



Name in English: Justin Lin
Name in Chinese: 林詣彬
Name in Pinyin:
Gender: Male
Birth Year: 1971
Birth Place: Taipei, Taiwan
Current location: Orange County, California
Philanthropy: Yes

Film Director and Producer

Profession(s): Film Director, Writer, Producer

Education: Master of Fine Arts, Film Directing, University of California Los Angeles Film School

Awards: 2002, Visionary Award, San Diego Asian Film Festival; 100 Most Inspiring Asian Americans of All Time" Goldsea Asian American Daily

Contribution (s): Justin Lin first came to prominence with his film, *Better Luck Tomorrow* in 2002. The film followed a group of overachieving Chinese American high school students who became gangsters, making a direct challenge to the Model Minority Myth. The film caused some criticism from opponents that thought the film created a negative image of Asian Americans but Lin responded that the film did its job in both providing a space for discussion of the Model Minority Myth as well as creating more diversity in the range of characters that Asian American actors can play. Memorably the prominent film critic, Roger Ebert, offered a spirited defense of the film at its premier at the Sundance Film Festival saying that Asian Americans should be entitled to portray themselves in any way they pleased. Not only did the film receive a lot of acclaim from audiences and critics alike, but also caught the attention of MTV Films, which bought distribution rights. Lin's work on *Better Luck Tomorrow* helped him become a talent to be watched and helped propel to stardom such actors as Roger Fan, Sung Kang, Perry Shen, John Cho, Karin Ann Cheung, and Jason Tobin. Hollywood took an especially close look given the significant profits the film made even with a low budget, unknown actors, and limited theater distribution.

After *Better Luck Tomorrow*, Lin was granted all the support of the Hollywood movie studio machinery, working on *Annopolis* (2006), *The Fast and the Furious 2* (2006), *Finishing the Game* (2007), *La Revolucion de Lgudala* (2007), and *The Fast and the Furious 4* (2009.) He's also worked on two episodes of the comedy series, *Community*.

Justin Lin was interviewed in the 2006 documentary *Slanted Screen*, produced and directed by Jeff Adachi. *Slanted Screen* is about the portrayal of Asians and Asian American men in film. Lin discussed the importance of *Better Luck Tomorrow* and how it challenged the weak image of the Asian American male in Hollywood's eyes.

Philanthropy: During the time that Lin was working on the film, he was production coordinator of the Media Arts Center at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. He was also worked closely with youth, teaching them sports and media.