

“ALL THINGS CHICKEN”

DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT OF JULIUS GALACKI

Many years ago I had my heart broken very severely. It was the longest romantic relationship of my life. The aftermath was a rather deep depression which was followed by a more low level, functioning depression that lasted many years. This heart break also changed the course of my life in more, perhaps, positive ways too.

Partially, it's the reason why I left the east coast and ended up in Los Angeles, where a playwright may have many more opportunities to get work performed, but concurrently theatre is far, far less important here than it is in New York City.

As part of my adjustment to being an Angelino, I treated my photography far more seriously than I had ever before. Meanwhile, I also dived into screenwriting with greater commitment, and started thinking about cinema - which I had always taken seriously - in even deeper, more complex ways.

Since I have often directed my own plays, it now seems inevitable that all of these strands would culminate in my second film that is an adaptation of one of my plays that is certainly fictionalized but also filled with much literal truth - that I wrote as part of the heal process about that aforementioned heart break.

One of the plays that influenced my writing was Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot". So, when I wrote the play "All Things Chicken" and then the screen adaptation, I wanted to use Godot's circular structure and vaudevillian routines as an inherent way to show two people, for different reasons, who aren't moving forward in their lives. However, the relationship between these two unlikely friends countered that circular structure by doing two things - it literally kept the more depressed person alive and also provided a subtle linear progression that by the end, there was an open window that these two boy-men just might climb through and escape their self-imposed prisons.

In my story, hope is far more palpable than in Godot because nature is not a wasteland as it is in Godot, but rather a place of renewal. The comet in Chicken, because I'm not literally religious, becomes the stand-in for God.

On a pragmatic note, my breakthrough in post production happened when I finally figured how to let the audience absorb the importance / humor of the individual scenes. When two people seem to be yapping on so nonsensically, how does an audience member realize there is something both funny and important behind the sparring?

I realized that during the play, there were blackouts and set changes that inadvertently created rest periods for the audience (that always threatened to become overly long rest points!). In the edit, I discovered the hard cut between scenes often wasn't working. The movie just wasn't funny enough. So, instead, I used wipes, black

screens, transitional cutaways, and especially the freeze frames / zoom in's between scenes to create these rest points for the audience in order to absorb what needed to be absorbed. I kept the hard cuts only where needed for particular comic timing reasons.

So my first goal of course is to tell the story that I spent 15 years writing (1st draft of the play was in 1997 so not contiguously or continuously, of course), but secondly to piece together as “real” and as affecting a performance from these two guys as possible.