

The Insider: Next stop, Cannes Film Festival

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Amanda Pennington's palms are sweaty, but not because she's worried about her final grades at the Tulane School of Continuing Studies. Pennington is in France preparing to show her first film, [Lillian](#), at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival May 15-26.



In the film *Lillian* by Tulane student Amanda Pennington, Lillian, played by Tony nominee Kathleen Chalfant, receives news that causes her to remember the summer of 1918 where she meets and falls in love with Frances, played by Toni Robison-May, right, a French painter of mixed descent. Pennington, left, plays "young Lillian" in the film. (Photo from Amanda Pennington)

After spending the weeks prior to her departure making sure she had ample press kits, business cards and the appropriate attire, [Pennington](#) says she's prepared and grateful to have been selected for the festival's [Short Film Corner](#).

"I was in the middle of midterms when I learned that my film was selected," says Pennington, who received help from local sound mixer [Larry Blake](#) and [Aimee Toledano](#), a 1997 Tulane University graduate, on post-production editing. "When the film was accepted, I was so excited I squealed. It was really surreal."

Set in the 1940s, the dramatic short tells the story of a romance that grew from an innocent encounter in 1918 between two women. It was inspired by a poem titled "What Lips My Lips Have Kissed" by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

Although it seems Pennington was destined to direct films, her introduction to the craft was happenstance. She lived in New York for 14 years before moving to New Orleans in February 2012.

"I worked as an actress for most of my years in New York, but after a while I started helping people with their productions. One day someone said that what I was doing was producing and she gave me an associate producer credit on her film."

After seeing that it wasn't impossible to write, direct and produce her own work, she decided to give it a try. *Lillian*, which also was selected for the Cleveland International Film Festival and the deadCenter Film Festival in Oklahoma City, was the result of her "experiment."

After earning her bachelor's degree, Pennington plans to pursue a master of fine arts degree.

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