

Visionary Filmmaker Imole Ladipo Unveils Psychological Thriller 8:38 With Award-Winning Creative Team and AAPI Cast

Chilling new short film from Lumiere Films and Imole Ladipo blends memory, fear, and identity into eight minutes of high-tension suspense.

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Lumiere Films has announced the upcoming release of [8:38](#), the latest psychological thriller from filmmaker [Imole Ladipo](#), whose recent short [What Happens Now?](#) starring Oscar nominee Eric Roberts and Rotimi Paul was selected for the Oscar-qualifying Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival and the

Micheaux Film Festival in 2025. Supported by executive producer Michelle A. Daniel, cinematographer Angelia Sciulli, and sound designer Garrard Whatley, 8:38 unites a standout ensemble of Asian American actors and a festival-caliber creative team for a gripping real-time thriller positioned for a competitive festival run.

“

The fear in her face, the confusion, the silence. Those moments never left me.”

*Mind-Bending Filmmaker
Imole Ladipo*



Malia Munley stars in 8:38 psychological short thriller by Imole Ladipo

Unfolding over eight minutes, 8:38 follows May Wang, who wakes in a shadowy, unfamiliar house with no memory of how she arrived. Her only lifeline is an emergency phone call to Daniel, a calm yet increasingly unsettling voice on the other end. As whispers intensify, shadows close in, and a menacing figure advances, May races to reconstruct fragments of her identity. What begins as an urgent escape

becomes a confrontation with a deeper truth tied to family, grief, and the mind's darkest protections.

The film stars Malia Munley as May Wang, a Yale University graduate and Sudler nominee whose

screen work includes WADE and BICYCLE and acclaimed stage roles in Natasha, Pierre and The Great Comet of 1812, Gypsy, and Pride and Prejudice. She is joined by Zhan Wang, a prolific Chinese American actor with more than 40 short films, international festival recognition, and collaborations with directors such as Lulu Wang, Billy Bob Thornton, Nathan Fielder, and Park Chan Wook, along with television credits including The Brothers Sun, Expats, The Sympathizer, and The Rehearsal. The ensemble also features Jack Wang, known for Lonely Blue Night and the Tribeca-selected Deep into the Forest, and Julia May, whose recent roles include Interior Chinatown and Max's The Sympathizer opposite Robert Downey Jr.

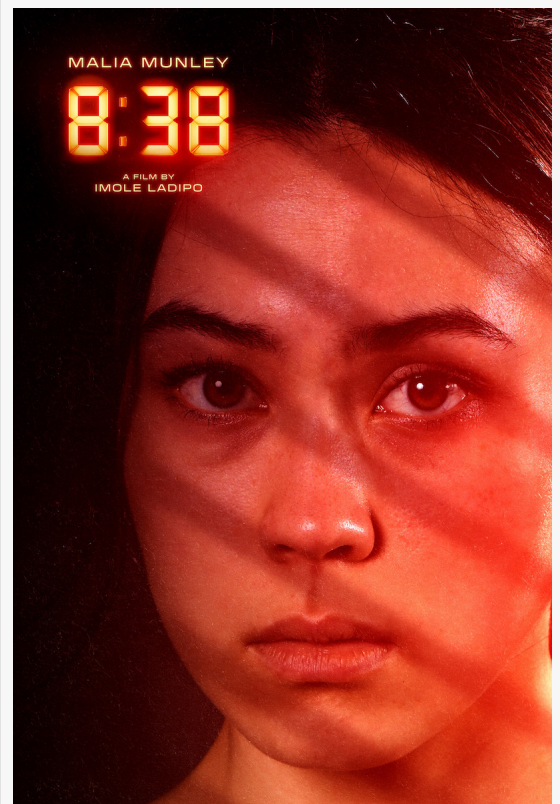
Behind the scenes, 8:38 is crafted by a skilled creative team. Cinematographer Angelia Sciulli, an AFI graduate and Project Involve Fellow, is a member of ICG Local 600 with credits including Netflix's Brand New Cherry Flavor, the indie feature All That We Love, and the acclaimed short Cherry Lemonade. Sound designer Garrard Whatley, an award-winning supervising sound editor and re-recording mixer, has created soundscapes for Discovery ID, Lifetime, HBO, and films such as Under the Lights with Lake Bell and Nick Offerman, Riddle of Fire which screened at Cannes, and The Wolf of Snow Hollow. Their combined expertise brings heightened tension, clarity, and atmosphere to the film.

8:38 is executive produced by Michelle A. Daniel, an award-winning executive producer, screenwriter, and creator of ShowRunHer. Daniel previously served as Director of Video at TV One's iOne Digital, collaborating with AT&T, Ford, and Wells Fargo. She recently co-executive produced Announcements, directed by D'Angelo D'Lo Louis, known for Creed III and Black Panther: Wakanda Forever. She also serves as Creative Development Advisor for The Heart of the Dream, a documentary examining the human impact of proposed 2025 mass deportation policies, and leads U.S. development for BlackBrain Pictures in South Africa.

Known for bold, emotionally charged, and visually precise storytelling, Imole Ladipo is rapidly emerging as



Director Imole Ladipo, the visionary behind the new short film 8:38.



Key art for 8:38, the new psychological thriller from filmmaker Imole Ladipo.

one of the most compelling new voices in independent cinema. Her latest short film, 8:38, is drawn from deeply personal experiences. While it functions as a psychological thriller, for Imole it is something far more intimate, shaped by the experience of watching her grandmother slowly lose her memory. "One day, she looked me in the eye and did not know who I was," Imole recalls. "The fear in her face, the confusion, the silence. Those moments never left me."

Ladipo's film What Happens Now? earned a Gold Remi Award at WorldFest Houston, a Telly Award in 2025, and was a Finalist in the Stage32 x HollyShorts Short Film Contest. It screened at the Oscar-qualifying Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival and the Africa International Film Festival. Her upcoming thriller 8:38 was named a 2025 HollyShorts Quarterfinalist and is supported by the Film Independent Fiscal Sponsorship Program. Through each film, Imole blends human vulnerability with cinematic tension, creating stories that linger long after the screen fades.

Learn more about the film at www.838film.com.

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