

LUKITA MAXWELL



SHELTER

PUBLIC RELATIONS

BYRDIE

The Next-Gen Issue

LUKITA
MAXWELL

There's a ratty cat stuffed animal that I still have from childhood, one of the few material tokens I've held onto. I don't remember where I got it, but it's most likely a Savers find or from the basement bin of toys at my paternal grandma's house. At 8 years old, I named this stuffed animal Alicia Markova. I had just watched a documentary on the Ballets Russes, my mama's weekly library DVD find for me, and I was just as enamored with the sound of Alicia's name as I was with her dancing. Ah-LEE-see-ah Mar-COVE-ah. A four-three. A good syllabic balance. I'm a three-two. Loo-KEE-tah MAK-swel.

My mama put me in ballet classes starting at the age of three when we lived in Indonesia. I had a nomadic childhood, but my mom always found a ballet studio for me. Bali at 5, running out of class barefoot, mossy lava rock under my feet until they were dangling off the back of a moped, my ride home. Massachusetts at 8, after class, watching other dancers slip on their perfect pink Uggs while I struggled to zip up my confusingly oversize parka. It had "room to grow into," or so I'd been told. Utah at 10, mama picking me up in grandma's old Cadillac DeVille with nori snacks and boiled eggs I would devour on the drive home.

"*Saint George, Utah*," is often the response I'll hear myself say when a stranger asks me where I'm from. Many of my days in that town were spent in a ballet studio with my teacher, Bené Arnold. Bené was in her late 70s. She was one of those electric humans whose energy was not bound by physical age or the conservative attitudes of the town.

We had the same affinities for elongating movements that bled into one, for defining the line the arm makes from the shoulder to the tip of the middle finger, and for the jumps that achieved the illusion of weightlessness, *ballon*.

Ballet is a sport of perfectionism. Perfected costumes, choreography, makeup, lines of the body, and breath. Good days are dictated by how many turns you do, while bad days are defined by shit as banal as your hair coming out of a bun. I was hard on myself. I took it seriously. I often compared myself to the girls featured in the 2011 documentary, *First Position*. I liked having a system of controllable variables. I liked feeling like I was good at something. There wasn't room for error, but I wasn't erring often. I was following ballet's structure and rules, and it was gratifying. I really wanted to be "the best." Before I had met Bené, my perception of "the best" was tethered to technical proficiency and how close you were keeping to the rules of the practice.

Bené introduced an element of artistry to my relationship with ballet. When to respect its rigidity of principle and when I could take the liberty of making movements *mine*. "Stay in *plié* until the last second of your *rond de jambe*," "change the music's accent to the 'up' instead of 'down' on your *sauté*," "hold, hold, hold the last breath of that *pirouette*." Through variations, I started to play with emotion in my movements, *The Sleeping Beauty's* Bluebird, joyous and bright; *Giselle's* Myrtha, ghostly and somber; and *Paquita*, sharp and eye-catching. I was storytelling. I loved it.

Recently, I found my journal from around that time, and much of my scribbled handwriting is a declaration of love for performing, and specifically performing with others. I loved watching a stage crew work their ropes and pulleys, older dancers stretching before a show, and hearing the orchestra tune their instruments. I wrote that I loved rehearsing for months, enjoying how smaller dance numbers culminated in one greater performance. Being in an ensemble of allied artists is something that's always brought me a jolt of energy. I get the feeling when seeing a visual deck for a film, when observing a camera crew set up a shot, and when I hear what music has been paired with a finished scene. A breath in a greater lung. It's comforting.

Early October 2013, Southern Utah University.

I'm standing at the head of a classroom facing 15 or so high schoolers and one adult. The adjudicator. I had just learned what "adjudicator" meant. They were all going to watch me perform a monologue from *Henry VI, Part III*. Queen Margaret. A grieving mother holding the body of her son in her arms, crying in anguish to the men who killed him: "O traitors! Murderers!" I was 11. I felt small in my thrifted cargo pants and sneakers, my style utilitarian, always. All the older kids in the room are costumed in red velvet Elizabethan collars, holding skulls, staffs, or fake swords. The adjudicator asks me what I'll be performing, and I hear myself answer. The air is dense around my ears, a fog. I realize I'm shaking. I hadn't felt this when I rehearsed the monologue with Miss Colleen, a mom from my homeschooling group.

She was why I was here in the first place, after noticing my literary intrigue about Shakespeare. A few weeks before, she asked if I'd want to "act" and perform a monologue at the Utah Shakespeare Festival. That sounded fun to me. The only Shakespeare I had ever seen was Emma Watson performing a monologue from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Puck's "*I am that merry wanderer of the night*") in the 2007 film *Ballet Shoes*. I loved that movie so much. When Miss Colleen asked me what I wanted to perform, I told her I wanted to do Puck. She told me I needed something juicier. So here I was, performing Queen Margaret in cargo pants.

The shaking is most apparent in my hands. I bind them together behind my back and let my fingers pick at themselves. The adjudicator finishes writing something. He looks up and says, shortly, "Go ahead." Miss Colleen told me to take my time before I began speaking. To visualize where I am, who I'm speaking to, and what I want. My hands unclasp, I look down to my imaginary son, and as I say, "*Oh Ned, sweet Ned*," the fog

around my ears becomes a sort of protection. I know the words, and I'm performing them well. Well enough to win the category I was performing in. I'd never won first place for anything before.

This fog has followed me every time I perform. On set, if I'm prepared and have run my lines, the fog is a blanket. I find that its density is correlated with the weight of a scene. It becomes more opaque the heavier the material. It's only penetrable if I'm unsure of a line or lost on the meaning of a scene. Also, when my scene partner is funny. Sometimes, then, I lose sight of my character. At times, I despise the fog, and at other times, I'm attuned to it. When we shot Season 1 of *Shrinking*, I remember Jason [Segel] telling me he feels the most comfortable between "action" and "cut." When the fog is on my side, that's also how I feel.

I have this recurring nightmare where I'm in the wings of a stage, rosinning my pointe shoes. I realize that I've completely forgotten my choreography. I step on stage and look out into the dark to see a full house. The music starts, I begin dancing, and it's all improvised movement, clearly aimless. Every so often, I glance at the audience, and it'll be emptier and emptier until there are only a few people left. I wake up uneasy and disappointed. There's another dream that takes place on a set. Often it's in Jimmy and Alice's kitchen [from the set of *Shrinking*] on the Warner Bros. lot. In the dream, I hear "action" called, and my mind goes totally blank. Jason will feed me a line, I ad-lib, and to my surprise, whatever I improvise works. I hear laughs from behind the monitor. They call "cut," say we're going for another take, and suddenly, all the dialogue comes back to me.

Being an actor has affirmed my need to embrace the unknowns, to listen, and to stay curious. So many magical, essentially spiritual, moments happen on set when something unscripted happens. There's a brief pit in your stomach, and the fog is most definitely not there, but somehow, it's the best take you've done. It's hard for me to let go. I'm a thinker, an overthinker much of the time. My therapist says I'm burdened with awareness. I'm told it's an empath's trait, an artist's trait.

As a kid, ballet was my first practice. Practice in the name of a sure, safe outcome. Now, I'm trying to use my energy for an artistic goal less tangible, and I think it's more of a practice in process. I'm trying to throw shit against the wall to see if it'll stick more often.

I'm trying to ruminate less on the unknowns and just make. A couple of years ago, I overheard someone say there's no one more insufferable than an artist not putting their art into the world. I don't want to be that artist.

Pi-er-rot /

pēə,rō/

noun - French

clown character in traditional pantomime, with a sad painted face, a loose costume, and a pointed hat. The archetype of artistic alienation, unrequited love, and the masked self.

When I first started acting, I was more drawn to dramatic characters, ones that felt vulnerable, or maybe, characters in growth. Worlds of comedy seem to have found me, specifically with *Generation* and *Shrinking*. I've tried to play my characters, Delilah and Alice, from places of vulnerability and honesty. I don't know how to approach a scene "being funny." I just try to understand the present circumstances through my character's eyes and be guided by their intuition. I don't know which is more vulnerable, tragedy or comedy. I think the mask of comedy is the same as the mask of tragedy. I don't know if it's better to wear the mask or to strive to take it off.

Shrinking is defined as a dramedy. It's a balancing act of an entire spectrum of emotion and being. Playing Alice has been my front-row seat to countless examples of that tightrope walk. Season 1, witnessing Harrison captivate not only the cast and crew but also the camera. He has a sustained and powerful relationship with the camera. Season 2, sitting across from Jason in the set kitchen, and we're shooting a scene for the finale. He's apologizing to me for failing as a father. He says the lines, take after take, and somehow, it's different every time. He's brilliant at catching the magical moments, letting them lead him to fresh thoughts, and letting those thoughts infuse his performance. Season 3, hiding on the kitchen staircase, watching Gaby [played by Jessica Williams] plead to Louis [played by Brett Goldstein] to move on. She's brave, funny, and undeniably great. When I think of my times on the set of *Shrinking*, there's an ever-calcifying gratitude in my body that I feel will continue growing with time.

After *Generation*, my post-wrap ritual has been bleaching my eyebrows. It's something small that makes me feel in control of my appearance, especially after spending weeks or months playing a character. After camera wraps and I've said goodbye, I'll get in my car and stop at the beauty store to pick up bleach and developer. The next morning, I'll wake up with raw skin around my brows and an itch to find the next *thing*. Often, I want the next *thing* to be a personal photo project, to get cast in an indie film, or to write. Usually, the next *thing* is press. Along with most of my actor comrades, I find press an attempt to wear an ill-fitting mask. It doesn't feel like a mask fit to you or your character, but maybe one that's an amalgam of both? I'm unsure whether people have wanted to see me as *me* or as my character. Speaking through this mask, how do you concisely define the energy of an entire shoot? How to be smart, likeable, and interesting and do it all rapid fire and purportedly off the top of your head (the latter is hard; I'm an overthinker, remember?). In the past, my answers have felt either laconic or uncomfortably earnest. An insecure, detrimental thought of the past has been that maybe being "myself" is not what's best to promote a project.

After we wrapped Season 2 of *Shrinking*, I left for London for the summer. I intended to study at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA), to grieve a breakup, and to find a sense of self again. Earlier that year, I had applied to RADA's Shakespeare acting program in a reaching attempt to reconnect with my childhood affinity. I wanted to connect with a true sense of *play* without perception anxiety. In London, I was alone for the first time in a long time. There were many hours spent unsure of how they should be spent. I walked a lot, wrote a lot, and read a lot of Shakespeare. It was a simple and nourishing time for my spirit. Coming home felt like a gentle revelation. I was more secure in my opinions and tastes. I could finally answer questions about myself without bothering to assuage the inquirer. I know this has to do with getting older, but revisiting the interests of my younger self was a catalyst.

My favorite word when I was 12 was "obsequious" for no other reason than the way it sounded. It rang perfectly in my head. I named my goldfish Obsidian because I wanted to hear some of those aural patterns more often. I vaguely knew what the word meant but paid it no attention.

Ob·se·qui·ous /əb'

sēkwēəs/

adjective

Obedient or attentive to an excessive degree.

I don't want to be obsequious. I don't want to be a people-pleaser. I don't need to say a lot, but what I will say will be with intention. I'll take my time. I'm accepting the process more. I'm more comfortable saying "I don't know." I'm sure the clown in me will roll her eyes at the ballerina, and the actor will stand by in observation. They're all curious entities chasing the next *thing*, maybe a photo project, maybe an indie film, and maybe to write. I'm more comfortable with wearing a mask, even an ill-fitting one, and with taking it off. I'm sure I'm wearing one now, as I write this piece. Whatever mask, my fidelity to honesty won't change.

BYRDIE

The Next-Gen Issue



LUKITA
MAXWELL

The Shrinking star gets into character

BYRDIE

The Next-Gen Issue



LUKITA
MAXWELL

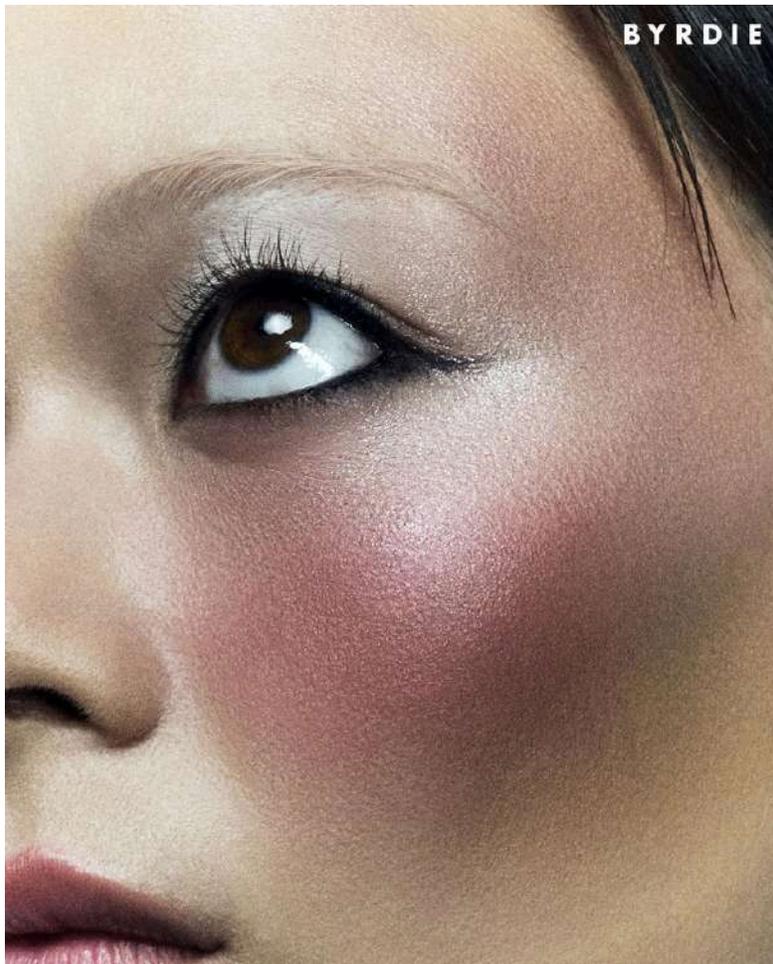
The Shrinking star gets into character

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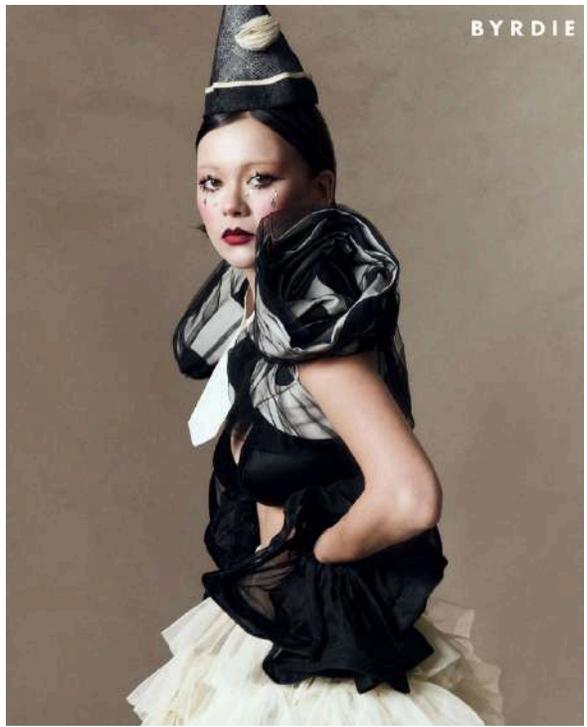


BYRDIE



BYRDIE





VOGUE

The Small, Simple Pleasures of *Shrinking* Star Lukita Maxwell

BY P. CLAIRE DODSON

January 28, 2026



the front and back
doors of the house are
open
keys
with
the smell of wood polish.
essentially, welcoming the
scents of yew, pine and
sweet, sweet oranges.





★ ★ ★ ★
CELEBRATION OF
AAPI
CINEMA & TELEVISION
CRITICS CHOICE
ASSOCIATION

RISING STAR AWARD

LUKITA MAXWELL

SHRINKING
APPLE TV



CULTURE

YOUR FASHION, MUSIC, ART & BOOKS EDITED BY HARRIET SIM

WATCH
Season two
of *Shrinking* is
streaming now
on Apple TV+.

Lukita Maxwell

HAVING A MOMENT

How the 25-year-old actor's home town is still the hero of her story

Your relationship with your home town can be a complicated one. Often, it's a haunting reminder of the person you once were, or a portal into a parallel life. But for Lukita Maxwell, her home town of St. George, Utah, turned out to be the unlikely hero in her origin story.

"I was a big bookworm, and when a theatre teacher saw I was reading Shakespeare she invited me to read a monologue in the Utah Shakespeare Festival," recalls Maxwell, who moved to the United States from Indonesia when she was 10. "I did well enough in the competition to have my mom and dad believe that I could act and [they] set up a meeting with a friend in Hollywood. So, really, I owe it all to Utah."

After landing her big break in HBO's *Genera+ion* when she was 17, Maxwell quickly made the leap from the coming-of-age drama

to a starring role alongside Jason Segel and Harrison Ford in the Apple TV+ comedy *Shrinking*.

"I was so excited to join the cast," says Maxwell. "Jason was always one of my favourite comedians because he is able to find the humanity and darkness in comedy. I was so stoked to learn from legends who have been doing and practising their craft for years."

With a fresh season of *Shrinking*, the buzzy film *Afraid* and the short *Mānoa Valley* all released this year, what's next for the in-demand actor? She hopes to return to her roots.

"I would love to do Shakespeare on stage or on film. My dream would be to play Richard II," she says. "There's an inherent femininity with him and the text follows the rhythm and the music of the iambic pentameter. I would really love to have the opportunity to speak those words on a stage."

POLYESTER

*Lukita Maxwell on Shrinking Series Two,
Nuanced Mental Health Representation, and
Returning to Herself*

Words: [Isabella Greenwood](#) | Photographer: [Yasmine Diba](#) | Stylist: [Valeria Semushina](#) | Glam: [Ciara Maccaro](#) | Video: [Steph Macdonald](#)







marie claire

Lukita Maxwell Is the Emotional Anchor of 'Shrinking' Season 2

The rising star discusses playing grieving teenager Alice on the Apple TV+ dramedy and acting alongside Brett Goldstein and Jason Segel.

By [Quinci LeGardye](#)



NYLON

CULTURE

LUKITA MAXWELL TAKES US ON HER MORNING SURF ROUTINE



Hanging ten and finding balance with the star of
Shrinking.

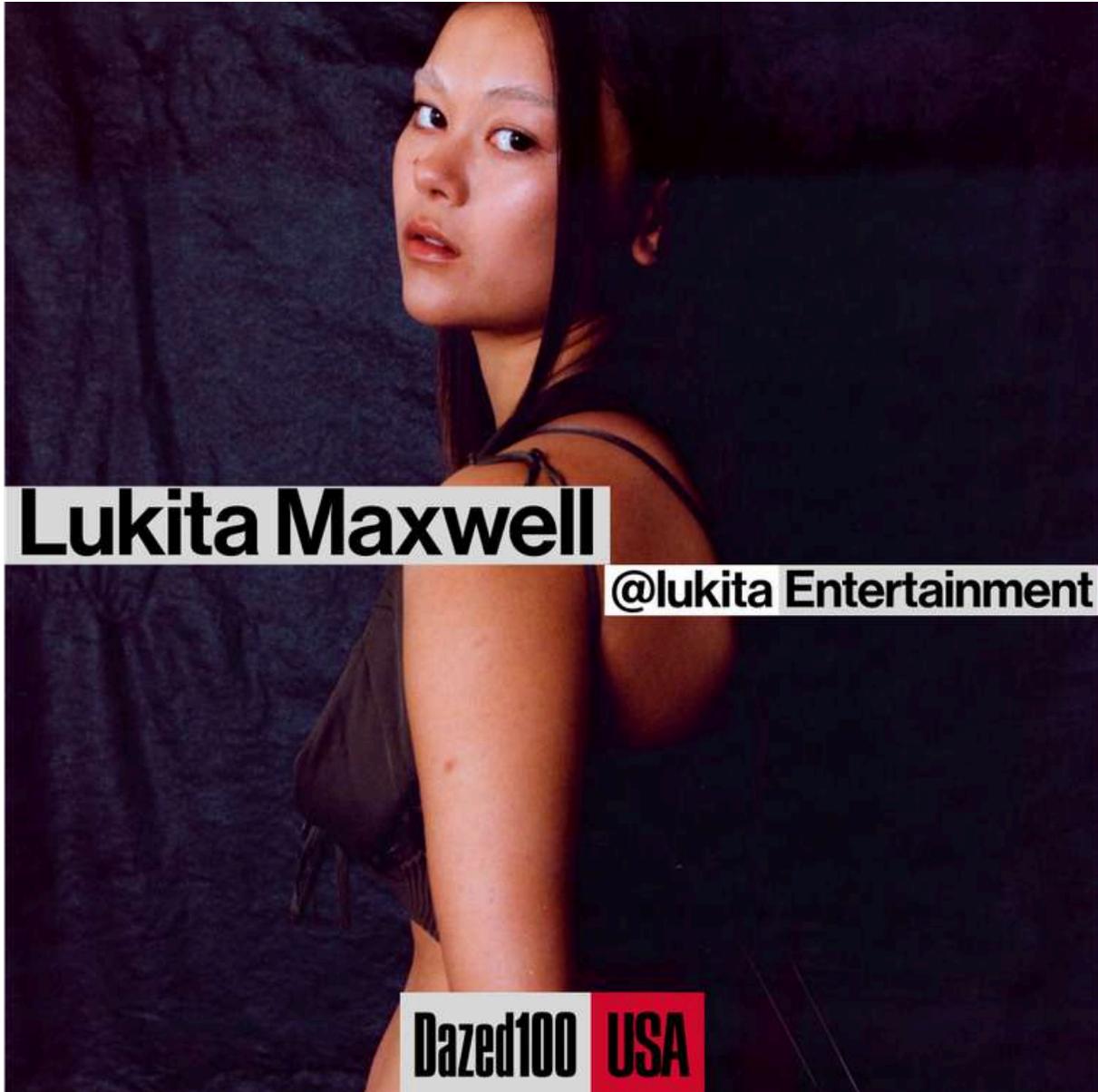


by SOPHIA JUNE

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DAZED



Lukita Maxwell

Lukita Maxwell is a 22-year-old actor born in Jakarta, Indonesia. She began her career on stage in the Tony Award-winning Utah Shakespeare Festival, where they won their annual competition performing a monologue from the classic play *Henry VI*. Now, you can watch Maxwell alongside Jason Segel, Harrison Ford, Jessica Williams, Luke Tennie, and Christa Miller in Apple TV+'s hit comedy series *Shrinking*, written and produced by Jason Segel and *Ted Lasso*'s Bill Lawrence and Brett Goldstein. Maxwell's previous credits include a regular role in the series *Genera+ion* and a role in the film *The Young Wife*, directed by Tayarisha Poe. They'll star in Jared Isaac's upcoming independent coming-of-age love story, *An Autumn Summer*, opposite Mark McKenna.

**Kenzo FW 2026 Campaign
Dinner in Paris**



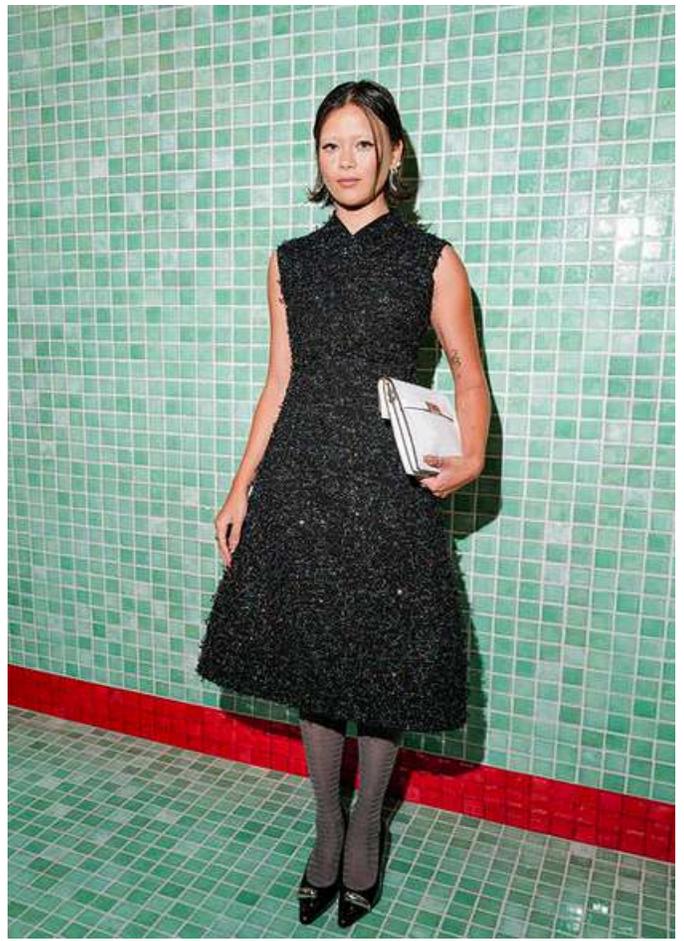
**Thom Browne SS26
PFW Show**

Tory Burch SS25 NYFW Show



2024 CFDA Awards

(guest of Emerging Designer of the Year nominee
Connor McKnight)



Miu Miu Vinyl Club 2025 NYFW Party

THE WRAP.

'Shrinking' Star Lukita Maxwell Details How a Lightning Strike Energized That 'Very Heavy' Screaming Scene With Brett Goldstein

The actress also tells TheWrap why that kiss cliffhanger scene between Alice and Connor was "just weird"

Raquel 'Rocky' Harris | October 23, 2024 @ 2:09 PM



Entertainment WEEKLY

'Shrinking' star Lukita Maxwell breaks down Alice's 'moment of true forgiveness'

"Grief and pain is easier to share," the actress notes of Alice's big decision.

By [Maureen Lee Lenker](#) | Published on November 13, 2024 02:07PM EST



SCREEN RANT



Shrinking Season 2 Interview: Lukita Maxwell Shares How Alice Will Branch Out More

By [Joe Deckelmeier](#) | Published Oct 21, 2024

VARIETY

Variety's 2023 Young Hollywood Impact Report:

Lukita Maxwell



Maxwell, 21, made her screen debut with HBO Max's teen drama "Generation," and has since starred on Apple TV+ series "Shrinking." Maxwell's goal in playing the grounded Alice, daughter to Jason Segel's grieving therapist on the show, was to balance out the comedy from her co-stars. Easier said than done, apparently. "I think the most challenging and enjoyable moments were when I completely failed to do either of the aforementioned, and broke character because my scene partners were so damn funny. Try watching Jason Segel, Jessica Williams and Harrison Ford improv and not laugh. It's simply not possible." Up next for Maxwell is the Blumhouse horror film "They Listen."

About Town

People, Places

NEXT BIG THING

Lukita Maxwell

The *Shrinking* star talks improv moments with Harrison Ford on the new Apple TV+ series. By Sydney Odman

Lukita Maxwell always wanted to pursue acting but didn't know it was possible without industry connections. "I thought that actors were just all nepotism babies," Maxwell says. "If you were born into acting, you were born into royalty, and I couldn't act because I wasn't born into a family of actors."

Now, she's starring alongside Jason Segel and Harrison Ford on the Apple TV+ comedy *Shrinking*, which premieres Jan. 27. Maxwell plays Alice, the strong, independent daughter to Segel's Jimmy, a grieving therapist who has lost his wife in an accident.

Created and co-written by Bill Lawrence, Brett Goldstein and Segel, *Shrinking* packs lots of industry power. "It was the most intimidating trifecta of comedy I had ever seen," the Indonesia-born actress, 21, remembers of her audition process. "I didn't think I was ever going to get the role. I didn't think that I had the chops to do that."

Following her performance on HBO Max's coming-of-age dramedy *Generation* — she had studied Shakespeare as a youngster before making her onscreen debut on ABC's *Speechless* in 2016 — Maxwell remembers the "nerve-racking" feeling of her first week on the set of *Shrinking*. "Comedy scares the shit out of me," the actress says with a laugh. "I was in the company of these incredibly seasoned, wonderful comedians. But after seeing them work and witnessing their craft,

"The character of Alice brings this groundedness and humanity to the show, a little bit. [She's] is kind of an anchor," says Maxwell of her role on *Shrinking*. She was photographed Jan. 9 at PMC Studios in Los Angeles.

Styling by Rebecca Ramsey
Proenza Schouler dress

it just kind of fueled me."

Maxwell's character shares several one-on-one scenes with Ford, who plays blunt but down-to-earth therapist Phil Rhodes. "He's a legend for a reason," Maxwell says, calling him the "most incredible scene partner." She says their scenes — where Alice meets Phil for therapy sessions — didn't require much preparation. "The energy was constantly oscillating between us," she says. "We would go into this improv that sometimes lasted five minutes after a take."

As the conversation surrounding mental health continues to become more normalized, *Shrinking* sees nearly all of its characters in therapy, to one degree or another. After spending her teen years being raised in the town of St. George, Utah, the Los Angeles-based actress says she's happy to see that times — onscreen and off — are changing.

"As a queer teenager growing up in a super repressive, highly



Lukita Maxwell as Delilah and Diego Josef as Cooper on the HBO Max series *Generation*.

religious town, literally going out and dressing the way that you want, expressing the way that you are, was an everyday fear of being attacked," Maxwell recalls. "I just went back for Christmas, and I saw a lot of very beautiful signs and beautiful shows of self-expression."

She adds, "After watching the [*Shrinking*] episodes, that's kind of when it really solidified that, 'Oh, this show is going to mean something to a lot of people' and hopefully spread the message that help is out there."

Inspired by Segel, Maxwell says she hopes to continue in comedy. "I want to be a comedian in the way that [Jason] is a comedian," she explains. "He finds the pain in comedy, but he also finds the light moments in dark times and is able to bounce back and forth." **Tina**

Photographed by **Nelwen Cifuentes**

THE
Hollywood
REPORTER



Wonderland.

Photography by CORRINA DAY
Styling by JUSTICE JACKSON

Words by ERICA RANA

**LUKITA
MAXWELL**

Run, don't walk – actor **Lukita Maxwell**
is sprinting after the scripts that matter.



46

Screens

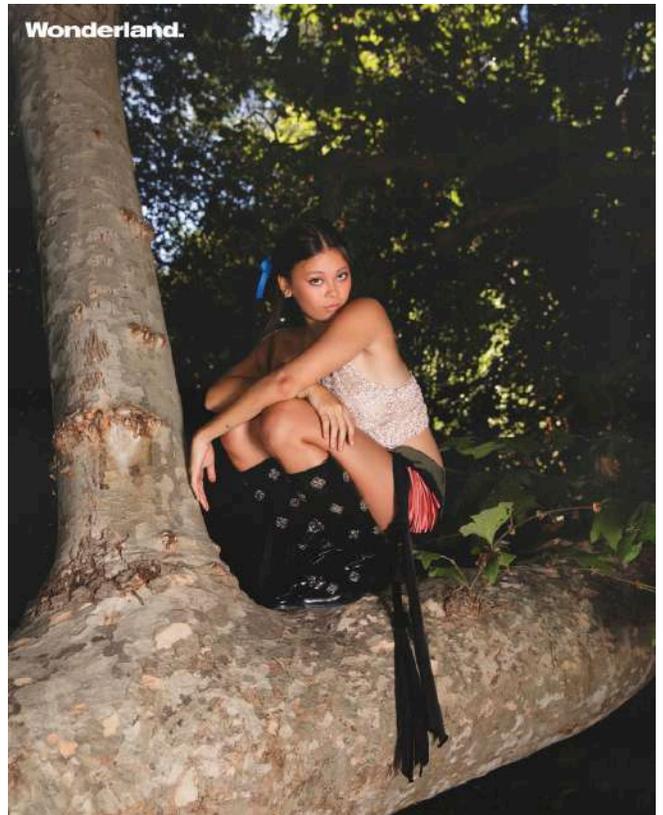


Lukita Maxwell

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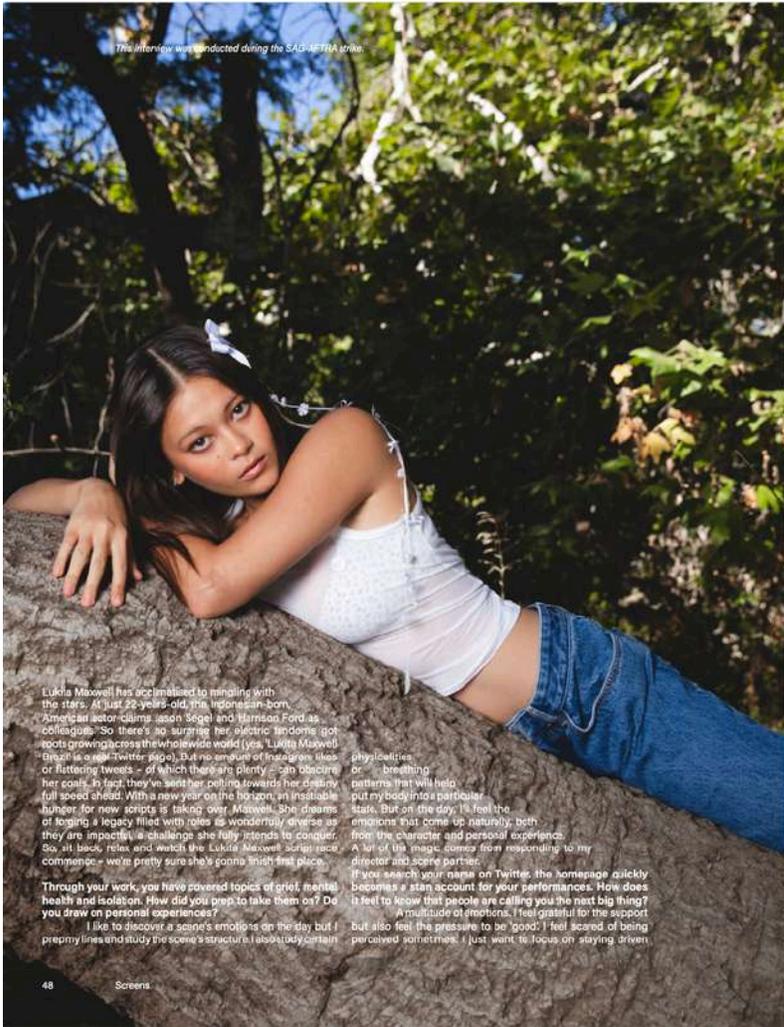


Wonderland.



Wonderland.

This interview was conducted during the SAG-AFTRA strike.



Lukita Maxwell has accomplished so much in her young career, mingling with the stars. At just 22 years old, the Indonesian-born, American actor—colleagues Jason Segel and Harrison Ford as colleagues—so there's no surprise her electric fandoms got roots growing across the worldwide world (yes, Lukita Maxwell is a fan of the actor's Twitter page). But no amount of Instagram likes or fluttering tweets — of which there are plenty — can obscure her goals. In fact, they've sent her pelting towards her destiny full speed ahead. With a new year on the horizon, an insatiable hunger for new scripts is taking over Maxwell. She dreams of forging a legacy filled with roles as wonderfully diverse as they are impossibly challenging she fully intends to conquer. So sit back, relax, and watch the Lukita Maxwell script race commence — we're pretty sure she's gonna finish first place.

Through your work, you have covered topics of grief, mental health and isolation. How did you prep to take them on? Do you draw on personal experiences?

I like to discover a scene's emotions on the day but I prep my lines and study the scene's structure. I absolutely cannot

physicities. Or — breathing patterns that will help put my body into a particular state. But on the day, I feel the emotions that come up naturally, both from the character and personal experience. A lot of the magic comes from responding to my director and scene partner. If you search your name on Twitter, the homepage quickly becomes a stan account for your performances. How does it feel to know that people are calling you the next big thing?

A multitude of emotions. I feel grateful for the support but also feel the pressure to be "good." I feel scared of being perceived sometimes. I just want to focus on staying driven



Hair by ASHLEY LYNN HALL, Make-up by ROB HUNSEY at AFRAME AGENCY, Photography assistant NURIT LAUSTDA

and working hard. I want the characters I play to be what people remember me for.

What's your process like when choosing roles? What kind of stories do you want to be a part of?

I'm sprinting after good scripts. I'm looking for diverse, fresh, raw, funny, painful and beautiful stories. Put me in anything with a good script, please. I'll be a rockstar, a princess, a clown. I want to look back at a protean career. Have there been any challenges you have had to overcome in your career?

Establishing an energy boundary between work and my personal life is one. I think I lost myself in the first few years of my acting career because I got so attached to the characters I was playing and inhabited their mind and their life without strengthening my own. I was a teenager which meant I was vulnerable and ecstatic and game for anything. I wish I had protected myself more. Now, I have a stronger brain and I'm always working to keep her in shape.

If you had to go shopping for someone and buy a record, a book and a film — what would they be and why?

This is one of the most difficult questions ever posed. Radiohead's *Kid A* because it's so ethereal and haunting that it hurts. My book would be *When We Cease to Understand the World* by Benjamin Labatut, which is an indescribable look into the psyches of geniuses. Absolute banger of a read. I just rewatched *City of God* by Fernando Meirelles and forget how much I loved the movie. It has an immaculate script, fucking stunning cinematography and beautiful performances from a huge ensemble cast. I love it.

If you could give a young Lukita one piece of advice, what would it be?

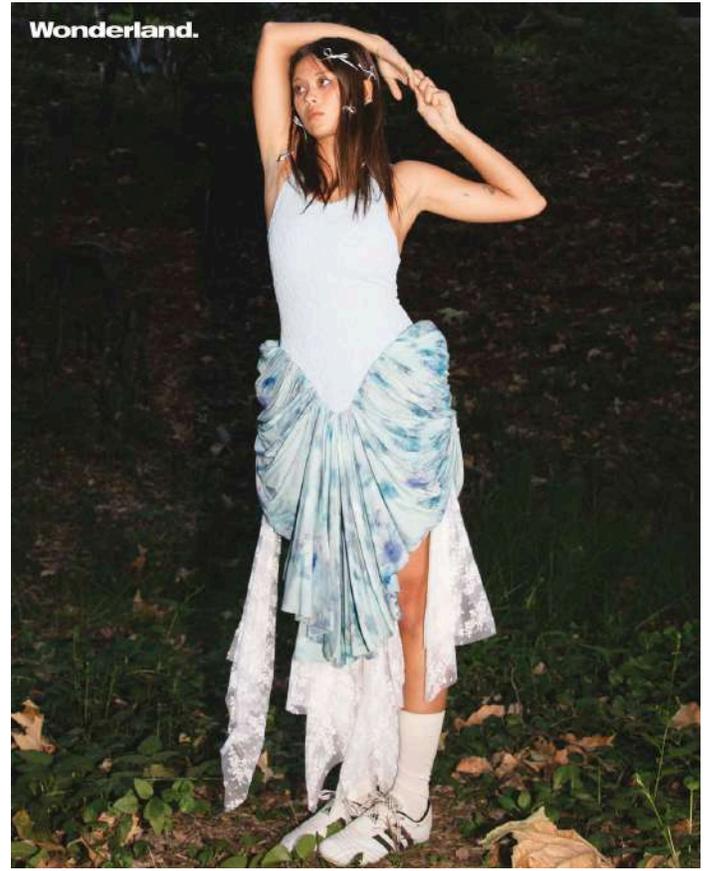
You don't have to be everything for everyone.

Finally, what do you want to represent as an actor? What does success mean to you?

Success looks like a diverse career. It means reaching a point where I'm able to use my resources to elevate others. To support other artists with clear voices and stories burning to be heard. Success is cultivating a warm energy in myself so I can share it. Success is the ability to support myself and those I love in any way.



Wonderland.



Wonderland.

Harper's BAZAAR

All the Best Celebrity Looks From
the New York Fashion Week
Spring/Summer 2024 Parties



Lukita x Commission

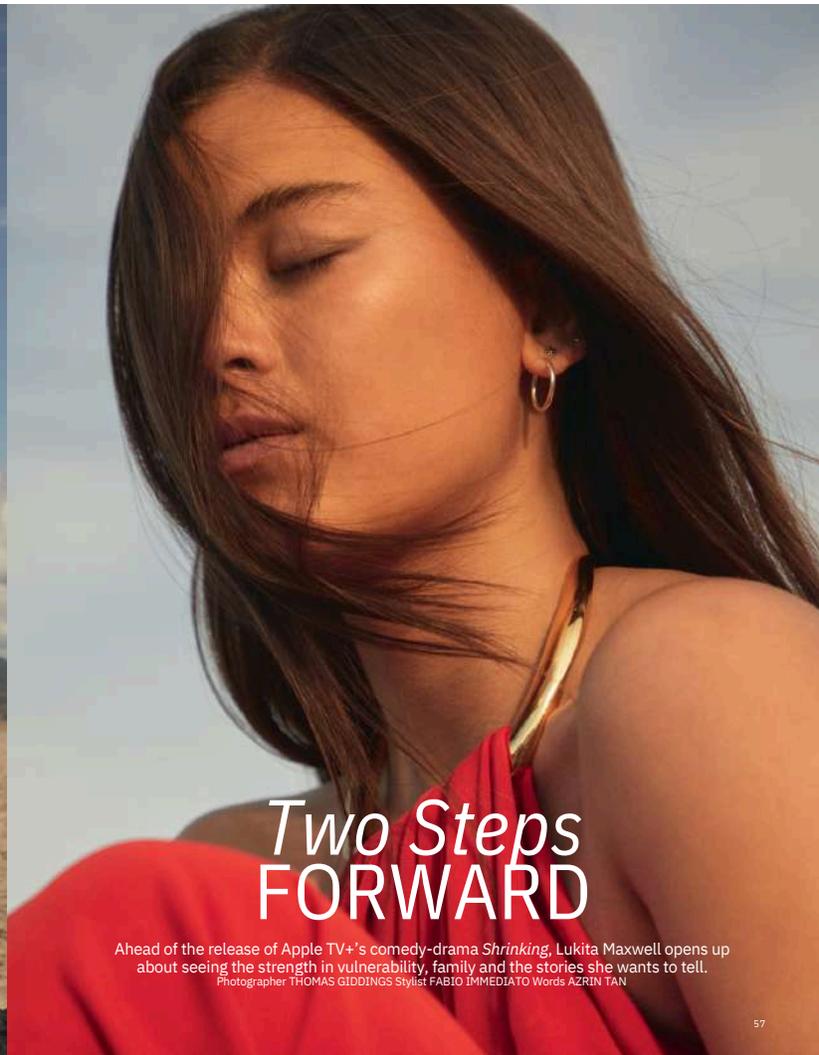
VOGUE

SINGAPORE

MissVOGUE

THIS PAGE
Dior dress and boots

FACING PAGE
Michael Kors
Collection dress,
earrings, Lukita's own



Two Steps FORWARD

Ahead of the release of Apple TV+'s comedy-drama *Shrinking*, Lukita Maxwell opens up about seeing the strength in vulnerability, family and the stories she wants to tell.

Photographer THOMAS GIDDINGS Stylist FABIO IMMEDIATO Words AZRIN TAN

MissVOGUE

Moschino jacket,
shorts and boots;
earrings, Lukita's own



Lukita Maxwell's first big screen break was HBO's *Generation* in 2021, where she played Delilah Faye, the resident Gen Z activist who seemed to have all her wits about her. Just over a year later, the fresh-faced actor is packed and on a flight to Los Angeles—travelling across the country to share screen credits with some of the industry's most seasoned actors, from Jason Segel to Harrison Ford. The role she's landed this time around is for Apple TV's latest comedy-drama *Shrinking*, backed by the creators of genre favourite *Ted Lasso*.

As she goes over the main two personas she's played thus far—Delilah for *Generation* and Alice for *Shrinking*—I see a running thread of what Maxwell shares with her on-screen characters: an overwhelming wealth of strength alongside a veiled softness. "I had a wonderful time playing these strong characters. They're so multifaceted and multidimensional and being able to not only portray the strength, but also the vulnerability and pain behind all their trials, is really gratifying."

In *Shrinking*, Maxwell plays Alice, the on-screen daughter to Segel's character, Jimmy—both grieving the loss of Alice's mother in their own ways. As Maxwell explains: "Alice can't really grieve because she has to take care of herself. There's nobody else to take care of her because her dad is absent, deflecting to substances and big experiences to cope with his grief." While Alice is trying to keep her life afloat, there's a noticeable tendency to retract from the usual teenage experiences she would have otherwise gone through without a thought. In a similar vein, Maxwell, who was homeschooled for the most part of her youth before she threw herself into acting work, always felt an incongruence with others her age. She tells me she relates to this side of Alice the most; recalling a sense of isolation borne by an inward pressure she felt growing up.

Yet through Alice's palpable longing for Jimmy, *Shrinking* also delves into another exposition—the bonds of family. When asked about her role models, the actress tells me that her mother is hers, before she sheepishly reveals that they speak over the phone every day. With her parents living in Utah, uncles and cousins in Singapore and close friends in Bali, Maxwell's world is a travelled one. What sits at her core, however, is an undying longing to connect with the people she loves—a message she hopes will resonate with viewers of *Shrinking* as well. "At the end of the day, no matter what generation you're from, the love of family is going to be so strong. No matter the anger, the pain and the disagreements, there will always be this powerful inclination to come back together and support and love each other."

While the plot of *Shrinking* might seem more universally relatable with its thematic functions of grief, she understandably has an undying spot of affection for her debut series *Generation*, which was lauded for its diverse, highly alternative cast. Maxwell, who was born in Jakarta, spent most of her time between Bali and Utah. Growing up biracial and surrounded by so many beautiful cultures, the world she lived in had been a continuous amalgamation of languages, race and cultures.

So much so that when she first moved to a small town in the US, it was a jarring experience. "Suddenly, it went from celebrating so many different cultures to being placed on the opposite side of the

room and everybody pointing at me and saying, 'You're different'. I had never paid attention to these differences before because it had always been something that was celebrated in my household." But Maxwell, led by the unwavering voice of her mother, made it a point to not let them inhibit her. "She told me to not let the outside world affect me, and that I was going to evolve and find that path on my own. Being in that sort of repressive environment was both a curse and a blessing; I wouldn't have been so sure of myself otherwise."

Given her isolating experiences growing up, it's clear that the actress's assured sense of self is something she came into at a much younger age compared to her peers. She recognises this herself; her adolescence had been a pressure cooker not many people might have had to go through, but if anything, it's telling of the average Asian-American woman's experience. "I felt a huge pressure to know who I was so clearly, especially during *Generation*. I felt the need to be eloquent about who I was and what I believed in because I identified as an Asian-American, queer woman. I was really hard on myself, thinking that identity had an end goal that could be physically presented."

It was this burning desire to present a fully formed version of herself that made her so right for a show that not only celebrated queerness, but normalised it. *Generation* is ripe with Gen Z and social media references, focusing on the teenage lives of an ensemble cast of characters—Delilah, Riley, Chester, Greta and Nathan to name a few—who mostly either identify as queer or queer-adjacent. And rather than double down on their individual struggles, the tone is light yet ripe with the intrepid, tenacious nature of the new generation.

Maxwell makes it apparent how monumental it was watching herself on screen for the first time. As someone who had been under-represented for most of her life, there were characters that she could identify with because they were not coded to specific stereotypes. "I related to Riley; that was who I felt like I most was in high school. That was the first time I was seeing a young, queer Asian-American woman being badass and making art and listening to good music and having the coolest friends. It was the first time that I saw somebody who looked like me but who was what *Generation* was. I cried and just didn't know how to react to that."

Maxwell speaks so passionately about the cause she wants to represent that it's easy to forget that below this fierce, resolute nature of hers lies a bright-eyed, young woman. There's a gentle, tentative nature that only occasionally slips through the Zoom screen, especially at the sight of her cat Roscoe, who made his welcome guest appearance at intervals between our conversation. Her voice softens when he's on her lap, but she doesn't forget to confidently remind me of the candour she so clearly wants to bring to her audiences—and ultimately her ever-evolving self.

She says: "I want to tell authentic, genuine stories about strong, multidimensional women who may go through a lot of pain but are also capable of coming out on the other end with strength, with power and even with flaws. I want to find the comedy in pain, the magic in flaws and the power in vulnerability in all the characters that I play. And as I get older, I want to be forgiving of myself changing." •

MissVOGUE

“I want to find the *comedy in pain*,
the *magic in flaws* and the *power in vulnerability*
in all the *characters* that I play.”

Givenchy dress;
earrings, Lukita's own

Hair: Lauren Palmer-Smith/
Forward Artists; make-up:
Samuel Paul/Forward Artists;
digital technician, Mevin
Viethen; production, James
Donoghue and Heather
Clark/Manifest Agency;
talent team, Shelter PR.



WHO WHAT WEAR

ENTERTAINMENT — FEB 10, 2023

Lukita Maxwell Is Firing on All Cylinders

by JESSICA BAKER



Lukita Maxwell can't stay stagnant for too long. Her burning desire to collaborate with others and make art simply won't allow for it. When she's not acting in shows like *Generation* and the new AppleTV+ dark comedy *Shrinking*, she can be found working on design projects for the Gen Z print magazine and arts collective [Sunstroke](#), honing her directorial skills behind the camera (you can follow her photography work at [@analog.diary](#)), or trying her hand at a new recipe for an upcoming dinner party. Listing off her passion projects, it's clear the 21-year-old is in a constant state of creation.

"If I keep surrounding myself with all of these different artistic outlets, I cannot get stuck in a rut," Maxwell tells me from her hotel in NYC. "I just need to keep myself firing all of the time, all of these different parts of my brain." Growing up a queer teen in a conservative Southern Utah town, Maxwell's creative pursuits weren't always celebrated. People questioned what she wanted to do in art, the way she dressed, her taste in music, etc., so she turned to her only connection to the outside world—the internet. Finding an online community of like-minded individuals blew her mind and made a career in acting, once just a pipe dream, feel actually achievable. "It's just the feeling of art being made and being a part of something—I love that," she says.

Maxwell made her on-screen debut in 2016 in the ABC series *Speechless* before landing the role of Delilah in the 2021 HBO Max coming-of-age drama *Generation*. The show was sadly canceled after one season, but it wasn't long before the actress nabbed her next role in the AppleTV+ comedy *Shrinking*. Starring Jason Segel and Harrison Ford, the show, which premiered its first three episodes on the streamer on January 27, centers on Jimmy (Segel), a grieving therapist who, after losing his wife in an accident, starts to take an unconventional approach with his clients, impacting both their lives and his own. Maxwell plays Alice, Jimmy's strong-willed teen daughter, who she describes as the show's emotional anchor.

"This show is really fun. ... When do we get to see the life of a fucked-up therapist?" Maxwell laughs. "It humanizes therapists, which humanizes therapy and makes it much more of an accessible conversation to have. And the show being brilliant at teetering the line between comedy and the darkness of it all really rounds out the story."



While stepping into the comedy genre was uncharted and intimidating territory for the actress, she felt at ease playing a character like Alice. “I am not too far removed from being an angsty teenager. I’m still young and coming out of that,” she says. When we first meet Alice, she comes off as independent and mature beyond her years, but slowly, the cracks of her hardened surface reveal a young woman who is still struggling with the loss of her mother and is desperate for her father’s attention and unwavering love. As a result, Alice has had to grow up quickly and be her own support system in life, something that was relatable to Maxwell. “I think that I personally have a hard time reaching out for help when I need it,” she reveals. “Even when I know I need it, I’m stubborn about it, and I am desperate to figure it out myself.”

She may be reluctant to ask for outside help, but Maxwell is not above taking cues from those around her. With *Shrinking*, she was afforded an invaluable opportunity to learn from a fantastic ensemble cast, particularly Ford. According to Maxwell, the actor isn’t the type to walk around set doling out advice, but just getting to watch him work and seeing how focused and alive he is in scenes was a master class in itself. “He’s so excited to be there on set every day, and every time we had a scene, it was just a lesson of having a legend being my scene partner who is opening up so much space emotionally for me as an actor. I felt like I could really play in scenes with Harrison,” she says. Maxwell swears she played it cool around Ford, taking extra care not to geek out and ask a bunch of questions, but she admits they did bond over eating lots of snacks together—mostly frozen yogurt and pretzels—which were a staple part of their park-bench scenes.



At one point during our conversation, Maxwell shares that her need to do film stems from a desperate desire to create art with cool people. I'd say shooting a comedy with Jason Segel and Harrison Ford for Apple checks that box. But at 21, there is so much more she wants to sink her teeth into, whether that's going on a full journey with a character who is falling apart or doing an action movie. Whatever it is, Maxwell promises one through line: "An underlying theme that I really enjoy playing is finding characters that are effervescent but—at the core of it—so strong."

Shrinking is now streaming on AppleTV+.

Photographer: [Emily Knecht](#)

Stylist: [Ryan Young](#) at The Wall Group

Hairstylist: [Derek Yuen](#) at A-Frame Agency

Makeup Artist: [Amber Dreadon](#) at A-Frame Agency

Numéro^A

NETHERLANDS



IN CONVERSATION WITH LUKITA MAXWELL

February 12, 2023

Lukita Maxwell is starring in the 10-episode Apple TV+ series 'Shrinking' alongside Jason Segel and Harrison Ford. The series follows a grieving therapist who starts to break the rules and tell his clients exactly what he thinks. You may also recognize Lukita from her most recent role in HBO Max's 'Generation'. The first two episodes of 'Shrinking' premiered on 27th January.



Lukita, you're starring in Apple TV+ 'Shrinking' as the daughter of a single father, who's a therapist, played by Jason Segel. This series sees nearly all of the characters in therapy at some point. Why do you think seeing mental health being so openly discussed in this series and on TV is important in today's times?

We've had a weird, sad, lonely last couple of years, collectively. Talks of mental health have been strong through the pandemic and this show hopefully continues the conversation by normalizing therapy, therapists and finding a sense of community.

During this 10-episode we see your character develop a sweet relationship with Harrison Ford's character. Tell us how was it sharing the scenes and the screen with such a Hollywood icon?

I played it cool. Or tried to. Harrison is simply an icon and I learned so much just from being in the same room as him and watching him work. Also, it was very fun eating a new snack every time I was on set with him. We just snacked through all our scenes.

Before you made your onscreen debut on ABC's 'Speechless' in 2016, you studied Shakespeare. How did your love and passion for acting develop?

Watching movies as a kid. I watched an extended box set version of 'Lord of the Rings' with all those BTS videos and was infatuated with the process of filmmaking. And then I think the movie 'Ballet Shoes' with Emma Watson, Yasmin Paige and Lucy Boynton made me obsessed with acting. The love grew from there.

How did working with Jason Segel inspire you to love comedy and want to continue in comedy?

Before 'Shrinking', I was terrified of comedy. Joining a cast of seasoned comedic geniuses was overwhelming at first, but very quickly Jason made me feel supported and seen. I've loved seeing responses to the show so far, because almost everyone has mentioned how much they missed Jason and how happy they are that he's back on their screens. Every day on set was a treat getting to watch him play on that tightrope, teetering between heartfelt pain and ridiculous comedy.

What kind of roles and characters are you most excited to play? What do you look for when being cast on new projects?

Right now I'm craving working on an indie set away from LA. I want to completely fall into a character that's in the middle of falling apart. At the beginning of 'Shrinking', we find Alice learning how to cope, long after her tragedy has struck. But for my next role, I want to explore pain and the numbness and everything that comes before the healing.

Not only is mental health something that 'Shrinking' openly portrays on screen, but it is also being more openly discussed in society. Where do you personally see the reason for so much mental health issues among the younger generation?

Being Gen Z, I'm confident in saying that growing up with social media has affected conversations about mental health for younger generations. We've not really grown up with a strong taboo or stigma speaking about therapy, which is fantastic. Hopefully, this show continues that trend to older generations as well.



You are openly queer. How was your experience growing up as a queer young woman?

It's just a part of who I am. I was never alarmed or 'surprised when I realized'. Internally, being queer just felt like a fullness and boundlessness. It never demanded a name. Any discomfort around my queerness was not felt by me. My queerness is fluid and I literally just feel like I could love anyone.

There are still a lot of stereotypes about the queer community. What do you believe should or could be done to make it easier for young queer people, who are afraid to come out?

Of course there are still stereotypes, but wow, the community is thriving. There are so many people that understand the experience and are willing to lend an ear and support. As it goes with most things, continue conversation and continue education.

What are some of the things, besides acting, that feed your soul the most?

I love to surf. It became my therapy after moving to LA to shoot 'Shrinking'. Cooking also literally feeds me, so I'll count that as well.

Next, we'll be able to see you in 'The Young Wife', a drama that follows a young woman grappling with the meaning of love and commitment. What can you share with us about this feature at the moment?

'The Young Wife' was the most magical film set I've worked on. The movie is about a 'non-wedding' wedding, where the main character Celestina, played by Kiersey Clemons, questions life and love and time. The ensemble is ridiculous and our north star, Tayarisha Poe, directed the movie. The cast became family to me that month we shot in Georgia. I cannot wait to see it premiere this year at SXSW.

What's your view, as a young woman, on the meaning of love and commitment?

I can't explain love. I wrote this in my notebook a couple months ago and maybe you can find love in the minutiae.

"I had a fire in my belly today. We listened to The Sunday's entire discography on the way to the beach because we were trying to figure out which ONE song we heard in the bar last night. I think it was 'Don't Tell Your Mother'."

interview by JANA LETONJA

photography EMILY KNECHT

styling RYAN YOUNG @ The Wall Group

hair DEREK YUEN @ A-Frame Agency

makeup AMBER DREADON @ A-Frame Agency

'Shrinking' Breakout Lukita Maxwell Shares Behind-the-scenes Look at Her Premiere Night

The actress wore a Puppets & Puppets look for the big night.



puppets + puppets
dress ♡



almost
forgot jewelry!!



taking glam shots



FINAL GLAM

“Shrinking,” the new Apple TV+ show that debuted Jan. 27, sees breakout star Lukita Maxwell making her mark alongside legendary actors Harrison Ford and Jason Segel. For the show’s premiere, Maxwell chose an outfit by emerging New York brand Puppets & Puppets and got ready with some help from her cat Roscoe. Below, she shares photos and behind-the-scenes notes from her big night.

getting my face zapped before makeup



SKINCARE



lashes!



having an internal breakdown over the baby bangs



Roscoe, my son, keeping Amber's kit safe



on the way!

final look on the carpet



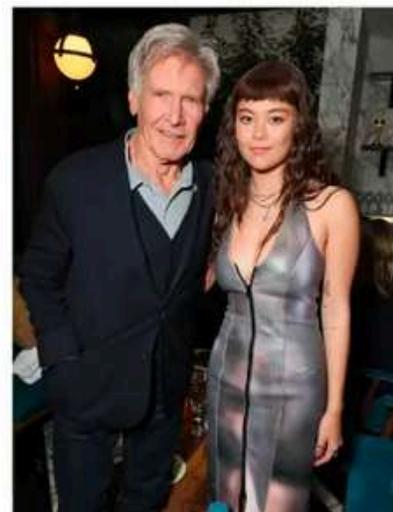
my best friend - ROSCOE - took these of me in the bathroom



christa ♥ jason ♥ michael ♥ me ♥ luke



harrison + i at the after



couplemain

CDM Zine #19 - Trust Zine.



LUKITA MAXWELL

Ahead of the release of her new Apple TV+ series, 'Shrinking', actress Lukita Maxwell shared some images and journal entries from her time on the show. Check out the trailer below...

THE FACE

Lukita Maxwell on surf-proof moisturiser and self-affirming fragrances



Daily Beauty Rituals: The *Shrinking* actor lets us in on her best kept beauty secrets, from soothing Singaporean scents to men's aisle lip saviours.

BEAUTY
Words: Olive Pometsey
8th February 2023

Scoring a part in a HBO show is on most actors' bucket lists, but Lukita Maxwell ticked off that milestone early on. Fans of the Lena Dunham-produced *Generation* will recognise her as Delilah, a teenage activist whose cryptic pregnancy (that is, when a person doesn't know they're pregnant) sees her unexpectedly give birth in the very first episode.

Wailing and screaming while pretending to squeeze a baby out in a public toilet? It's all in a day's work for this 21-year-old.

Luckily, Maxwell's had a strong dose of comedic relief since filming those "intense" scenes. The Indonesia-born actor recently flexed her funny bones in *Shrinking*, a laugh-then-cry [Apple TV+](#) series about a therapist who essentially gives up after the death of his wife. She got to learn the quirks of comedy acting from the industry's best, too: Maxwell plays Alice, the angsty on-screen daughter of Jason Segal AKA the self-destructive shrink. (Harrison Ford also brings the laughs, namely via a scene in which he's high on edibles.)

Next up, Maxwell has a [Netflix](#) flick, *The Young Wife*, on the agenda, but she's still finding time to embrace the great outdoors and go surfing in between filming. How does she salt-water proof her skin on down days? We're so glad you asked...

The first thing I eat and drink when I wake up is...

The half-finished glass of water on my nightstand from the night before.

My morning skincare regimen looks like...

A splash of cold water and moisturiser.

The soundtrack to my morning routine is...

Whatever my monthly playlist is on Spotify. This month I've got The Sundays, Slow Pulp and Horsegirl on there.

My go-to beauty hack for when I've pulled an all-nighter is...

Curling my lashes.

The product I'll reach for when I've got a pimple is...

Nothing. I let them run their course, because my skin gets dried out by anything topical.

My favourite brand of sunscreen is...

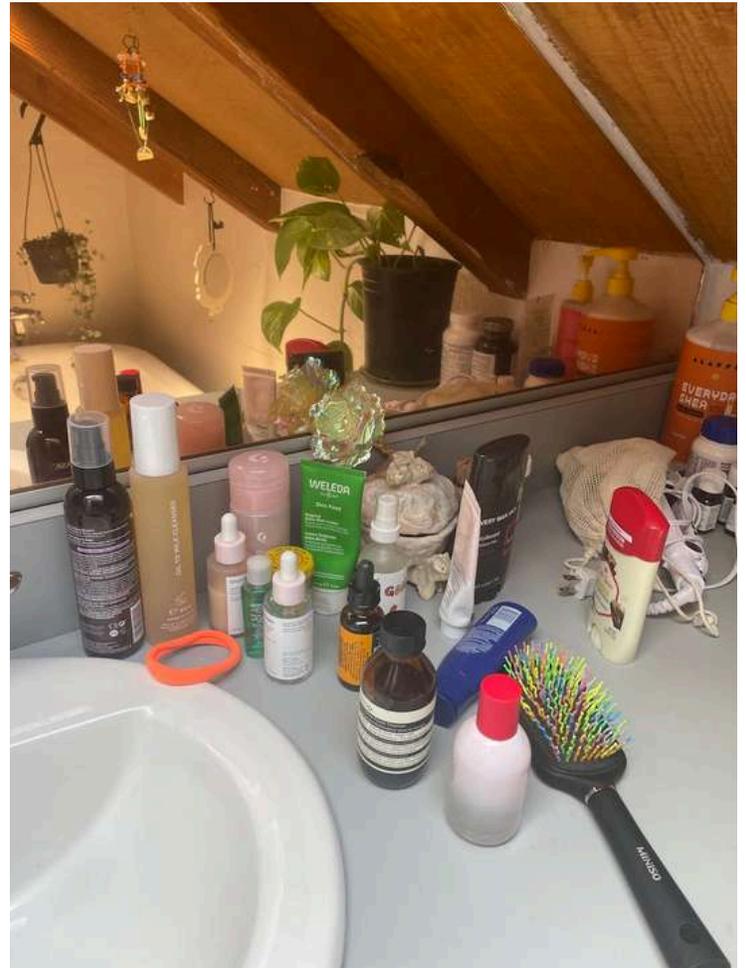
The [Supergoop](#) one! I don't own it but every makeup artist on set uses it on me.

My holy grail skincare product is...

The Mad Hippie Triple C Night Cream.

Because...

I have dry ass skin and it has kept me soooo moisturised, especially after wearing makeup at work or surfing all day.



My best kept beauty secret is...

When surfing, the combo of salt water and sun clears my skin up like nothing else.

My favourite feature is my...

Nose.

Because...

Someone said I have a lil' pixie nose and I loved that.

My first beauty-related memory is...

My mama doing my makeup for ballet performances.

The last life-changing product I discovered was...

Embryolisse Lait-Crème Concentré as my daily primer while shooting. Nothing moves!

The best tactic for getting rid of stubborn waterproof mascara is...

I have no idea. I let my eyes stay smudgy for as long as they want, honestly.

I keep my lips moisturised with...

The Duke Cannon Cannon Balm. I found it in the men's grooming aisle at Target. It looks like a glue stick and has SPF. I never go anywhere without it.

The boujiest beauty product I own is...

The most money I've spent on a beauty item was probably Kiehl's Clearly Corrective Dark Spot Solution.

My favourite budget find is...

The Cannon Balm for sure.

The face mask that never lets me down is...

I don't have one. Need a recommendation!

My signature scent is...

Sometimes I smell like this yummy "Good Luck Charm" spray that my herbalist friend (@snakerootapothecary) makes. I also sometimes smell like this Singaporean balm, Tjing Tjau Balsem. It's my comfort smell because my mama (a Chinese ointment queen) would put it on me as a kid to help me sleep. After a long day of playing a character, I come home and put on the balm. It's my sensory grounding tool to bring me back to *me*.

My top tips for having a good hair day are...

Wash it the night before and then air dry.



A hair product I can't go without is...

I don't have one product I use in my hair... so maybe just shampoo? I use the Hask Argan Oil Shampoo.

My evening skincare routine looks like...

I wash with the Aesop Two Minds Cleanser, which has witch hazel and salicylic acid, tone with the Glossier Solution for AHAs, BHAs and PHAs, and moisturise with either the Mad Hippie Triple C Night Cream or the Weleda Skin Food, which is lighter. I'll try and gua sha my face too if I have time.

The very last product I apply before going to sleep is...

Lip balm, of course.

The secret to a good night's kip is...

Half a glass of water.



LIVE

4 minutes left

A live broadcast still from KTLA 5's Morning News. A woman, Lukita Maxwell, is smiling and looking towards the camera. She has long dark hair and is wearing a black top with suspenders. The background shows a room with a lamp, a stereo system, and a mirror. A large white play button is overlaid on the center of the image. In the top right corner, there is a share icon. At the bottom, there is a news ticker with various information including social media handles, program names, and weather/drive times.

LUKITA MAXWELL @Lukita

MORNING NEWS

DRIVE TIMES 5 TO THE 55: 64 mph - 16 minutes | ktla.com | 101 SB -- 134 TO THE 110: 62° | 10:20A

ENTERTAINMENT

Lukita Maxwell stars alongside Harrison Ford and Jason Segel in 'Shrinking'