viewing public, who may come to believe in these stereotypes. Hollywood re-enforcing stereotypes is detrimental to the Asian American community since "Asian Americans [are seen as] the perpetual foreigner, which positions Asian Americans as an 'other' in mainstream (white) culture" (Besana et al., 2019). Additionally, the media's shallow portrayal and lack of diversity distorts Asian Americans' own sense of self, devaluing their identities in America (Besana et al., 2019).

Actors Resisting Hollywood's Barriers

Despite Hollywood's leukocentric practices and misrepresentation of Asian Americans, some actors have broken down barriers, rising to fame without taking stereotypical roles for survival. There are many well-known examples, but this paper will specifically focus on Daniel Dae Kim and Nora Lum (also known as Awkwafina). Their success and fame in Hollywood have allowed them to pursue opportunities in an array of creative projects and even transition to behind the scenes.

Daniel Dae Kim is an American actor and producer, widely known for his roles in *Lost* and *Hawaii 5-O*. Before Kim gained stardom, he had minor roles in television and took part in predominantly Asian American theater work (Jung, 2021). When Kim was able to land the role of Jin-Soo Kwon in the show *Lost*, part of his success was his friendship with one of the writers, Monica Macer (Jung, 2021). Macer persuaded casting directors to hire Kim by vouching for his acting abilities. Kim's friendship gave him the opportunity to showcase his acting abilities, and he eventually stayed on as a series regular for six seasons. Additionally, Macer and Kim worked on the series *24* (Monica Macer, n.d.). Thus, the friendship with Macer allowed Kim a foot in the door, and once he was able to showcase his acting abilities, he achieved a fruitful career. Kim was able to transition to *Hawaii 5-O* into the role of Chin Ho Kelly because of his fame and success from *Lost*.

Kim recalled his experiences as an Asian American actor trying to make a name for himself in Hollywood; he wanted to provide a fair opportunity for people of color and underrepresented groups to make it on screen. Fortunately, Kim's time working under CBS on *Hawaii 5-O* and his connections with other actors on set allowed him to launch a production company called 3AD. 3AD aims to integrate characters and culture that are often underrepresented (DANIEL DAE KIM, n.d.). This is not just a production company for Asian

Americans, but for all marginalized groups. For instance, Kim's company produced and directed the series *The Good Doctor*, which aired on the ABC network, where he previously worked on *Lost*. Additionally, compared to shows like *Grey's Anatomy*, *Chicago Med*, and *New Amsterdam*, in which the main casts feature predominantly white actors, *The Good Doctor* depicts representations of Asian American, African American, Jewish American, Muslim American, and other marginalized groups. This provides opportunities for unique storytelling.

Furthermore, Kim's success as a producer and director may be attributed to his years on ABC and CBS networks. Recently, 3AD partnered with Amazon Studios to produce other shows (Porter, 2019). Thus, this newly formed collaboration is another method of Kim widening connections or networking to receive and provide opportunities for people of color in Hollywood.

On the other hand, Nora Lum or Awkwafina, began her career in the music industry as a rapper and released a solo album called *Yellow Ranger* (Awkwafina, n.d.). After the release of her albums, she collaborated with other artists before transitioning to acting. When she began her acting career, she had minor roles in film and television before her breakout role as Goh Peik Lin in *Crazy Rich Asians* (Fontoura, 2018). Awkwafina did not have many personal connections for her to get the role of Lin like Kim did with the show *Lost*, but her videos on YouTube were what influenced *Crazy Rich Asians* director Jon M. Chu to convince Warner Bros to cast her (Fontoura, 2018). As a result, Awkwafina's portrayal of Lin was one of many reasons for the film's success and gave her countless opportunities to work on other high-profile and blockbuster films. Some notable ones include *Ocean's Eight* (2018), *Raya and the Last Dragon* (2021), and *Shang Chi and The Legend Ten Rings* (2021).

However, despite her role in these widely acclaimed films, she also participated in the film *The Farewell* (2019), a small-budget, independent film (Galuppo, 2020). The film is based on a true story, where “a Chinese family discovers that their beloved grandmother has a short time to live. They don’t tell her but instead stage a wedding so the family can gather together before [the grandmother dies]” (Fleming, n.d.). Awkwafina’s role in this film is significantly different in genre and acting method than her prior roles. Her breakout role in *Crazy Rich Asians* allowed her to explore small, passion projects without worrying about the box office. In addition, her fame and success provided an opportunity for her to create *Nora from Queens*. Awkwafina is the star actor, writer, and producer of the comedy series. Awkwafina's stardom is slightly different from Kim's, but both “have been able to survive and challenge Hollywood’s racist culture” (Yuen, 2017). Asian Americans vouching for other aspiring Asian American actors and producers creates more visibility and a strong network within the industry to champion each other. New artists have the opportunity to further their career paths and allow opportunities for other Asian Americans that would not have been available to them.²

Working Behind the Scenes

Asian American directors and producers often get their start in the industry with independent films. With smaller film projects, producers and directors are able to create storylines that more directly address issues within Asian American community, can cast Asian American actors for these roles, and do not have to adhere to the pressures of a mainstream, big budget Hollywood flick. As a result, networking is built between Asian American producers and directors with actors. For instance, directors Justin Lin and Destin Daniel Cretton began working

² I acknowledge that networking is essential for anyone new in any industry. However, for this paper, I will only be focused on Asian Americans networking in the Hollywood entertainment industry.

on small independent films before working on larger projects. Some directors who work on independent films establish professional relationships with Asian American actors, which can benefit both parties in the future if they collaborate on a project that is widely anticipated. Therefore, there is not only a network among Asian American actors but between the actors, directors, and producers.

Justin Lin is a Taiwanese American film director who began working on smaller independent films. Some of these films include *Shopping for Fangs* (1997) and *Crossover* (2000), which address issues often associated with the Asian American community. Furthermore, these two films were submitted in Asian American film competitions for exposure (Busack, n.d.). However, Lin's most notable film was *Better Luck Tomorrow* (2002), which premiered in the Sundance Film Festival competition before the film's release in theaters a year later. The movie's premise is "about a bunch of Asian-American high-school kids searching for their own identity. The straight and narrow path of earning good grades and getting into an Ivy League school is juxtaposed against a descent into a life of drugs and petty crimes, before ultimately escalating to murder" (Nast, 2018). This film gained popularity as it portrayed Asian Americans in a light beyond racial stereotypes.

Because of its unique perspective on Asian Americans, the film gave Lin and other cast members like Sung Kang and John Cho new opportunities that furthered their careers and fame. For instance, Lin's breakout debut as a director occurred when he signed on to the third installment of *Fast and the Furious* -- *Fast and Furious: Tokyo Drift* (2006). Initially, the franchise was not doing well at the box office. Thus, Universal Pictures, the franchise's studio sponsor, was not going to finance the project anymore after the third installment. However, Lin's new perspective "push[ed] the series into uncharted territory," which resulted in the success of

the series, even a decade later (Ames, 2021). Lin's previous experience working with Sung Kang allowed Lin to bring Kang onto the project. Their new collaboration brought diversity on screen and on set not present in the first two films.

Furthermore, Lin's diverse perspective allowed him "to tell stories that would speak to cultures all over the world" and incorporate "a global youth culture united by hip hop, street fashion, and speed" (Hill, n.d.). Lin's film success domestically and internationally resulted in a multibillion-dollar series. The film's success allowed him to sign on as the director for the next three films, while Kang's beloved character allowed him to remain as a series regular. Thus, the film's success allowed Kang to explore other creative projects like *Raya and the Last Dragon* (2021) (*Sung Kang - IMDb*, n.d.). Additionally, Lin went to work on *Star Trek Beyond* (2016), where he brought in John Cho as Lieutenant Hikaru Sulu (Lin et al., 2016). The film received over \$ 300 million dollars in revenue and allowed Lin to "branch into [TV] as executive producer of *S.W.A.T.* and *Magnum P.I.*" (Lee, 2021).

In addition to Lin's successful career, Asian-American director Destin Daniel Cretton also made monumental breakthroughs in Hollywood. Cretton began his career with shorts and independent films that entered many film festivals. One notable work was *Short Term 12* based on Cretton's experience working in a group facility for teenagers. The film received acclaim from the Sundance Film Festival as a short film in 2009 (Goldstein, 2013). A few years later, Iraqi film producer Ron Najor adapted *Short Term 12* into a feature-length movie, and it subsequently won the Audience Award for Best Narrative Feature and the Grand Jury Prize for Best Narrative Feature at the South by Southwest Film Festival (SXSW) in 2013 ("CASE STUDY," 2014). With the success of this film, Cretton was able to direct the film *The Glass Castle* (2017) based on Jeannette Wall's memoir. The film is about "a young girl raised in a dysfunctional family with an

eccentric artist mother and an alcoholic father" (McNary, 2014) and received mixed reviews about the performance and the tone of the movie. Despite the film's reviews, Cretton later had the opportunity to work on the film *Just Mercy* (2019), based on the true story of Bryan Stenson and the case of Walter McMillian, who was convicted and sentenced for a crime he did not commit (*Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson | Bestselling Book and Adapted Film*, n.d.). The film had many A-list actors like Brie Larson, Jamie Foxx, and Michael B Jordan, which gave Cretton even more recognition.

After *Just Mercy* was critically acclaimed and won many accolades, Marvel Studios hired Cretton to work on the film *Shang Chi and The Legend Ten Rings* (2021). The film is about "Shaun (played by Simu Liu), a seemingly ordinary San Francisco valet who is revealed to have trained during his childhood as an assassin for the infamous Ten Rings army" (Truitt, n.d.). This is the first superhero film with an all-Asian lead ensemble. In an interview, Cretton signed to direct this film because he "grew up without a superhero to look up to" and "[wanted] to give [his] son a superhero to look up to" (Ford, 2020). Many people have widely praised Marvel's first live-action film with a superhero lead since it has prominent Asian American actors like Awkwafina, Michelle Yeoh, Ronny Chieng, and Tony Leung Chiu Wai, defying the notion that Hollywood films must have largely white casts to be successful. In addition, these actors gained fame throughout the years. Thus, *Shang Chi* attracted many kinds of viewers -- young and old, domestically and internationally.

Furthermore, *Shang Chi* is the first Marvel movie where Asian-American audiences feel represented. One person stated that "'Shang-Chi made for an endearing and exciting origin story...[i]t was a fun MCU take on martial arts-infused fantasy grounded in Chinese and Chinese American culture" (Chang et al., n.d.). The film was empowering for many viewers since it

incorporated an array of global cultures. Additionally, the film addresses some important issues, like identity. Many Asian Americans have difficulty adjusting to their two environments – the one they live in, and the one they are racially part of. However, since the film deals with "having a foot in both worlds ... in the North American world and China," it speaks volumes to many viewers, especially in the U.S. (Samuel, 2021).

Also, Marvel's casting of Simu Liu as someone who struggles with identity gives viewers someone to relate to and even look up to as a mentor or superhero. Besides these positive reviews of the film, one viewer appreciated that "scenes that have been staged and blocked and sculpted with care, and that hasn't been chop-chop-chopped beyond recognition" (Chang et al., n.d.). Cretton's attention to detail with the Asian characters and storyline is accurately portrayed in the film. The usage of accents and Asians seen as "others" or "perpetual foreigners" is now beginning to change. The film's unconventional casting group has gained much publicity and popularity, and Cretton has even signed on for a *Shang Chi* sequel. The popularity of this film shows that Asian American directors and actors can succeed in Hollywood without conforming to Hollywood's leukocentric practices. Furthermore, the success in these diverse non-white storylines allows other marginalized ethnic groups to succeed in Hollywood.

Conclusion

Overall, the Hollywood entertainment industry is predominantly white due to its leukocentric practices and misrepresentation of marginalized groups, specifically Asian Americans. Hollywood has historically taken stories originating from the Asian American community or other marginalized groups and whitewashed them, justifying such practices due to profit maximization. As such, Asian American actors have received limited opportunities to

make it on screen in a leading capacity or without playing into offensive racial tropes. Although some Asian American actors were able to succeed in Hollywood, they were forced to perform accents and other stereotypical roles to land the job. Thus, inaccurate depictions of Asian Americans have severely impacted how audiences view this group in the U.S., as foreigners and not American citizens. Despite Hollywood's racial and discriminatory practices, actors like Daniel Dae Kim and Awkwafina were able to break down these barriers. They gained stardom by having other Asian Americans in Hollywood vouching for their talents, which propelled their careers. As a result, some actors use their new platform to work on other projects that provided more opportunities for Asian Americans to get a foothold in Hollywood.

Additionally, Asian American directors and producers also struggled to gain recognition in the film industry, and many started their careers in independent films. These smaller films usually centered around Asian American issues, with many entering film competitions. Justin Lin and Destin Daniel Cretton were among the few Asian American directors and producers to gain fame after releasing well-crafted independent films. This recognition allowed them to work on large projects with big budgets and more creative control. Such directors could then bring on Asian American actors they have worked with previously. Furthermore, some of these blockbuster films have made huge strides in Hollywood as Asian American representation increases and the audiences no longer feel they are foreigners. Ultimately, Asian American actors, directors, and producers are breaking down barriers and slowly changing how Hollywood produces movies that deal with marginalized groups.

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