



### Introducing Carly Chaikin

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At 19, actress Carly Chaikin does not have much in common with most of her young Hollywood peers. First, she is borderline fanatical over Bob Dylan and his endless canon of songs, sporting a tattoo of his lyrics (“Strike another match, go start anew ... and it’s all over now, Baby Blue”) and talking about him with the passion and soul of a ’60s-era witness to his Newport Folk Festival appearances.

Second, her interests include Buddhism, creative writing, and purposefully staying away from the club scene. “I don’t drink, so there’s really nothing I find enjoyable in the clubs,” she says over an iced-coffee beverage on the patio of a Brentwood Coffee Bean. “Every once in a while my friends will want to get all dressed up and go out, but it’s never very long before we just go home and watch ‘The Office.’ I really don’t want to be a celebrity. I want to be an actor.”

Finally, the young thespian does not come from a show business family or any extreme sort of Lindsay Lohan turbulence. Born, raised, and still living in Santa Monica, her dad is a cardiologist and her mom is a psychotherapist, who also happens to be her “number-one fan.”

So, how did Carly Chaikin wind up making her feature-film debut alongside Miley Cyrus and Greg Kinnear in the latest Touchstone Pictures coming- of-age release, *The Last Song* (based on the Nicholas Sparks novel)? “I was at a sleepaway camp when I was 12 and we did a play. I played a waitress and I only had five lines, but I loved it and knew that this was what I wanted to do with the rest of my life.” Ms. Chaikin chose to keep her desire a secret for the next five years before announcing her aspirations to a friend. Then, a series of it-could-only-happen- in-L.A. events were set in motion. “A friend set me up with a meeting with an agent, who referred me to a manager, who sent me to my current acting teacher (actor Jonathan Slavin), who suggested that I meet his manager. She took a chance on me, and three months later I booked *The Last Song*.” In the film, Chaikin plays Blaze, a troubled girl, whom Cyrus’ character befriends.

*The Last Song* audition was only the third movie audition Chaikin had been on, and the first callback she ever received. “They called me back in to do three scenes for the director (Julie Anne Robinson), and after the audition, I went to New York to visit a friend. Two weeks later, I woke up to my phone ringing. When I picked it up, my manager told me I got the movie!”

Chaikin is also currently shooting *My Uncle Rafael*, an independent film starring John Michael Higgins and directed by Steven Spielberg protégé, Marc Fusco. The budding star is very aware and appreciative of the almost unprecedented ease with which she landed on the big screen, trading dialogue with megastar Miley Cyrus, but with the confidence and fierce intensity of another of her idols, holds the belief that, one way or another, she was destined to be an actor. “My complete acting inspiration is Angelina Jolie. As an actor, she is completely fearless and she inspires me because she does not hold back. If there is something in a scene that I am hesitant about, I think, ‘How would she do this?’ I learned from watching her films that success in acting comes from not holding back at all. I know that I am very fortunate to be in the position I am in, but if I didn’t get *The Last Song*, I would have just kept acting and auditioning. My dream is to keep acting ... and to someday work with Angelina Jolie.” ▼

“*The Last Song*” opens in theaters on March 31.