

# Olivia Munn: "The LEGO Ninjago Movie" Interview

By **Kam Williams**  
For *The Skanner News*

**L**isa Olivia Munn was born in Oklahoma City on July 3, 1980 to a mother of Chinese extraction, and to a father of English, Irish and German descent. She spent most of her childhood in Tokyo where she learned to speak fluent Japanese. She moved back to the U.S. in her mid-teens to finish high school before attending the University of Oklahoma.

In 2006, Olivia joined G4 Network's popular "Attack of the Show!" as co-host. She subsequently joined "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" as a correspondent, becoming one of five female cast members to ever appear on the program. Her first book, "Suck It, Wonder Woman! The Misadventures of a Hollywood Geek" debuted on both the New York Times and Los Angeles Times best seller lists upon its release in 2010.

Last year, she co-starred in "Office Christmas Party," alongside

Jason Bateman and Jennifer Aniston, and as Psylocke in "X-Men: Apocalypse." Prior to that, she appeared in Ride Along 2 as a homicide detective, opposite Kevin Hart and Ice Cube. And she'll be in The Predator, opposite Keegan-Michael Key and Sterling K. Brown, which is slated to be released on August 3, 2018.

Lauded in 2014 by Variety as the Breakthrough Actress of the Year, Ol-

ivia serves as a spokeswoman on numerous environmental issues, including working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Sierra Club. Here, she talks about her latest outing as the voice of Koko in LEGO Ninjago, an animated action-adventure co-starring Jackie Chan, Dave Franco and Fred Armisen.

**Kam Williams:** Hi Ol-

**“**You can't choose your parents or what life you were born into, but you can choose the kind of person you want to be

ivia's other film credits include Mortdecai, Deliver Us from Evil, Magic Mike and Iron Man 2. She enjoyed an arc on the Fox Emmy-nominated sitcom "New Girl," and appeared in the Emmy-winning Showtime environmental documentary series "Years of Living Dangerously," from James Cameron and Jerry Weintraub.

ivia. I'm honored to have this opportunity to speak with you.

**Olivia Munn:** Thanks. It's nice to speak to you, too, Kam.

**KW:** I loved this film. Had you seen the other LEGO movies before making this one?

**OM:** Yes! They were so great.



Olivia Munn (right) performing the voice of Koko (left) in 'The LEGO Ninjago Movie'



**KW:** How did you like playing Koko, Lloyd's mom?

**OM:** I loved playing the upbeat, positive person that Koko is, and it was also nice that I was encouraged to let my inhibitions go and create a really fun character.

**KW:** I found the film both hilarious and very touching. What's the key to generating chemistry to that extent in an animated adventure, when you don't even get to act opposite other actors?

**OM:** That's an interesting question. Thankfully, we had an amazing director [Charlie Bean] who knew what everybody else was doing, so he could guide us in the right direction, and make sure we're always in sync and using the right tone. Basically, it's really just like playing pretend.

**KW:** What message do you think people will take away from?

**OM:** I think the message of the movie is "Be okay with who you are. And that you can't choose your parents or

what life you were born into, but you can choose the kind of person you want to be." That's what Lloyd is figuring out. He comes to understand that you don't get to choose a lot in life, but you do get to choose your character.

**KW:** I really enjoyed your book, "Suck It, Wonder Woman!" Do you have any plans to write another?

**OM:** I don't have a plan, but it's been rolling around in my head recently that I should do another book. I have some ideas for it that I've been thinking about. Well, as a writer, you know how hard it is to focus your brain on one specific topic for such a long time, and have to organize the material and put it all together. But, yes, I guess I would like to do another one.

**KW:** "LEGO Ninjago" is a sequel, and so are a number of your upcoming movies: "X-Men: Dark Phoenix," "The Predator" and "Ocean's Eight."

**OM:** I just do a cameo in those films, although

it's exciting to be a part of them.

**KW:** But you're going to have a prominent roll in "The Buddy Games," Josh Duhamel's directorial debut.

**OM:** Yeah, he wrote it and stars in it, too. It has such a great cast: [Olivia's boyfriend] Nick Swardson, Dax Shepard, James Roday, Kevin Dillon, Dan Bakkedahl... Honestly, it was one of the most fun shoots I've been on. Those guys had me laughing constantly. It really was a testament to Josh how all these friends were eager to participate in his passion project. As actors, we always want to step up and help out each other. And he knew exactly how to cast each of us.

**KW:** Is there any question no one ever asks you, that you wish someone would?

**OM:** I enjoy when people just ask me random stuff.

**KW:** Okay, I got a lot of random questions. Ling-

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there as an engineer, too.

So, with the help of Ruby (who sold her beloved yellow moped) and many of their neighbors, Sami soon raised enough to relocate to Chicago, where he'd been offered a position with an engineering firm. However, only after arriving in the states was he informed by the sassy sister in Human Resources (Patricia Belcher) that he was being hired as a draftsman and at a much lower salary than that of an engineer.

To add insult to injury, he's mugged on the street right after politely declining the bait-and-switch demotion. Suddenly broke and homeless, Sami thanks his lucky stars to be befriended by Babu (Rizwan Manji), a Pakistani who came to the country a year ago.

Next thing you know, Sami reluctantly moves into the tiny apartment the affable stranger shares with about a dozen, other Southeast Asian immigrants. And after hearing how they're

all underemployed, he just as grudgingly accepts a gig that's way beneath him. That doesn't bode well for his relationship with Ruby, and the plot thickens when she and her demanding dad arrive in the country expecting to find Sami faring far better.

Thus unfolds "The Tiger Hunter," a charming romantic comedy marking the marvelous directorial debut of UCLA Film School Grad Lena Khan. Lena also co-wrote the relentlessly-funny script that's so convincingly executed by its talented cast that the picture keeps you in stitches from beginning to end.

A lighthearted look at the pursuit of the elusive American Dream from the perspective of a lovesick expat from the subcontinent.

Excellent ★★★★★

Unrated

Running time: 94 min.

Production Studio: Sneaky Sneaky Films

To see a trailer for The Tiger Hunter, visit: [TheSkanner.com](http://TheSkanner.com).

## Kam Williams

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