

the FINAL CUT

Senior creates award-winning screenplay
shown at film festivals across the country

by Morgan Saucier

One line of dialogue was all it took.

One line of dialogue, and senior Gretchen Lynch was up at 3 in the morning writing the screenplay for *Evelyn Parker*, a short film that would impact her film career monumentally.

"I woke up and it kept replaying in my head over and over again, so I got up and wrote it down," Lynch said.

After finalizing her screenplay, it was up to Lynch to start pre-production. She began by asking people to be on her film crew, hoping that they would say yes.

"I could not have made the film without Bryn Poth and Ava Palmo," Lynch said.

From there, Lynch and Poth spent time scouting locations and contacting people like the Eanes Elementary School principal and the dean of the College of Natural Sciences at the University of Texas. Then they began casting lead roles.

"Austin has such a great acting community, and I really wanted to utilize it for this film," Lynch said, "especially when looking for child actors."

Disney actually looks to Texas to first cast their kid roles, so for Lynch, the talent pool was endless.

"We had around 40 kids submit for the lead role and supporting characters. From there, we asked 11 kids for taped auditions, then we brought three in for screen testing," Lynch said. "That's how we found Gracie and Sicily."

Lynch's film was about a 9-year-old girl who planned to be the next big icon in the fashion industry. Her life was turned upside down when she realized that fashion involved

a lot more than she expected. *Evelyn Parker* was submitted to several film festivals around the country and premiered at the Urban Media Makers Festival in Atlanta, Ga., in the fall. *Evelyn Parker* also showed at the Women's Independent Film Festival in Los Angeles, where it won for best film, best director, best screenplay and best actor in the student division.

"Seeing my film play was incredible. L.A. was awesome because you are walking down the Third Street promenade, and you walk into the theater and filmmakers three times my age were congratulating me," Lynch said. "My film also played at Paramount in Austin on Feb. 18. To see my film play on the same screen where the film that made me want to direct was unreal. It was like it all came full circle."

In total, filming took about three days in April 2014. Then, it was time for Lynch to edit.

"Editing was the worst because my computer crashed and I lost the whole first edit," Lynch said.

The cut was finally finished in June after junior Patrick Byrd composed the original music to accompany her short film.

"It turned out lovely," Lynch said.

Overall, Lynch said filming *Evelyn Parker* had made a significant impact on her life in terms of her success in the film industry in the future.

"This film has opened so many doors for me going forward in my career," Lynch said. "For a production company to trust me benefits me in my credentials, especially because I am so young."