

Theatre students to create film musing on love, blindness

By Glen Tadych
Trends Reporter

A group of Texas State theatre students will question the circumstances of unconditional love conflicted with hardship in their upcoming short film "Love is Blindness."

Centered around a young couple, Julian and Emma, "Love is Blindness," tells of Julian's struggle to adjust to Emma's going blind after a car accident. The couple's future is uncertain as they deal with the mutual frustration of just how unconditional their love is for each other.

Writer and director Shane Wellesley, theatre junior, began writing the script for his short film in lecturer Bryan Poyser's spring 2012 screenwriting class as an assignment. He was inspired by a blind man he met in high school, whose happiness in life moved Wellesley.

"Originally, it was a very personal script, and I hadn't shown it to many

people," Wellesley said. "Eventually, I asked myself, 'What question can I ask to get others to connect?'"

As the project became more ambitious, Wellesley spent the next year shaping the script into a story with which he could express a strong moral message to an audience. His notion behind the film is that blindness is merely a vehicle to drive a more "metaphysical idea."

"Beauty doesn't have to be perfect. It just has to be permanent," Wellesley said.

"Love is Blindness," will be filmed using a one-shot technique, giving the audience a story without scene cuts but the visualization of one full take. As a reference for one-shot cinema, Wellesley and cinematographer Charles Robertson, theatre junior, studied Alexander Sokurov's 2002 drama film, "Russian Ark."

Robertson expressed excitement at the opportunity to work on a one-shot

project, while also acknowledging the difficulty and preparation accompanying it.

"It's going to be a learning experience. That's for sure," Robertson said. "We're going to have to rehearse constantly to make the principal plot go down smoothly."

Wellesley and Robertson met in Poyser's screenwriting class the previous spring, where Robertson found an admiration for Wellesley's work. Their shared tastes in film, along with familiarity of each other's work, made Robertson Wellesley's first and only choice as director of cinematography for "Love is Blindness."

When it came time to finding just the right people to play the film's characters, Wellesley looked no further than Texas State's Department of Theatre and Dance.

Actress Alexandra Taylor, theatre freshman, was not at all reluctant to accept when Wellesley offered her the

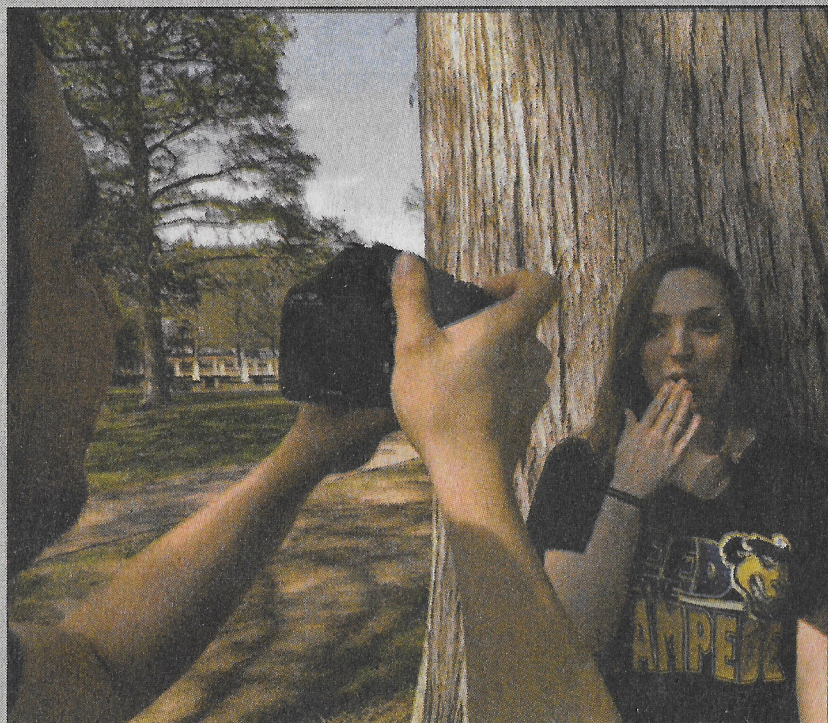
part of Emma. Having spent all of her acting career in theatre, Taylor saw the opportunity to be involved with a film as a steppingstone in the business.

Her immediate attachment to the story also provided the incentive to say yes, as the emotional intensity, while within her reach, would be demanding.

"It's great that (Wellesley's) giving me a challenge," Taylor said.

Taylor, as well as the rest of the cast and crew, is looking forward to the film's production because the chance to partake in an ambitious collaboration with a group of friends will only give the film's story more heart.

The cast and crew of "Love is Blindness" are currently raising money to support the film and future festival admissions through Kickstarter. Principal photography will begin around the second week of May, with postproduction taking place over the majority of the summer.



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Photo courtesy of Shane Wellesley

Charles Robertson, theatre junior, records Alexandra Taylor, theatre freshman, for the short film "Love is Blindness."