

### **How the Foundation helped us as emerging artists:**

The first time the Skye's Foundation helped Gin & Tonic Films was awarding us with a production grant for Houston's 48HR Film Project 2015. It was the first monetary award we've ever received based on an evaluation of the body of our work. I can't quantify the immense boost of morale, and confidence it gave two women trying to tell stories in a field still so dominated by men.

Up until that point, all the money we've ever spent to make our films came from either Alex, me, crew members, sometimes even cast members, people related to us, or people related to people working in the film. The Skye's Foundation was different in that they are completely independent of us.

After the 2015 48HR, Gin & Tonic Films next project was a short-film entitled 4 or More. The short is a dramatic dark comedy about Robert, a middle-aged man suffering through a midlife crisis. Instead of buying a convertible or skydiving, he decides to give up his boring, lifelong career in marketing and become a hitman. Robert's optimistic wife, Helen, and her snarky brother, Tom, are caught up in the mix when Robert kidnaps his first mark - a charismatic artist named Dave, and brings him to their home on Helen's designated "family night". To pass the time before Dave's demise, the family forces him to be the fourth player in their game of Cards Against Humanity. We were exploring a few themes in this short. Chief among them, how one needs to change themselves in order to change the situation they are in. Another theme is how games can bring people together and allow them to learn more about each other.

On top of the story we wanted to tell with the film, we also wanted to pay the cast and crew for their services. Alex and I feel strongly that many great artists from Houston don't stay in Houston because there isn't enough paid work to sustain them. And we were not any different. We did not pay those who worked with us up until that point, so we set out to change that with 4 or More. We made a budget. However modest it was, we stuck to it, we raised the funds with the help from the Foundation. We were able to pay everyone and everything out of money raised to make the film. Of course, Alex and I still paid for incidentals here and there but our number one priority at the time was to take care of our cast & crew and deliver a completed short film.

So for me, personally, the grants from Skye's Foundation worked in two very important distinct levels. First was the functional level, money was used in exchange for products and services we needed for the film. But the second, and most important one is that it gave us the belief that what we create, that our professional growth adds value to our society to the point that Skye's Foundation saw enough value to invest in us.

For the investment Skye's Foundation made on us, we are eternally grateful.

Gin Yu  
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