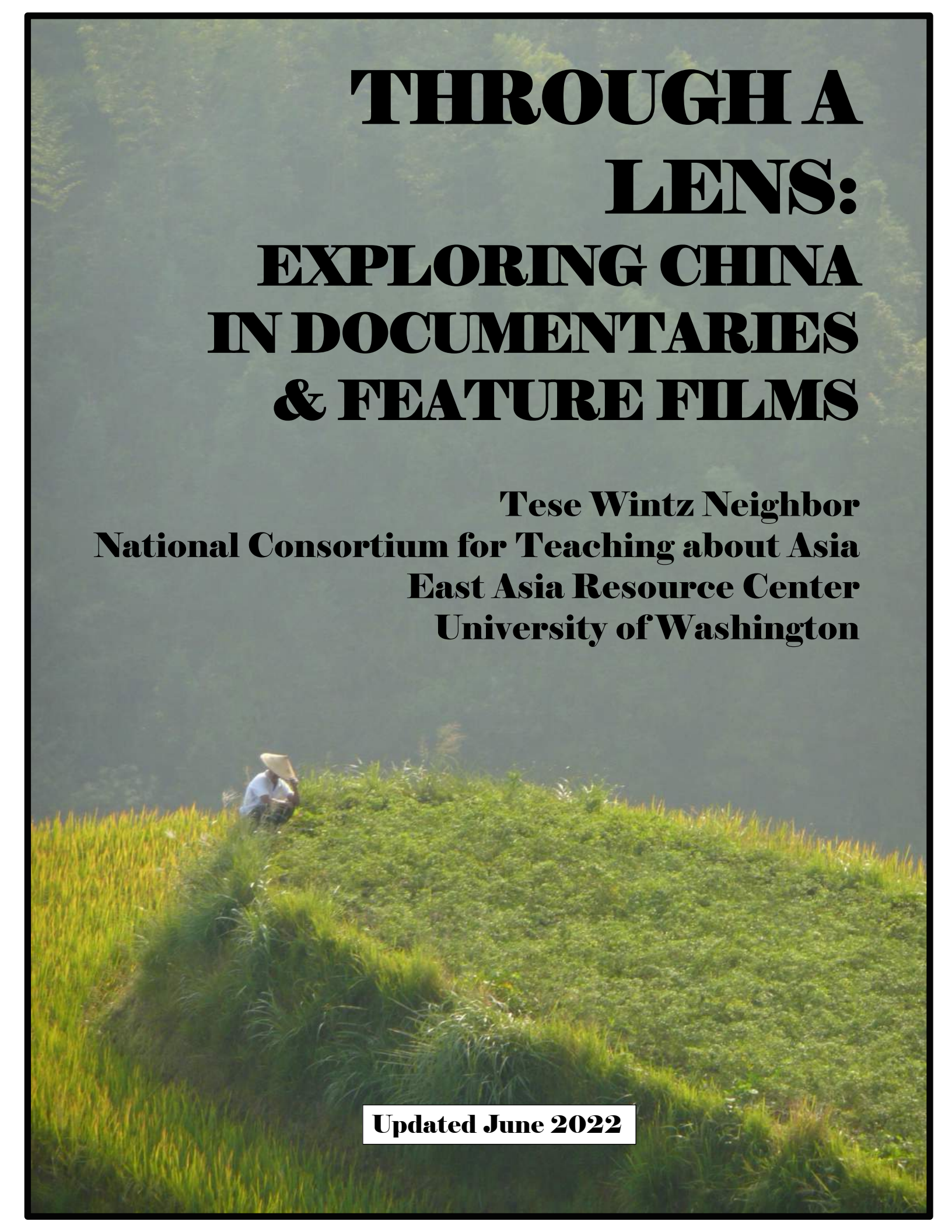


The background of the entire page is a photograph of a person wearing a traditional straw hat, bent over and working in a lush green rice field. In the distance, misty mountains are visible under a soft, hazy sky. The overall tone is peaceful and rural.

THROUGH A LENS: EXPLORING CHINA IN DOCUMENTARIES & FEATURE FILMS

**Tese Wintz Neighbor
National Consortium for Teaching about Asia
East Asia Resource Center
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Updated June 2022

THROUGH A LENS:

EXPLORING CHINA IN DOCUMENTARIES & FEATURE FILMS

Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms, which began in 1978 following the Mao Zedong's death in 1976, resulted in rapid economic growth that catapulted the People's Republic of China through a period of intense modernization and development. This guide has been organized for teachers who are interested in studying contemporary China through film.

This is not a comprehensive list. The annotated lists include mostly films directed and produced in China. In general, I have not included many films produced in Taiwan or Hong Kong or other countries in Asia. I have included some films that were made with US-China cooperation. I have also included a smattering of Chinese TV documentaries and Western TV documentaries. I have taken the liberty to throw in films such as *The Farewell* and *Finding Ying Ying*. And throw out some violent thrillers and sappy romcoms.

Filmmakers' names are copied from the source cited. Yes. It is confusing. Some sites use the Chinese name as expected with the surname first (Zhang Yimou), others put the surname last (Yimou Zhang) in western style. All Chinese language films noted here include English subtitles.

I hope this list illuminates the growing accessibility of diverse films portraying a changing China. I have confidence that you will find a movie or two that can be used in your classroom. Some films are as short as 7 minutes, others are as long as 554 minutes. This is a work of labor and love *and is still in progress*.

Tese (tneighbor@aol.com) May 2022

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This resource is dedicated to my old friend and comrade-in-much-of-my-life, Zhang Yan (1922-2018) and to the youth of China.

USING THESE RESOURCES

The information regarding each film has been excerpted directly from the websites. Some were taken from film festival websites, some from film reviews, others from Wikipedia. I have included short trailers, reviews, teacher guides, and articles of interest.

There are different ways to access these documentaries and films. At the time of this "printing" (5/22), I have indicated films that can be currently downloaded for free online. This is a changing list and I encourage you to go to **JustWatch** [justwatch.com/us](https://www.justwatch.com/us) which directs you to free/rental/sales downloads. For those in the Seattle area I have listed free streams through Seattle Public Library. <https://spl.kanopy.com/> Kanopy adds/subtracts new movies every week. Check to see if your library has Kanopy access.



Currently (6/22) on Kanopy



Teacher Guide



Tese's favorites (very limited, she has not watched all movies (yet!))

DOCUMENTARIES

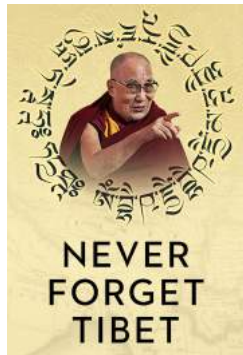
(Listed in chronological year order of film release)

THE EXILES — 2022 (95 MINUTES)

<https://filmthreat.com/reviews/the-exiles-2022/>

If Violet Columbus and Ben Klein's *The Exiles* demands anything of its viewers, it's these two things: never forget the Tiananmen Square protest and massacre and, for goodness sake, know who Christine Choy is. The documentary begins as it ends, with outspoken documentarian Christine Choy speaking to the camera. We learn of her early career and a chance assignment that led her to interview the four leaders of the pro-democracy movement as they arrived in New York City following the aforementioned massacre... One by one, Choy finds and connects with the men who, all those years ago, attempted to change their world. First to Taiwan, then to Maryland, and finally France. Trotting the globe with her footage Choy rekindles their memories in search of who these men are now. Even more poignant are the moments in which Choy interviews her subjects on how they view their past and whether or not it was a fight worth taking on. Their lives changed forever, they reflect on the courses they chose to take...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnFse15Kskw&t=1s>



NEVER FORGET TIBET - THE DALAI LAMA'S UNTOLD STORY — 2022 (95 MINUTES)

<https://www.fathomevents.com/events/Never-Forget-Tibet>

Over sixty years after China's Most Wanted Man escaped from occupied Tibet, the powerful documentary follows The Dalai Lama as he recounts his escape through the Tibetan borderlands into India to tell his remarkable escape story as he fled in 1959. One of the most significant moments of 20th-century history, *Never Forget Tibet* tells the secret story of the Dalai Lama's journey into exile told in his own words through exclusive access to the Dalai Lama and the previously unknown private diary of the Indian political officer who led him to safety, Har Mander Singh. Incorporating interviews with the Dalai Lama's family, the Tibetan Community living in Exile and those with historic ties to Tibet, this culturally significant story offers insights into the importance of our shared worldwide humanity and reveals the incredible details of the Dalai Lama's escape and his wider message of compassion firsthand. It also documents the rich art, culture, and traditions of the region.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crgRJNKmdB0>

WAY OF THE WARRIOR, PART 1 & 2 — 2022 (18 MINUTES EACH)

<https://radiichina.com/episode-1-way-of-the-warrior/>

Produced and filmed across China and the USA, RADII Studios' new 2-part film reveals the struggles, challenges and triumphs that Chinese fighters face while chasing their MMA championship dreams. Witness the fiery resolve of notable Chinese athletes — many from humble backgrounds — as they chase their dreams to become the world's best in MMA. See how this sport transcends cultural and national boundaries as these athletes and trainers come together from all parts of the world in their pursuit of a common passion for athletic excellence. We follow young fighters in training, but also former world champions and UFC Hall of Famers. Episode 1 introduces the mixed martial arts sport in China via interviews with two leading Chinese female MMA

fighters and their trainers from the USA and Australia. Episode 2 profiles Song Yadong's move to America to train with UFC legend Urijah Faber and the evolving journey of Tibetan fighter Qiu Lun.

Behind the scenes 30-minute panel discussion:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXdz8npq1OY>

Stream Episode 1 here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Vc1EwaV6Lo>

Stream Episode 2 here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCdOJ45I01CA-c-sqvEQvTA>

MISSION: JOY - FINDING HAPPINESS IN TROUBLED TIMES — 2021 (90 MINUTES)

<https://rocofilms.com/missionjoy/>

Deeply moving and laugh-out-loud funny, *Mission: JOY* is a documentary with unprecedented access to the unlikely friendship of two international icons who transcend religion: His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Tutu. In their final joint mission, these self-described mischievous brothers give a master class in how to create joy in a world that was never easy for them. They offer neuroscience-backed wisdom to help each of us live with more joy, despite circumstances.

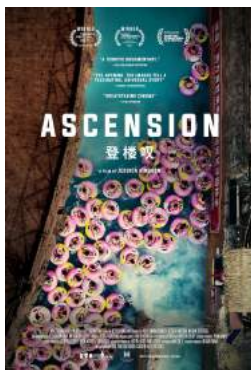
Inspired by New York Times bestseller *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World*, the film showcases the exchange between these two Nobel Peace Prize winners that led to that book.

Consisting largely of never-before-seen footage shot over 5 days at the Dalai Lama's residence in Dharamsala, the film invites viewers to join these luminaries behind the scenes as they recount stories from their lives, each having lived through periods of incredible difficulty and strife.

With genuine affection, mutual respect and a healthy dose of teasing, these unlikely friends impart lessons gleaned from lived experience, ancient traditions, and the latest cutting-edge science regarding how to live with joy in the face of all of life's challenges from the extraordinary to the mundane.

Mission: Joy is an antidote for the times.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIU5yNgIE>



ASCENSION — 2021 (97 MINUTES)

Ascension is an impressionistic portrait of China's industrial supply chain that reveals the country's growing class divide through staggering observations of labor, consumerism, and wealth.

The documentary portrays capitalism in China across the levels of its operation, from the crudest mine to the most rarefied forms of leisure. Accordingly, the film is structured in three parts, ascending through the levels of the capitalist structure: workers running factory production, the middle-class training for and selling to aspirational consumers, and the elites reveling in a new level of hedonistic enjoyment. In traveling up the rungs of China's social

ladder, we see how each level supports and makes possible the next while recognizing the contemporary "Chinese Dream" remains an elusive fantasy for most.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/ascension-movie-review-2021>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/07/movies/ascension-review.html>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7Z4DRhy9pI>

2022 Oscar
nomination
for Best
Documentary

THE MOUNTAIN PATH - MY SEARCH FOR A HERMIT ZEN MASTER IN CHINA — 2021 (93 MINUTES)

<https://www.onemindproductions.com/themountainpath>

A spirited young man journeys into the mountains of China in search of a Buddhist hermit master. Along the trail he meets an unexpected cast of dedicated recluses; the gaunt ascetic, the persevering nun, a wise old master and his disciples, all who, despite living far from the world, teach him all about how to live within it. Edward A. Burger lived in China for over twelve years and is one of the few foreigners to have lived and studied with the hermits of the Zhongnan Mountains. *The Mountain Path* recounts his personal journey, including the story of how he found his lifelong teacher and entered into the world of these dedicated recluses. We witness the practical everyday challenges of mountain solitude, while the hermits share precious teachings on life, death and the journey within. *The Mountain Path* is crafted from original footage Edward gathered over fifteen years ago to make his critically acclaimed film, *Amongst White Clouds*. Offering a whole new cinematic experience, *The Mountain Path* includes new interview footage and a new voice-over narration and editing style; all revealing a fresh and deepened perspective on the timeless teachings of these hermits in modern times.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmoYQ5nHgCo>

REEDUCATED/INSIDE XINJIANG'S SECRET DETENTION CAMPS — 2021 (21 MINUTES)

<https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/reeducated-inside-xinjiangs-secret-detention-camps>

This virtual-reality documentary takes viewers inside one of Xinjiang's "reeducation" camps, guided by the recollections of three men—Erbayt Otarbai, Orynbek Koksebek, and Amanzhan Seituly—who were imprisoned together at a facility in Tacheng. Over the past several years, government authorities have turned Xinjiang, the largest region in China, into one of the most advanced police states in the world. In the spring of 2017, officials in Xinjiang began imprisoning thousands of Uighurs, Kazakhs, and other predominantly Muslim minorities in secret extrajudicial detention camps. By 2018, as many as a million people were held in a vast network of prisons and "reeducation centers." It is likely the largest internment of ethnic and religious minorities since the Second World War.

In December 2019, just before the global covid lockdown, the reporter Ben Mauk, the film director Sam Wolson, and the artist Matt Huynh flew to Kazakhstan to interview Otarbai, Koksebek, and Seituly. Drawn from firsthand testimony, survivor sketches, and satellite photos, the V.R. film uses pen-and-brush illustration, brought to life by the animator Nicholas Rubin, and spatial audio, composed by Jon Bernson, to reconstruct the men's shared experiences in an immersive three-dimensional space.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPzDUfoPhuQ&t=4s>

Stream this 21-minute virtual-reality documentary here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGUyo5dxke8>

WUHAN WUHAN — 2021 (98 MINUTES)

<https://www.wuhanwuhandoc.com/about>

Wuhan Wuhan is an observational documentary unfolding during February and March, 2020 at the height of the pandemic in Wuhan city, where the coronavirus began. With unprecedented access at the peak of the pandemic lockdown, *Wuhan Wuhan* goes beyond the statistics and salacious headlines and puts a human experience into the

early days of the mysterious virus as Chinese citizens and frontline healthcare workers grappled with an invisible, deadly killer.

The film focuses on five heart-wrenching and endearing stories: a soft-hearted ER doctor and an unflappable ICU nurse from the COVID-19 hospital; a compassionate volunteer psychologist at a temporary hospital; a tenacious mother and son who are COVID-19 patients navigating the byzantine PRC healthcare system; and a volunteer driver for medical workers and his 9 month pregnant wife whose heartfelt story forms the backbone of this film.

Wuhan Wuhan is a testament to the universality of our collective pandemic experience, that no matter what country, no one is immune to disease and that we, as a human species, share the same humanity in our struggle to survive.

Review: https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-reviews/wuhan-wuhan-film-review-hot-docs-2021-4173718/?fbclid=IwAR1tnAZisSd7Gc9JB-UzD8Bmu6_L2zKkcTU2GiRXIx6YhW6N_tTeYijnppY

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9pLv0A1iss>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/wuhan-wuhan>

THE RISING OF CHINA ARCTIC — 2021 (90 & 52 MINUTES)

<https://javafilms.fr/film/chinas-arctic-ambitions/>

After the rise of China's power in Africa, are we on the verge of seeing a Chinese Arctic?

With global warming affecting the poles more rapidly than the rest of the planet, ice is melting at an accelerated rate. Over the past decade, Shanghai has invested more than five billion euros to protect itself from rising waters. But with the melting ice comes new opportunities. New shipping routes, mining provinces and fishing grounds are opening up.

In January 2018, China outlined its ambitions to develop shipping lanes opened up by global warming. The project, which would extend President Xi Jinping's signature Belt and Road Initiative to the Arctic, has been dubbed 'the Polar Silk Road'. It's a policy that China has been quietly developing for several decades now. Despite being a non-Arctic state, China is increasingly active in the polar region. It has invested in gas fields in Arctic Russia, developed a research outpost in Svalbard, made new allies in Norwegian Lapland and created the first domestically built icebreaker, the Xuelong. China also became an observer member of the Arctic Council in 2013 and now refers to itself as a "Near Arctic state." But traditional security challenges remain. There are concerns over its long-term strategic objectives, including possible military deployment. What does China want in the Arctic? And how do the traditional Arctic powers view China's actions?

FOUND — 2021 (98 MINUTES)

<https://decider.com/2021/11/02/found-on-netflix-stream-it-or-skip-it/>

Netflix's *Found* is a legitimately tear-jerking, heartstring-yanking documentary about three teenage girls born in China, abandoned by their parents during the country's era of the one-child policy, and adopted by American families. Roughly 150,000 Chinese children were placed in American homes between 1979 and 2015, most of them female, due to the greater "value" ascribed to boys by Chinese culture and society. Director Amanda Lipitz — the aunt of one of the girls in the film, Chloe — follows these three young women on their physical and emotional journeys to find their birth parents.

Review: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/saramerican/2021/10/19/netflix-doc-found-tells-poignant-story-of-transnational-adoption/?sh=28e10e3e7f77>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r7i_E6zm8IM

ALL ABOUT MY SISTERS — 2021 (174 MINUTES)

<https://www.dgeneratefilms.com/post/all-about-my-sisters-now-screening>

In her debut film, director Qiong Wang builds a riveting portrait of her family reckoning with the lasting impact of China's one-child policy.

After giving birth to two daughters, Qiong's parents were desperate for a boy. When they learned that they were pregnant with a third daughter, the couple embarked on a path that would affect their family for generations to come. Filming for more than seven years, Ms. Wang courageously investigates her family's shocking history. Intimate, powerful interviews with her parents and siblings and a keen eye for detail create a never-before-seen view of the one-child policy at its peak and the echoes that still haunt a family and their community today.

Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/14/movies/all-about-my-sisters-review.html>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwUqJdc99Os>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/all-about-my-sisters>



THE SIX — 2021 (100 MINUTES)

<https://www.thesixdocumentary.com/>

The Six is a documentary that tells the unknown story of the Chinese passengers on board Titanic. Through the work of the team of researchers - led by historian Steven Schwankert - the central mysteries of their story are tackled: how did they survive the accident at such a high rate and, afterwards, why did they disappear from the history books so completely within 24 hours of arriving in the US? While most of the 700 or so survivors of Titanic were celebrated in their home countries, and to this day are regularly covered in the press on Titanic

anniversaries, the Chinese men on Titanic were never interviewed, and never claimed by relatives, making their experience unique.

Podcast interview with Arthur Jones and writer Steven Schwankert:

<https://supchina.com/podcast/searching-for-the-six-chinese-survivors-of-the-titanic/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxpTnSZvX4c>

Rent:

<https://www.justwatch.com/us/search?q=THE%20SIX%20%E2%80%94%202021%20>

BEETHOVEN IN BEIJING — 2021 (83 MINUTES)

<https://www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf/beethoven-in-beijing->

[about/12364/?utm_source=youtube&utm_medium=pbsofficial&utm_campaign=greatperformances2021#GreatPerformancesPBS](https://www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf/beethoven-in-beijing-about/12364/?utm_source=youtube&utm_medium=pbsofficial&utm_campaign=greatperformances2021#GreatPerformancesPBS)

Great Performances: Beethoven in Beijing spotlights the resurgence of classical music in China through the legacy of the Philadelphia Orchestra, the first American orchestra to perform in China in 1973. Following the end of China's Cultural Revolution, when Western classical music was banned in favor of politically themed works, the onset of "Beethoven fever" began. Narrated by American and Chinese musicians and historians, the film explores the impact of the Philadelphia Orchestra's historic tour on China both then and now. Renowned musicians, including Academy Award-winning

composer Tan Dun, Philadelphia-trained famed classical pianist Lang Lang, Philadelphia Orchestra and Metropolitan Opera music director Yannick Nézet-Séguin and more share their stories of how Beethoven's music shaped their careers as China's classical music scene boomed. Featuring archival footage and first-person recollections from American and Chinese musicians, the documentary brings the 1973 visit to life alongside a behind-the-scenes look at present-day tours capturing the dynamism of China, from its new concert halls to its tens of thousands of young musicians.

Stream entire film at website listed above.

H6 — 2021 (114 MINUTES)

<https://www.highonfilms.com/h6-2021-cannes-review/>

...The Sixth People's Hospital is one of the largest in Shanghai. Through a series of interconnected stories of patients, their relatives and the various medical staff, the film attempts to comment on Contemporary China and its people. On one hand, we see unprivileged people trying to survive the various costs and getting themselves or their family members treated. On the other, we get to see the multi-faceted struggles and the harsh reality endured by the otherwise committed medical staff. There are patients injured by accidents and those who got sick because of the hooks of pollution in the ever-growing cities and countrysides...

Trailer: <https://www.festival-cannes.com/en/films/h6#vid=21033>



IN THE SAME BREATH — 2021 (95 MINUTES)

<https://deadline.com/video/coronavirus-china-sundance-in-the-same-breath-nanfu-wang-interview-hbo/>

Nanfu Wang's deeply personal *In the Same Breath* recounts the origin and spread of the novel coronavirus from the earliest days of the outbreak in Wuhan to its rampage across the United States.

Shot very up-close and personal with dozens of cameras and freelancers in the emergency wards, ambulances and dark heart of the crisis in Wuhan and all over the People's Republic, *In the Same Breath* brings a damning critical perspective on misinformation and

incompetence not only in China, but here in America too.

"I think the people in the two countries tend to believe that we are very different," Wang said of competing superpowers the PRC and the USA. "What I witnessed and I hope that the film can convey is how the authority has shaped the narrative of China's response to the pandemic," she notes of the propaganda machine at work literally from New Year's Day 2020 when the first rumors of a new virus started to spread – as you can see in a harrowing clip from *In the Same Breath* below:

"People in China had now formed this memory of this is how it happened and this is how China handled it. And this memory ... is more so shaped by the information they consumed, TV, newspaper and social media, the information that was allowed to be presented to them, So, what really struck me is I felt I had seen seeing the history being written in real time, and this is the very of the history that the Chinese people will remember," Wang notes. Yet, with almost 430,000 deaths from Covid-19 so far, and nearly 26 million confirmed cases here in America, an attempt at an official narrative was not unique to China, Wang states in the film.

The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2021/jan/29/in-the-same-breath-review-nanfu-wangs-shattering-covid-19-documentary>.

NYT: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/in-the-same-breath-movie-review-2021>
Interview (11 minutes) with director: <https://deadline.com/video/coronavirus-china-sundance-in-the-same-breath-nanfu-wang-interview-hbo/>
Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXgPNA19YKo>
Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/search?q=IN%20THE%20SAME%20BREATH%20>

REVOLUTION OF OUR TIMES — 2021 (152 MINUTES)

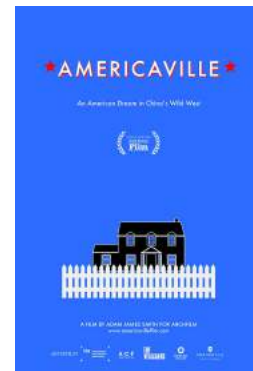
<https://letterboxd.com/film/revolution-of-our-times/>
THE TIMES DIDN'T CHOOSE US, WE CHOSE TO CHANGE THE TIMES. Over the past fifty years, Hongkongers have fought for freedom and democracy but have yet to succeed. In 2019, the “Extradition Bill” to China opened a Pandora’s box, turning Hong Kong into a battlefield against the Chinese authoritarian rule. The award-winning director of *Ten Years: Self Immolator*, Kiwi Chow, made this documentary to tell the story of the movement, both with a macro view of its historical context and up close and personal on the front lines.
Review: <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-news/director-shock-cannes-doc-revolution-of-our-times-talks-risking-imprisonment-to-tell-story-of-hong-kong-protests-1234986453/>
Trailer: <https://letterboxd.com/film/revolution-of-our-times/trailer/>

AMERICAVILLE — 2020 (80 MINUTES)

<https://www.americavillefilm.com/about>
Hidden among the mountains north of Beijing, a Wild West themed community promises to deliver the American dream to its several thousand Chinese residents. In *Americaville*, Annie Liu escapes China’s increasingly uninhabitable capital city to pursue happiness, freedom, romance, and spiritual fulfillment in the town; only to find the American idyll harder to attain than what was promised to her.

Trailer:

https://vimeo.com/316307011?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=5020475



DENISE HO: BECOMING THE SONG — 2020 (83 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/movies/denise-ho-becoming-the-song-review.html>

Denise Ho: Becoming the Song is an inspiring documentary driven by an unwavering belief in the ability of people — particularly young people — to create the world they want to live in. The film, directed by Sue Williams, maps the life and career of the Cantopop singer Denise Ho, who has used her platform to become one of the more influential pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong. Her story may be of particular note at this moment, as China’s new security law imposes more restrictions on the region. Ho’s parents left Hong Kong for Montreal in 1988, four years after Britain and China settled on a joint agreement that would hand the territory over to China in 1997 but allow it to retain autonomy. They feared Beijing’s encroachment and wanted to raise Ho and her older brother in a different environment. In Montreal, Ho became inspired by Anita Mui, an early Cantopop star (often referred to as the Madonna of the East) who was also a pro-democracy activist and nurtured the values Ho says made her the person she is today.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/denise-ho-becoming-the-song-movie-review-2020>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gu7bpEuOcl>

Rent:

<https://www.justwatch.com/us/search?q=DENISE%20HO%3A%20BECOMING%20THE%20SONG%20%E2%80%94%202020%20>

Stream for free on Kanapy:

<https://www.kanopy.com/spl/video/11178018?frontend=kui>

TAIWAN VS CHINA: A FRAGILE DEMOCRACY — 2020 (52 MINUTES)

<https://javafilms.fr/film/taiwan-democracy-lab/>

To China, it's a breakaway province that must return to the fold. To its 24 million inhabitants, it's a sovereign state, with its own constitution and democratically elected leaders. Now that Hong Kong has been brought into line, Taiwan remains determined to stand up as a vibrant, young democracy. But it won't be easy...

Since the Sunflower Movement in 2014, when the young came out to prevent an economic agreement with China, citizen groups have been fighting for the transparency of institutions. As Audrey Tang, Minister of Digital, explains, the idea, whenever possible, is to put the citizen at the heart of the political process and its decisions. But this new generation is at odds with the old one, who experienced dictatorship and for whom democracy does not necessarily mean economic prosperity. Every day, Taiwan counters millions of cyber-attacks that aim to destabilize its institutions and exacerbate divisions in society.

Trailer:

https://vimeo.com/481164073?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=102719763

PUSHED UP THE MOUNTAIN — 2020 (76 MINUTES)

<https://www.pushed-up-the-mountain-film.com/>

Pushed Up The Mountain is a poetic and personal film about plants and the people who care for them. Through the tale of the migrating rhododendron, now endangered in its native China, the film reveals how high the stakes are for all living organisms in this time of unprecedented destruction of the natural world. Beginning in the Scottish Highlands, in the garden of the filmmaker's godfather, the film travels between conservationists in China and Scotland who devote their lives to the rhododendron's survival. Patiently observed footage of conservationists at work combines with centuries-old landscape paintings and the filmmaker's speculative voice to create a thought-provoking film about human efforts to protect nature for and from ourselves.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5nKKjnYUXE>



ONE SAYS NO — 2020 (90 MINUTES)

<https://china-underground.com/wp/movies/one-says-no/>

Chinese cities expand and gradually absorb the countryside. The village of Yangji was yet another victim to the expansion, which benefits local developers linked to the government. Rural residents are forced to vacate their simple dwellings and make room for new houses and entrepreneurs from the cities. The vast majority of local resistance will subside despite meager compensation and low

prospects for decent housing, but Azhong is one of a handful of people who choose to fight against the corrupt system.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpGr-Ij4HTA>

TOUGH OUT — 2020 (108 MINUTES)

<https://www.firstfilm.org.cn/en/movies-en/film-library-en/tough-out/>

Sport as social redemption is at the heart of this honest and touching documentary that reflects the best humanistic traditions of the genre. Directed by Xu Huijing, a documentary filmmaker who tackles social issues, *Tough Out* won the prestigious FIRST Film Festival 2020 in the documentary section.

In the suburbs of Beijing, a group of troubled teenagers learn to play baseball with a famous baseball coach, while struggling through their internal conflicts and the inability to play baseball games like professionals. When an accident took place in the winter of 2017, countless local residents got evacuated in Beijing, the baseball team, as well as their playfield were facing the unexpected obstacle—the relocation of their headquarter. With the World Series of the Little Pony League waiting around the corner, the whole team will have to pull themselves together and face the competition on the international stage.

Review: <https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1008553/How%20a%20Hard-Hitting%20Baseball%20Film%20Scored%20a%20Surprise%20Home%20Run%20in%20China/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icXpJOb2PQQ&t=7s>

Stream here:

https://www.iq.com/play/2e7sb2tnok?shortlink=GoogleTraffic&pid=Google%20Traffic&deep_link_value=%20%22biz_id%22%3A%22102%22%2C%22biz_plugin%22%3A%22qiviplayer%22%2C%22biz_params%22%3A%22%22101%22%2C%22biz_params%22%3A%22aid%3D8847588488573000%26type%3D0%26pc%3D0%26video_type%3D0%26playMode%3D1%22%2C%22biz_extend_params%22%3A%22%22%2C%22biz_dynamic_params%22%3A%22%22%2C%22biz_statistics%22%3A%22%22%2C%22biz_version%22%3A%22%22%2C%22biz_force_deepLink=true



76 DAYS — 2020 (93 MINUTES)

<https://www.indiewire.com/2020/09/76-days-review-1234586513/>

...While Wuhan's story would soon be retold in places like Northern



Italy and New York City, the remarkable documentary *76 Days* offers a bracingly immediate view from the frontlines of history — at the trauma and disequilibrium of being ambushed by a crisis dire enough to define its century.

Discretely shot across four Wuhan hospitals without government approval... this fly-in-the-trenches look inside the outbreak is scattered and structureless in a way that makes it seem as if it's simply taking notes for the history books of the future. But if Hao Wu, Weixi Chen, and their anonymous co-director's film is more valuable as a time capsule than it is as a piece of *cinéma vérité*, it still puts a human face on an epochal

horror that some people have refused to acknowledge even as it rages around them...

...*76 Days* is an urgent act of witnessing for a world that only tends to see itself clearly in hindsight; the film's value to future generations is self-evident, but it has just as much to show us in the here and now about the history we're making alone and together.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwEhn9hgHy4>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/76-days>

USC

Interview with Director Hao Wu 12/11/20

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHIS4h-C6fY&feature=youtu.be>

Window into Wuhan's Wards: A Nurse's Video Diary

<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1006648/Window%20Into%20Wuhan%E2%80%99s%20Wards%20A%20Nurse%E2%80%99s%20Video%20Diary/>

Days and Nights in Wuhan (2021)

State
documentary
detailing the
COVID-19
pandemic

Trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARXFp6dcqEE&t=3s>



CORONATION— 2020 (113 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/movies/ai-weiwei-coronation-coronavirus.html>

Ai Weiwei, the artist-activist has secretly assembled a powerful and artful look at how the pandemic was handled in China ... The film reflects this broader story through vignettes that follow the events chronologically: It begins on Jan. 23 with a couple driving through a snowy night to return home to a suburb of Wuhan and ends on April 8 with people burning paper money — a traditional offering to the dead — on a street corner.

In between are scenes and stories remarkable for their rare access into the machinery of the Chinese state. These include up-close images of a hospital being built in a matter of days and an inside look at an intensive-care unit, scenes of medical staff being rewarded with membership in the Communist Party and of workers at a crematory kneading bags of human ashes so they will fit into urns...

Review: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/aug/21/coronation-review-ai-weiwei-harrowing-coronavirus-documentary>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8_9fQSxsU

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/coronation>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/10853493>

LIKE THE DYER'S HAND — 2020 (120 MINUTES)

<http://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202010/16/WS5f890206a31024ad0ba7f0c1.html>

...As the first biographical film authorized by traditional Chinese literature scholar Florence Chia-ying Yeh, who turned 96 in July, the movie looks back at her legendary life through interweaving interviews of her and scholars and literature enthusiasts. Producers said the crew traveled to 10 areas in China, the United States and Canada, and interviewed 43 people close to Yeh, mostly her students – such as writers Pai Hsien-yung, Hsi Muren and sinologist Stephen Owen.

As one of a few Chinese scholars who toured the United States to teach traditional Chinese poetry in English in 1960s, Yeh worked at Harvard University and Michigan State University before settling down in Canada as a lifetime professor at the University of British Columbia.

Director Chen Chuan-xing likened Yeh to Odysseus, the ancient Greek poet Homer's famous literature figure who wanders for 10 years to try to get back home, explaining that the documentary tries to display Yeh's lifelong pursuit of freedom and her quest to find her physical and spiritual hometown.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8eGENj-YdU>

FAREWELL TO POVERTY — 2020 (100 MINUTES)

http://www.china.org.cn/arts/2020-07/06/content_76241919.htm

...The film records the real stories during China's poverty-alleviation campaign in Kelan County, Shanxi province, where there are 91 poor villages, 4,580 poor households and 10,181 poor people. In accordance with the overall deployment of the poverty-stricken areas in Kelan County, the local government plans to relocate 115 natural villages.

...During the two years of filming, the crew lived in cave dwellings, struggled with household mice and fleas, and encountered severe scenarios, such as heavy snow sealing off mountain passes and mobile phones having no signal. Almost isolated from the world, the crew eventually finished this impossible movie.

The tagline on the movie poster reads: "Poverty itself is not terrible. What is terrible is the thought that you are destined to be poor or must die due to poverty."

Stream 50 minute preview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zabUkE9sGPk>



SWIMMING OUT TILL THE SEA TURNS BLUE — 2020 (112 MINUTES)

<http://povmagazine.com/articles/view/swimming-out-till-the-sea-turns-blue-jia-zhang-ke>

Faces are the recurring interest of Jia Zhangke's *Swimming Out Till The Sea Turns Blue*, the director's third film in a "trilogy" of arts based

documentaries that began with *Dong* (2006) and *Useless* (2007). The reminiscing, reciting, emoting, boring, or thinking face becomes a site

of great interest, as if in an attempt to imbue the camera with the writerly perceptiveness embodied by the subjects of this film. Here, the principal subjects are a trinity of renowned contemporary Chinese writers who focus on rural life: Jia Pingwa, Yu Hua, and Liang Hong.

...The interviews themselves are often long-winded, and seem minimally edited. Each subject is allowed to wander through their memory and experience, which allows them to naturally reach poignant insights about their artistic relationships to rurality, politics, and culture in China post-1949. They reveal vivid details from their personal lives, sometimes reaching an emotional vulnerability so potent that audience members experience a privileged intimacy with suddenly accessible and deeply present figures of cultural prominence.

Of *Swimming's* many contributions to literary discourse, its most powerful insight might be in upholding the importance of literature while refusing to romanticize the life of an artist or merely chart their accolades. These writers are not treated as diviners of truth but humans subject to the flows and impositions of country and history. As with the best poetry, they are grounded in life itself.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzU8yV1RCxg>

Rent:

<https://www.justwatch.com/us/search?q=SWIMMING%20OUT%20TILL%20THE%20SEA%20TURNS%20BLUE%20>

Director Jia Zhangke discusses *Swimming Out Till the Sea Turns Blue*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ynH0HIAIKM>

LOST COURSE — 2020 (179 MINUTES)

<https://www.dgeneratefilms.com/catalog/LOST-COURSE>

Embedding herself in the village of Wukan, southern China for several years starting in 2011, first time documentarian Jill Li witnessed an unprecedented experiment in local democracy. Corrupt officials had illegally sold villagers' land, but the villagers decided to fight back.

The documentary is divided into two halves: the first, "Protests", depicts the grassroots activities of Wukan residents as they work to reverse the land sales and gain a substantial measure of control over their local territory. We see how the villagers themselves learn to organize elections, form alliances, and win support. Part two, "After Protests", confronts the collapse of idealism as the newly elected village government finds itself mired in the same kind of corrupt dealings they had originally condemned. Li reveals the complexities of their triumphs and setbacks from the inside. Her astonishingly intimate, sympathetic and fair-minded access to the events' major players reveals Chinese local politics with three-dimensional passion and energy.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/502243654>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/lost-course>



FINDING YINGYING — 2020 (99 MINUTES)

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/finding-yingying-movie-review-2020>

Yingying Zhang was a promising young graduate student who left her home, family and boyfriend in China to pursue her studies in the United States. She's one of thousands of students who make the same journey, whose parents sacrifice both financially and emotionally to let their children go to an unknown country all in the hopes of a brighter future. Unfortunately, that future never came to pass for Yingying. One day when she was running late to see an apartment, she accepted a ride

from a stranger and was never seen again.

...Jaiyan "Jenny" Shi's *Finding Yingying* is simultaneously a tribute to the young woman—who she was and what she aspired to, the isolation and culture shock she faced in the U.S., the love she had for her family that drove her to keep going—and a true crime documentary that follows the Zhang family as they try to piece together what happened to their beloved daughter. But the documentary is quite sympathetic to the family, centering their frustrating experiences with the U.S. justice system.

...The MTV documentary doesn't play up the emotions for dramatic effect. The flashbacks to Yingying's photos and words are in service of the story, and by the end, her diary's sudden stop brings a second heartache. We won't hear from her anymore. The answers the documentary finds are not easy, but the loss *Finding Yingying* depicts is one that will reverberate for years to come.

Review:

<https://supchina.com/2020/12/18/finding-yingying-chinese-pain-and-the-empathy-deficit/>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dlsAibt1hc&feature=emb_logo

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/search?q=FINDING%20YINGYING%20>

ABANDONED: JAPANESE WAR ORPHANS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND CHINA — 2020 (98 MINUTES)

Addressing issues around family and transnation, citizenship and empire, and history and memory across East and Southeast Asia, a Japanese documentary film, "Abandoned: The Stories of Japanese War Orphans in the Philippines and China (2020)," traces forgotten and disappeared Japanese communities in the Philippines and former Manchuria by shedding light on the perspectives of migrants' children now approaching the end of their lives. While Japanese diasporic communities in the Americas and Hawai'i persist to this day, other Japanese communities in the areas colonized or occupied by Japan were destroyed during and shortly after World War II, along with the Japanese empire itself. From the late nineteenth to the late twentieth century, with the encouragement of the Japanese government, Japanese migrants established families, communities, and settlements throughout the Asia-Pacific. The film subjects' testimonies and our panelists from Japan will discuss the afterlives of communities and families to grapple with the legal, economic, and emotional questions of the historically fraught diaspora.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4FQumw7lbI>

CURTAIN UP — 2020 (68 MINUTES)

<https://www.curtainupfilm.com/>

Curtain Up! follows elementary school kids in New York's Chinatown as they prepare for the musical production of "Frozen" and begin to discover their identities. Behind the scenes, they face cultural stereotypes, families' expectations and uncertainties post-graduation. It is through rehearsing for this American favorite that these kids come to grapple with their Chinese roots.

Will they have to let something go?

The film unveils dilemmas from their honest – often humorous – perspectives.

Study Guide:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yBReBysTjZwsv01yU3dtc0r7-cL70RA/view>

Trailer: <https://www.curtainupfilm.com/>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/curtain-up>



FRONTLINE CHINA UNDERCOVER – 2020 (55 MINUTES)

With undercover footage and firsthand accounts from survivors of China's detention camps, Frontline investigates the Communist regime's mass imprisonment of Muslims, and its use of sophisticated surveillance technology against the Uyghur community.

Preview: <https://www.pbs.org/video/china-undercover-preview-6a329z/>

Stream here: <https://www.pbs.org/video/china-undercover-zqcoh2/>

Shorter report:

**WSJ: LIFE INSIDE
CHINA'S TOTAL
SURVEILLANCE
STATE – 2017 (8
MINUTES)**

Stream:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQ5LnY21Hgc>

HOW DUSHAN BURNT 40 BILLION — 2020 (22 MINUTES)

<https://sg.news.yahoo.com/china-debt-fuelled-county-admits-112055680.html>

A county-level government in China has vowed to make changes after a viral online video raised questions over its debt-fueled 40 billion yuan (US\$5.7 billion) construction spree that began in 2016.

Within days of its release, the *How Dushan Burnt 40 billion* video was viewed over 27 million times on Weibo, China's Twitter-like social media platform.

The 22-minute video, produced by Shanghai-based Guan Video, features some of the construction projects that have taken place in Dushan County in the landlocked southwest province of Guizhou, one of the poorest regions in China.

Review: <https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1005931/unfinished-vanity-projects-a-debt-trap-for-guizhou-county>

1001 NIGHTS — 2020

<https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1005816/father-tells-his-coming-out-story-in-daughters-documentary>

Chen Yujun's documentary is her journey of staking out her father's business and stumbling upon his sexuality is the topic of her upcoming documentary *1001 Nights*. What started as an amateur project born of curiosity and some speculation about her father's private life has turned into a film that's now scheduled to premiere on June 25, with an eventual online release. "Literature and film play vital roles in shifting people's attitudes toward sexual minorities," Yang Yi, (a program officer at LGBT Rights Advocacy China) said. "Considering the lack of social activism in China, LGBT stories in the media contribute to the transformation of queer culture, from being a taboo to an embraced identity." Chen hopes her documentary will also join the ranks of films that

help others explore LGBT identities and family dynamics. “My film is about more than just sexuality,” Chen said. “It also explores topics like love, aging, and kinship. I hope viewers will find it encouraging and remain hopeful for a future where homophobia is less prevalent.”

COCKROACH — 2020 (93 MINUTES)

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/dec/18/cockroach-review-ai-weiwei-hong-kong-protests-pro-democracy-activists>

... *Cockroach* (the film by the artist-activist Ai Weiwei), is about the passionate pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong, which was triggered by the introduction of the Fugitive Offenders amendment bill by the pro-Chinese Hong Kong government in 2019, exposing protesters to extradition to the Chinese mainland and effectively destroying that minimum of 50 years’ judicial independence and autonomy that the Hong Kong people were promised at the 1997 handover. “Cockroaches” is how the protesters feel they are seen by the Chinese authorities: their proud sense of democratic independence is seen as laughably irrelevant by an increasingly belligerent national government – and the same goes for any human rights. A banner proclaims that they are going the same way as Tibet and the Uighurs, and the whole of Hong Kong is going to be a scorched-earth monument to Beijing’s new obsession with alpha-dog nationalism...

Review: <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-55354531>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJuYB6Hlfrk&feature=emb_logo

JOURNEY OF CHINESE PLANTS — 2020 (10-PART SERIES, 50 MINUTE SEGMENTS)

<https://chinadialogue.net/en/nature/11883-china-s-first-plant-based-documentary-series/>

The series, which had official backing, took three years to make and examines 28 different species over ten 50-minute episodes, including the tea tree, the mulberry tree, rice, soybean and bamboo. It covers their lifecycle from sprouting to harvest, their significance to China, and the impact they have had globally. ...The documentary goes to great lengths to explain how plants have contributed to Chinese civilization. The soybeans carefully selected by our ancestors fed their families, and also allowed them to raise livestock. When the Tang dynasty monk Jianzhen travelled to Japan he took soybeans as a gift alongside his Buddhist texts. Bamboo slips were used for early forms of writing: “Of China’s five millennia of history, two or three millennia were recorded on bamboo, and it was bamboo that allowed the writing system to stabilize.” And in China, tea is not just a drink – it is also widely used in traditional medicine...

Short previews here:

https://www.iqiyi.com/a_19rrhzhmd9.html

SEEK OUT NATURAL MYSTERIES — 2020 (5-PART SERIES, 30-50 MINUTE SEGMENTS)

What it’s about: The science-and-nature-focused documentary series *Seek Out Natural Mysteries* depicts the four unsolved mysteries in nature The Origin of Life, Species Extinction, Light Curves, Ball Lightning. We not only want to present you with four fascinating natural riddles in a refreshing way, but also would like to introduce you those outstanding Chinese scientists and China’s little-known past related to science. Science has no nationality... Jie also acts as the executive secretary of Voice of Science, a

science media league to popularize scientific knowledge and disseminate scientific spirit. Voice of Science takes its mission to improve people's scientific literacy, advocate logic and empirical evidence, oppose pseudoscience, and eliminate ignorance and superstition.

Trailer:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSNk_FflCQ8&list=PLrpsOAujCCNzhyTbRhBiogqxSwizjgbPp&index=5

Stream 50 minutes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pxdSCng-hc&list=PLrpsOAujCCNzhyTbRhBiogqxSwizjgbPp>

SKATEBOARDING

SHANGHAI 5 — 2010 (23 MINUTES)

Stream entire film here: <https://vimeo.com/17700447>

SHANGHAI 6 — 2020 (22 MINUTES)

Stream entire film here: <https://vimeo.com/416297647>

Skateboarding in Shanghai has radically changed over the years, going from a free for all skate spots to a heavily regulated practice. Shanghai 6 is the sequel to Shanghai 5 a 2010 documentary about the burgeoning skate scene. The new opus focuses on the radical changes the scene has undergone in the past decade and what it means for the local skate community. Directed, filmed, produced and edited by Charles Lanceplaine.

Article/Interview with filmmaker Charles Lanceplaine:

<https://www.thatsmags.com/shanghai/post/31683/shanghai-filmmaker-on-award-winning-skateboarding-documentary>

DO NOT SPLIT — 2020 (35 MINUTES)

<https://fieldofvision.org/do-not-split>

Told from within the heart of the Hong Kong protests, *Do Not Split* begins in 2019 as a proposed bill allowing the Chinese government to extradite criminal suspects to Mainland China escalated protests throughout Hong Kong. Unfolding across a year, *Do Not Split* captures the determination and sacrifices of the protesters, the government's backlash, and the passage of the new Beijing-backed national security law. It is a 2020 American-Norwegian documentary film directed by Anders Hammer; The film was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Documentary Short Subject at the 93rd Academy Awards.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/393764663>

Stream entire film here: <https://fieldofvision.org/do-not-split>



TAKING BACK THE LEGISLATURE — 2020 (47 MINUTES)

<https://www.idfa.nl/en/film/507d5aab-154f-4fae-8f6b-990344134bbc/taking-back-the-legislature>

Since spring 2019, tens of thousands of mostly young Hong Kong citizens have been protesting against the takeover by China. Initially they opposed the introduction of a new extradition law, which jeopardizes Hong Kong's independence and threatens to subject critics to strict Chinese rules.

On July 1, protesters stormed the Legislative Council Complex.

Anonymous activists filmed the run-up to the assault from the inside, resulting in this turbulent and compelling visual account. With umbrellas to protect them against police rubber bullets, the protesters prepare for battle.

Not everyone agrees on the plan of action, as we see in the fierce discussions that divide the participants: while one group takes a combative attitude, the other fears arrests or casualties. Equipped with hardhats and gas masks, the protest leaders prepare the

crowd, raising the intensity of emotions. In fast-paced footage from the frontlines, the chaos and despair about the future becomes tangible.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/554457238>

INSIDE THE RED BRICK WALL — 2020 (88 MINUTES)

<https://www.idfa.nl/en/film/f6eb6617-22a2-4897-8c08-b85595df0b2f/inside-the-red-brick-wall>

In 2019, Hong Kong was swept by demonstrations against the controversial extradition bill. At the Polytechnic University, a group of students also takes a stand for freedom and democracy. Negotiations with the police are chaotic and aggressive, conducted via megaphones and politically charged music played over loudspeakers. The colorful umbrellas which the young people use to protect themselves against the brutal police actions emphasize the group's bravado, which borders on recklessness.

What begins as an energetic battle against the establishment turns into a lopsided game of cat and mouse when the police decide to surround the building. Within its red brick walls, the university building becomes a prison. Over the nearly two weeks that follow, as fear and exhaustion grow among the hundreds of students, so does the uncertainty. Should they hang on inside, or leave the building to face the armed police? The camera follows the developments and emotions so closely that it is impossible for the viewer not to become caught up in this deadly clash.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pf0RwklusUc>

THE REVOLUTION THEY REMEMBER — 2020 (106 MINUTES)

<https://culturalrevolution.pitt.edu/#documentary>

The Revolution They Remember — a documentary produced by the University of Pittsburgh's Library System — explores how ordinary people experienced the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966–76) and how they remember it today. The featured interviews with Chinese citizens were among many collected as part of two oral history projects by the Library System's East Asian Library and Dartmouth College Library.

This site contains maps, timelines, background information.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i78TXr3_uPU

Stream entire movie here: <https://culturalrevolution.pitt.edu/#documentary>

OUTCRY AND WHISPER — 2020 (100 MINUTES)

<https://www.dgeneratefilms.com/catalog/OUTCRY-AND-WHISPER>

A performance artist approaches a dais with a quiet formality, and then proceeds to slowly and deliberately slice a series of cuts into her face with a razor. A doctoral student/filmmaker, under house arrest and constant surveillance, walks up to a vehicle following her and holds up a sign saying, "Shame to insult a woman." Female factory workers describe being arrested and harassed when they stand up for their rights. Shot over eight years, *Outcry and Whisper* is a highly personal and sometimes uncomfortably intimate documentary chronicling women's oppression and resistance in mainland China and Hong Kong. One remarkable and tumultuous sequence is shot in the midst of Hong Kong pro-democracy demonstrations...

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/429306868>

Rent: <http://icarusfilms.com/df-outcry> or <https://www.ovid.tv/videos/outcry-and-whisper>

MY PEOPLE, MY HOMELAND — 2020 (153 MINUTES)

<https://thereelbits.com/2020/10/26/review-my-people-my-homeland/>

It would be very easy to drop the word 'propaganda' in here and be done with it. Yet to do so would ignore the role of the National Day films in Chinese popular culture. Like Chinese New Year, they are aimed at being a feel-good piece and to get bums on seats in cinemas. In late 2020, this is even more important than ever.

As a companion piece to the 2019 anthology film *My People, My Country*, this follow-up unapologetically bathes rural Chinese life in a golden glow. Filled with glorious drone shots of fields and vividly saturated landscapes, it borders on being a tourism video were it not for some fun vignettes at its core. Like the previous film, this is made up of multiple unrelated stories, but thematically linked by their appreciation of hometown life.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ev2sCnsYv9A>

My People, My Homeland is the 2020 sequel to *My People, My Country*

THE WINGS OF SONGS — 2019 (93 MINUTES)

The Wings of Songs a lavish musical that premiered in 2019 in China's capital to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. The film promotes national, pan-ethnic unity by showing friendships between young Kazakhs, Uyghurs and people from the nation's Han majority traveling across a vibrant and colorful region to share their passion for music and dance. The movie was partly shot in Tacheng, on the border of China and Kazakhstan, an area where at least seven internment camps have located by satellite imaging.

Trailer / Review: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/03/china-launches-musical-in-bid-to-counter-uyghur-abuse-allegations>

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lXAZRdW5PI>

How Chinese Movies Gloss Over Xinjiang's Camps

Watch this 3-Minute video:

<https://www.codastory.com/disinformation/uyghurs-movies-propaganda/>

KUNLUN BROTHERS — 2019 (93 MINUTES)

That same year *Kunlun Brothers* shot in the region's south to promote the "pair-up campaign" — an initiative that mandated one million Han civil servants sent to live in Uyghur households, with the aim of encouraging host families to embrace nontraditional, secular lifestyles. Directed by Abdukerim Abliz and Jiang Hong, it centers on ethnic unity. In the film, a villager in southern Xinjiang is forced to leave his hometown after he is mistaken for a jade thief. Three years later, a civil servant who visits a homestay owned by the man's family discovers the lost jade, clearing the villager's name and helping the family to reunite.

Stream entire 87-minute film here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6yNi6j4VL8>



THE GREAT 14TH: TENZIN GYATSO, THE 14TH DALAI LAMA IN HIS OWN WORDS — 2019 (82 MINUTES)

<https://thegreat14th.com/>

"The Great 14th: Tenzin Gyatso, The 14th Dalai Lama In His Own Words", uniquely and exclusively features Tenzin Gyatso as both subject and narrator as he presents the

full arc of his epic and very public life as the 14th Dalai Lama. Based on intimate conversations, it's a portrait both profound and inspiring. From childhood to adulthood, through his lifelong quest for democracy, the true nature of power and the nobility of our humanity is revealed. It's a story—and a film—for the ages

Trailer:

https://vimeo.com/358189409?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=3688281



CHILDREN OF SHANGHAI— 2019 (61 MINUTES)

<https://www.childrenofshanghai.com/>

Bear Grylls narrates this documentary feature about China's first generation of foster children. Now working in technology, finance, tourism, arts and sports, these young professionals reveal how they moved on from life in orphanages to achieve success and, in a series of touching reunions, their foster parents recall their battles to help them overcome prejudice and serious developmental difficulties. Bear tells the extraordinary story of Robert Glover, who, together with his wife Elizabeth and their six young children, moved from the UK to China in 1998, and founded the charity Care for Children. This was the first joint venture social welfare project between the British and Chinese governments, and it has placed almost a million Chinese orphans with families. Filmed in Shanghai, Beijing, and Chengdu, with unprecedented access to all levels of Chinese society, this is a powerful and inspiring testament to the power of international cooperation and human compassion.

Trailer: <https://www.childrenofshanghai.com/>

Rent: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/childrenofshanghai>

Stream for free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/11610348>

SPARK — 2019 (114 MINUTES)

<https://www.dgeneratefilms.com/catalog/SPARK>

Spark opens by the side of a road in Lanzhou City, northwestern China, as trucks rumble through a blasted hillside. An elderly man walks along the dusty road and pauses to point to a nearby spot—the former execution grounds. “They executed many,” the man says. “Then fewer and fewer.”

Two of those executed were contributors to *Spark*, a short-lived magazine from Gansu Province whose young, intellectual contributors bravely shone a light on the horrific realities of life during the Great Leap Forward. More than 35 million people died of famine between 1959 and 1961, in large part because of

Communist Party policies. To this day, the Party has never fully acknowledged the scope of the disaster.

In *Spark*, filmmaker Hu Jie—who has been described as “China’s most important unofficial historian-filmmaker”—tracks down the surviving men and women of *Spark*, including founder Gu Yan, allowing them to tell their stories.

Weaving together their interviews, the film is in an oral history of the magazine and the tumultuous period that from which it arose. The interviews are striking in their clarity and their emotional immediacy 60 years later...

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/315725144>

"Though none of his works have been publicly shown in China, Hu Jie is one of his country's most noteworthy filmmakers."

- Ian Johnson, *The New York Review of Books*

THE OBSERVER — 2019 (78 MINUTES)

<http://icarusfilms.com/df-observer>

After repeated threats from authorities, the Beijing Independent Film Festival was shut down. The government wouldn't tolerate their showing *Spark*, an incendiary historical documentary that revealed human rights violations during The Great Leap Forward. News of the festival's cancellation reverberated around the world. Who was the artist whose work had pushed the government past the edge of tolerance?

Away from the limelight, dissident artist Hu Jie has managed to make more than 30 documentaries. Films like *Though I Am Gone* and *Searching for Lin Zhao's Soul* are vital to understanding Chinese history and society and preserving memory of its past. Widely recognized as the first artist to dare talk about the Great Famine, the labor camps and the Cultural Revolution in an unfiltered way, Hu Jie is considered China's first historical documentary filmmaker—even though he's blacklisted.

Featuring lush photography and revealing interviews, filmmaker and critic Rita Andreotti's sensitive portrait, *The Observer*, explores Hu Jie's commitment, tenacity and courage, as well as the toll those have taken in his personal life. Through the creation not only of films but also of woodcuts and paintings, he continues to fight for the truth... but will museums, galleries and movie theaters have the courage to show the work that he makes?

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/theobserver/430728768>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-observer>

TELL THE WORLD — 2019 (43 MINUTES)

Detained under a high-tech dystopian surveillance state in Xinjiang province, exiled Uighurs speak out in this powerful investigation. Their religion is all but banned as they undergo 're-education'.

Trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryk6qZ4YLi0>

Rent: <https://www.journeyman.tv/film/7639>

CHINA'S CRAZY RICH — 2019 (10 MINUTES)

For most of the last century Communist China's planned economy prevented its citizens from getting wealthy. But now China is producing more billionaires than any other country in the world.

Stream free:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88Qils4J284>



A WOMAN WHO PAINTS THANKAS — 2019 (25 MINUTES)

<https://vimeo.com/334373370>

Rebgong (Qinghai, China) is well-known for its Tibetan Buddhist thangka art for centuries. However, Tibetan women were not allowed to learn or to paint thangkas, until recent years. Lutso is one of the few Tibetan female thangka painters in Rebgong. She is also a mother, a wife, and the oldest daughter in

See **Journeyman Pictures** for current documentaries and shorts on rap music to women's issues to censorship to environmental concerns (search China)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/features>

<https://www.journeyman.tv/shorts>

FLEEING XINJIANG — 2022 (47 MINUTES)

NOWHERE TO CALL HOME — 2019 (26 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/7576>

CHINA DREAM — 2018 (29 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/7504>

THE LOVE BOAT — 2018 (28 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/7251>

GOBI DESERT SAND WARRIORS — 2018 (12 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/7308>

A DISAPPEARING WAY OF LIFE 2018 (7 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/7314>

RENT A BOYFRIEND — 2017 (26 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/7248>

CHINA'S MILLIONAIRE MIGRANT — 2016 (22 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/6799>

BULKLAND — 2016 (59 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/6685>

REMEMBERING TIANANMEN — 2014 (11 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/6206>

EMPTY CITIES — 2013 (14 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/5939>

MY DEAR ART — 2018 (106 MINUTES)

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/7263>

CHINA'S WEB CELEBS — 2017 25 MINUTES

<https://www.journeyman.tv/film/7197>

the family. The film captures Lutso's unique life as a thangka painter, who has a career to develop and a family to support. The film is made by Dr. Ming Xue, an anthropologist who has been doing field research about Tibetan thangka painters in Rebgong since 2009.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/334373370>

BROKEN HARMONY: CHINA'S DISSIDENTS — 2019 (51 MINUTES)

<https://www.brokenharmonyfilm.com/>

Broken Harmony: China's Dissidents tells the story of Hua Ze, an ordinary Chinese citizen for whom a discovery of corruption led her into a hidden world of dissidents, citizen journalism, police harassment and kidnappings.

Trailer: <https://www.brokenharmonyfilm.com/trailer>

Download Teacher's Guides (including history, humanities, IB Global Politics & Economics, etc.) here:

<https://www.brokenharmonyfilm.com/for-educators>

Stream entire film here: https://tubitv.com/movies/549691/broken-harmony-chinas-dissidents?utm_source=google-feed&tracking=google-feed

Broken Harmony is a great teaching resource to put students in touch with the gritty reality of China today.
Andrew Nathan,
Columbia University;
Chair, Center for The
Study of Human Rights



WE WERE SMART — 2019 (125 MINUTES)

<https://radiichina.com/shamate-documentary/>

Li Yifan's film gives a rare look into the life and struggles of this group of marginalized, often poor rural youths through their own accounts. It has helped reopen old wounds and spark conversations around class and conformity, over a decade on from the vicious takedown that marked the end of the shamate movement.

Focused largely around rural migrant workers who'd travelled to China's cities to get in on, and help power, the country's economic boom, shamate was largely identified by its outlandish fashion sense, makeup and hairstyles. Spreading through dedicated online forums, the subculture's name came from the Chinese transliteration for the word "smart" — "sha-ma-te."

Li spent two years collecting 915 first-hand video recordings from former shamate members, as well as conducting full-length interviews with 78 of them. According to the director, almost all shamate participants were second-generation migrant kids who were born in the '90s and hailed from underserved villages and towns....

In the documentary, one trend that emerges is that many of these young people were "left-behind children," kids whose parents had taken jobs in major urban areas, leaving their offspring with grandparents at home in the village. Many talk of only seeing their parents on occasion, such as during the national Spring Festival holiday. Many of the interviewees also relay how they dropped out of school at a very early age and went to look for work themselves, often heading to manufacturing hubs on the basis of a vague lead or tip from a fellow villager.

Once there, the young migrant workers found themselves in unfamiliar surroundings and often in intense, exploitative working arrangements. In search of an outlet for pent-up tensions and a sense of belonging, they formed their own identity: shamate.

...Ultimately, *We Were Smart* is a poignant, important look at an oft-overlooked section of the incredibly diverse mosaic that is Chinese society.

Review: <https://supchina.com/2021/02/05/we-were-smart-chinas-controversial-subculture-tells-its-story/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyP5zI1svzU>



OUR TIME MACHINE — 2019 (80 MINUTES)

<http://timemachinefilm.com/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/sep/11/our-time-machine-documentary-maleonn>

...The fragility of memory, the tension between fantasy and reality, and the family bonds forged in hardship and joy are tenderly interwoven in *Our Time Machine*, which won the award for best cinematography at last year's Tribeca film festival. Co-directed by Yang Sun and S Leo Chiang, the documentary charts the evolution of Maleonn's ambitious production while reflecting on the artist's past and present relationship to his ageing father, who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. In the play, the main character achieves what exists only in Maleonn's wildest dreams: he builds a time machine so that his father, whose memory is also fading, can relive his happiest moments.

Trailer: <http://timemachinefilm.com/#trailer>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/11064757>

Review: *Our Time Machine*

A short, stylistic documentary that examines the love between a father and son, the difficulty of creating art, the challenges of dementia, and the importance of perseverance through anguish.

<https://supchina.com/2020/10/16/our-time-machine-a-bittersweet-documentary-on-love-art-and-dementia/>



ALL IN MY FAMILY — 2019 (40 MINUTES)

<https://thebottomline.as.ucsb.edu/2020/04/all-in-my-family-highlights-the-lgbt-asian-american-experience>

...*All in My Family* documents the experiences of Hao Wu, a gay Chinese American film director, as he and his partner start a non-traditional family and learn how to raise children via surrogate mothers amid backlash from Wu's conservative family. But this 40-minute documentary is also about the cultural and generational barriers gay people all over the world have to overcome.

The opening scene shows the family of one of Wu's surrogate mothers. This image of a typical nuclear American family that consists of a wife, husband, and children is juxtaposed next to Wu's large, loud, and emphatically Chinese family. At age 20, Wu ran away from his home of Chengdu to escape his family's Confucian values and live freely as a gay man in America. But as Hao puts it, "The son of a Chinese family can never run away from his past. At least not from his parents."...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXiSr8I39fM>

Stream on Netflix: <https://www.netflix.com/watch/80208662?source=35>



AMERICAN FACTORY — 2019 (115 MINUTES)

<https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2019/09/10/759152615/why-we-should-all-watch-american-factory>

...And so *American Factory* is only nominally a film about America. The



part that is astonishing about *American Factory* is seeing everything about the United States through the eyes of Chinese factory workers and managers arriving to reopen and restaff a plant in the rust belt. *American Factory* is the view we never get. Americans know how they feel about competing with China. But we don't know how China feels about working with America.

Just minutes in, two workers from China, a couple, stand on a ledge overlooking Dayton. They marvel at the houses, which seem like antique wonders to them. They think it's beautiful. And on

Reviews:

NYT:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/20/movies/american-factory-review.html>

The Atlantic:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2019/08/american-factory-review-julia-reichert-steven-bognar/597067/>

The Guardian:

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/aug/15/american-factory-review-a-sobering-documentary-by-the-obamas>

second watching, I took a moment to look at the view, too, and, yeah, Dayton may be an opportunity zone, but it's underrated. 2020 Academy Award for Best Documentary.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m36QeKOJ2Fc>

Stream on Netflix: <https://www.netflix.com/watch/81090071?source=35>



ONE CHILD NATION — 2019 (89 MINUTES)

<https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/one-child-nation/>
China's one-child policy, the extreme population control measure that made it illegal for couples to have more than one child, may have ended in 2015, but the process of dealing with the trauma of its brutal enforcement is only just beginning. From award-winning documentarian Nanfu Wang and Jialing Zhang, *One China Nation* explores the ripple effects of this devastating social experiment, uncovering one shocking human rights violation after another – from abandoned newborns (almost always girls), to forced sterilization and abortion to government abductions.

As the story unfolds, Wang, a native of China, digs fearlessly into her own personal life, weaving her experience as a new mother and the firsthand accounts of her relatives with archival propaganda material and testimony from victims and perpetrators alike, yielding a revelatory and essential record of this chilling moment in human civilization....

Interview: <https://www.npr.org/2019/08/13/750875479/one-child-nation-documentary-tells-explores-the-dark-side-of-chinese-policy>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMcJVoLwyD0>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/one-child-nation>



AI WEIWEI: YOURS TRULY — 2019 (76 MINUTES)

<https://www.yourstrulyfilm.com/>

The story of the film begins with the remarkable exhibiting 2@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz, organized in 2014 by director Cheryl Haines. Following Ai Weiwei's detention at the hands of the Chinese authorities, the outspoken artist and activist transformed the former island penitentiary of Alcatraz into an artistic platform. The resulting exhibition engages nearly 900,000 visitors in a conversation about the plight of prisoners of conscience around the world.

...The film *Ai Weiwei: Yours Truly* follows these postcards around the globe—from Alcatraz Island to Beijing, Washington, DC and Cairo—as Director Cheryl Haines meets with former prisoners of conscience and their families to discuss their impossible choices and the comfort they found in messages sent by people they would never meet....ultimately the film is a call to action, extending the incredible reach of Ai Weiwei's postcards by asking viewers to take the issue of global human rights personally.

Review: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/sep/27/ai-weiwei-yours-truly-review-alcatraz-artwork-mixes-the-political-and-personal>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOGOBZP5OpU>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/10736364>

CITY DREAM — 2019 (100 MINUTES)

<https://tiff.net/events/city-dream>

Weijun Chen's lively new film documents the struggles of Wang Tiancheng, an elderly and cantankerous street vendor in Wuhan, China, whose business is threatened by the development of a new retail district.

Documentary comedies are a rarity, even more so from China. But Weijun Chen has proven himself a master with such mirthful films as *Please Vote for Me* and *The Biggest Chinese Restaurant in the World*. The Chinese economy may have lifted over 850 million people out of poverty since the early 1980s, but it's necessary to look beyond such statistics and into individual lives for a true understanding of what this means. That's the accomplishment of *City Dream*, which documents an effort to introduce a new retail district by clearing out street vendors.

Chen embeds himself with the Urban Management Bureau of Wuhan, the biggest city in Central China. The bureau officers are firm in their duty to clean up the streets, but still show sympathy towards vendors being displaced. They meet their match in Wang Tiancheng, an elderly and cantankerous seller of fruits and clothing, who receives help from his grown son who lost a hand in a factory accident. The old man is brazenly defiant, like a swordless warrior against an army. He rips up the officers' paper citations, screams insults to their faces, and even throws punches. They take his abuse with surprising patience and humour. But their bosses are adamant to see the job get done. Suspense builds over a year in this standoff between government force and individual willpower.

In the tradition of his previous films, Chen brings out the humanity of everyone on screen, even when they're pushed to their limits.

Q&A with Director at Toronto International Film Festival:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJNDTAM8iXw>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhqa3AYxJ9o&feature=emb_logo

CONFUCIAN DREAM — 2019 (87 MINUTES)

<http://povmagazine.com/articles/view/review-confucian-dream>

After witnessing the cohesion of a family practicing Confucianism, young wife and mother Chaoyan converts to the religion with hopes of bringing order and happiness to her family life. While diving into her studies, Chaoyan becomes obsessive. Chaoyan's four-year old son seems oblivious to his mother's fervour, while she clashes with her husband and alienates her in-laws. Consumed with the thought that an ardent practice of Confucianism is necessary to her family's well-being, Chaoyan's newfound beliefs end up having the opposite effect.

Mijie Li's *Confucian Dream* follows Chaoyan's narrative, which flows with almost fictional precision. Her beliefs begin earnestly before developing into mania. The philosophy starts with respect and morality, but slowly results into screaming matches with family. The drama reaches fever pitch as Chaoyan's zealousness increases, but *Confucian Dream* offers a dénouement: Chaoyan separates from her husband and gains self-awareness of her actions. Without abandoning her beliefs, she acknowledges her desperation and anger and we witness her growth. Chaoyan is never one-dimensional in her strict Confucianism; instead, she shows a great deal of depth and development....

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfAaMEUnBEg>

CHINA'S NEW SILK ROAD — 2019 (52 MINUTES)

<https://javafilms.fr/film/chinas-new-silk-road/>

Chinese president Xi Jinping has named it the 'project of the century.' Since 2013 China has invested billions into bringing the 'Middle Kingdom' to the forefront of global economics and international politics.

What China has baptized 'The New Silk Road' allows a pair of trainers to be transported by train from China to France in less than two weeks. But they also act as a vehicle for a wave of Chinese expansionism across the world.

In Gwadar, Pakistan, China is excavating a giant port, as well as a spectacular highway that crosses the Himalayas, in order to open the doors to the warm seas. At the limits of their Russian borders in central Asia, along a new railway line that serves Europe, Chinese entrepreneurs have installed special economic zones and casinos in the middle of the desert. Further afield than Beijing, in Djibouti, on the Horn of Africa, the Chinese state has recently established a military port, a stone's throw from the American and French bases, as well as building an ultra modern railway serving Ethiopia. In the wake of these movements, Chinese businesses are swooping down on east African markets, hoping to make the region one of the new workshops of the world.

Trailer: <https://javafilms.fr/film/chinas-new-silk-road/>

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvPJ5Utrcwg>

CHINA'S BIG PROBLEM: THE RISE OF OBESITY — 2019 (52 MINUTES)

<https://javafilms.fr/film/chinas-big-problem-the-rise-of-obesity/>

Victim of a terrible famine in the early 1960s that killed nearly 20 million people, China is now facing a new scourge: obesity. 100 million Chinese people are overweight.

Although it is a disease particularly prevalent among adolescents, affecting 20% of boys and 10% of girls, even babies are being born at more than six kilos. A phenomenon never before seen in the country's history.

Expansion and economic growth have changed the lifestyles of Chinese people, who are now consuming more and more Western-style food. Traditional Chinese food, which is generally quite healthy, has been replaced by "junk food" and the portions have doubled or even tripled. The overconsumption of fat and sugar coupled with sedentary lifestyles and the one-child policy have caused rates of obesity to skyrocket. The Chinese authorities are tackling this epidemic with former prison camps for overweight people run by soldiers. Television shows, smartphone applications, doctors and nutritionists are encouraging the entire nation to get into shape.

In this documentary, we visit China to explain why obesity rates are rising, and how weight loss has become a national issue. How has China progressed from a starving country at the beginning of the 21st century to having one of the highest obesity rates in the world?

Trailer:

https://vimeo.com/365792592?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=16878122

Rent: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/chinasbigproblem>

LEFTOVER WOMEN — 2019 (84 MINUTES)



<https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/documentaries/leftover-women/>

Leftover Women follows three successful Chinese women — Qiu Hua Mei, a 34-year-old lawyer; Xu Min, 28, who works in public radio; and Gai Qi, 36, an assistant college professor in Beijing — who, despite

Atlantic: What It's Like to Be a Leftover Woman
(3/11/20)

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2020/03/leftover-women-china-israel-children-marriage/607768/>

thriving careers, are still labeled “leftover women,” or *sheng nu*, a derogatory term used in China to describe educated, professional women in their mid-20s and ’30s who are not married.

With 30 million more men than women in China, a severe demographic imbalance resulting from the One-Child Policy, social stability is under threat. As single women search for “Mr. Right,” they struggle to stay true to their personal and professional ambitions, while dealing with pressure from their families, friends, and a government that launched a state-sponsored campaign to stigmatize unwed women. Though methods may differ, societal pressure for women to marry exists in every culture. From awkward singles mixers to marriage markets for parents, as well as dealing with differing views of marriage and relationships within families and from potential partners, the struggle for these women to find true love and true happiness seems more elusive than ever.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PmQGyIroEE>

Rent: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2DN9IUwVBA>

Stream entire film here:

<https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/documentaries/leftover-women/>

PBS NEWSHOUR PRESENTS CHINA POWER AND PROSPERITY — 2019 (58 MINUTES)

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/series/china-power-and-prosperity>

The United States’ relationship with China has dominated conversations about U.S. foreign policy, trade and more recently, the global effort to combat coronavirus. Before COVID-19 cases were first reported out of China and before the pandemic swept across the globe, PBS NewsHour’s foreign affairs and defense correspondent, Nick Schiffrin, traveled to China for a series of inside looks into the country. PBS NewsHour Presents China: Power and Prosperity explores the future of the communist country’s relationship with the U.S., which will help determine the new international order, the dominant technology supporting the world’s communications infrastructure, and the global economy.

Stream entire 58 minutes here:

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/series/china-power-and-prosperity>

See box to the right for related 11-part series (5-10 minute segments)

SOUTH OF THE CLOUDS — 2002 remastered in 2019 (44 MINUTES)

The documentary shows, without commenting, a China-linked to ancient traditions, which nowadays struggles to compete with the rhythm of modern life: villages, customs, music, and lifestyles of the minorities Bai, Lisu, Nusu, Miao, Dai, Hani, Naxi, Yi, and Hui, before the advent of Chinese mass tourism and the exodus of young people to the metropolis in search of a job opportunity. The documentary was shot in 2002 in

PBS 11-Part Series

1. Taking Stock of China’s Growing Power & Prosperity

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/taking-stock-of-chinas-growing-power-and-prosperity>

2. How President Xi Jinping is Transforming China at Home and Abroad

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/how-president-xi-jinping-is-transforming-china-at-home-and-abroad>

3. China’s Massive Belt & Road Initiative

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/how-historic-belt-and-road-infrastructure-project-is-building-chinas-global-influence>

4. Impact of US-China Trade

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/impact-of-u-s-china-trade-war-felt-in-both-countries>

5. Chinese Tech Makes Cities “Smart”

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/is-this-chinese-technology-a-trojan-horse-for-spreading-authoritarianism>

6. How China’s High-Tech Monitors Behavior & Dissent

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/how-chinas-high-tech-eyes-monitor-behavior-and-dissent>

7. China is Producing Billionaires Faster than any other Nation

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/china-is-producing-billionaires-faster-than-any-other-nation>

8. How China is Driving the Future of Electric Cars

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/how-china-is-driving-the-future-of-electric-cars>

9. How China’s Art Market is Evolving from Knockoffs to New Works

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/why-chinas-art-market-is-evolving-from-knockoffs-to-new-works>

10. China Calls it Re-education, but Uighur Muslims say it’s Unbearable Brutality

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/china-calls-it-re-education-but-uighur-muslims-say-its-unbearable-brutality>

11. Pro-democracy Demonstrators and Beijing Fight for the Future of Hong Kong

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/pro-democracy-demonstrators-and-beijing-fight-for-the-future-of-hong-kong>

the counties of Nujiang (Gongshan, Bingzhongluo), Lijiang, Dali, and Honghe (Yangshuo and surrounding area). The rhythms of life of minorities were still strongly linked to the cycles of nature. Remastered in 2019 Stream entire remastered 45 minutes here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNVv95zyxWM&t=151s>



CHINESE PORTRAIT — 2018 (79 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/12/movies/chinese-portrait-review.html>

In its title and its panoramic scope, *Chinese*

Portrait <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muWRbcEz00k> promise s a snapshot of modern China, with scenes that show life in settings urban and rural, industrial and agrarian, scenic and seedy. This documentary's human subjects are young and old. But in intriguing, sometimes unsatisfying ways, it leaves the synthesis to the viewer. It is an experimental film more than it is a state-of-the-nation address, inviting consideration of how each of its successive tableaux — just about the entirety of the movie — came to be created.

The director, the veteran Chinese filmmaker Wang Xiaoshuai (*Beijing Bicycle*) shot *Chinese Portrait* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muWRbcEz00k> over a decade on a combination of film and video. Many scenes consist of a single shot, and the vignettes are generally separated by brief bits of visible film leader. The pieces of dialogue that can be heard go unsubtitled. And while the film depicts a diverse cross-section of Chinese life — from horses grazing in the countryside to a man in a respiratory mask in a smoggy cityscape; from Muslims in prayer to a dimly lit celebration — its primary interest lies in the tension between candid moments and shots that appear artfully composed.

The documentary begins with miners standing by a track at what looks like the opening of a mineshaft. (There are no title cards or other identifiers.) Are the miners' stoic stances natural or acted? What conversations, with the filmmakers or otherwise, took place before and after the cameras rolled? In several shots — in an office, in a classroom — one person will stare directly at Wang's camera while others appear oblivious to it. Other images are straightforward person-on-the-street portraits, practically still photographs. The camera is notable for its stillness. Kineticism generally derives from action within a shot:

A man stands by a gate at the back of a speeding train while another train rushes by in the opposite direction. A building undergoing

demolition partly collapses, stirring up a giant cloud of dust...

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muWRbcEz00k&feature=emb_logo

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/search?q=CHINESE%20PORTRAIT%20>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/10847651>



...The rush of progress generated by China's transition to a capitalist economy has been explored by several widely screened Chinese filmmakers, such as Jia Zhangke (*Ash is Purest White*) and Wang Bing (*Bitter Money*). A bit of that theme — in scenes that involve construction or pollution — is here as well. But the overall mood is less hectic than peaceful; Wang's snapshot shows a China that happily encompasses multitudes. The concatenation of difference is captured in the busy final image, in which a singer with a guitar begins to perform in a crowded restaurant, never quite commanding the attention of its diners.

RITOMA — 2018 (57 MINUTES)

<https://caamedia.org/films/ritoma/>

On any given day on the vast Tibetan Plateau, you will find nomads herding their yaks and sheep, and monks reciting their mantras. You will also find them playing one of their favorite sports — basketball.

Makeshift courts are found in nearly every village. Next to traditional horseback riding, basketball has become a way for young men to work off their aggression and channel their energy. With the introduction of televised NBA games, the nomads of Ritoma have a new strategy for their court game. And when a proper coach arrives from the United States, slam-dunk becomes their new mantra.

A new tournament has been announced, the first in their region. Can they put together a team that's good enough to take the part? Might they even be able to win?

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABCsJ_qNyqk

Rent: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/ritoma2018>

SHANGHAI YOUTH — 2018 (150 MINUTES)

<https://letterboxd.com/film/shanghai-youth/>

Liming is a worker district close to Shanghai – the richest city in China. Every year, many young people leave their villages and move there. They are between 17 and 20, all from rural Yunnan Province, 2,500 km west, where the Yangtze River has its source.

These young Yunnanese often live at their place of work, in dormitories, unsanitary rooms, or sometimes in small studios. Time and space to meet is missing them. So they communicate through QQ, MSN China. They live as adults but they are teenagers, and the unstable situation, economic pressures, geographical dispersion, burn their innocence and youth. Wang Bing will spend a year with them in Liming: at work, at home, on the Internet, every day of their professional, romantic, and friendly relations. At the end of the year he will follow them in the opposite direction to their province of origin, to be with their family and celebrate Chinese New Year.

A LONG WAY HOME — 2018 (73 MINUTES)

<https://store.der.org/a-long-way-home-p1031.aspx>

A Long Way Home takes us on a fascinating journey into both the grim days of recent Chinese history and the dazzling cultural scene in present-day China. The film centers around five of the most significant representatives of contemporary Chinese counterculture: the visual artists the Gao Brothers, the choreographer and dancer Wen Hui, the animation artist Pi San and the poet Ye Fu. With bravery and subversive wit, they each shed light on the social problems in their country from their unique perspective. Their vision is of a democratic and humane civil society, and, increasingly, their struggle seems as relevant for the world today as it is for China.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/alongwayhome2018>



MINERS, THE HORSEKEEPER, AND PNEUMOCONIOSIS — 2018 (81 MINUTES)

<https://u.osu.edu/mclc/2020/05/07/documentary-on-the-plight-of-chinese-miners/>

From the age of 15, Zhao Pinfeng worked for two decades as an iron ore miner in a remote, mountainous area of Hunan province in central China.

Several years ago Zhao, who by then had two children and whose wife is mentally challenged, was diagnosed with pneumoconiosis, a fatal lung disease. He lost the ability to work and had to breathe through a ventilator. On one fateful night in 2018, an electricity outage at his village stopped his ventilator. He died the next day.

Zhao's final days were recorded for a documentary feature, *Miners, the Horsekeeper and Pneumoconiosis*. Directed by Jiang Nengjie, the 81-minute film revolves around Hunan villagers who relied on the illegal mines for a living before they were closed down by the government. They include porters who transport the mine explosives and iron shards, and miners like Zhao.

The film shows how the use of illegal explosives and mining without protective gear damaged the health of villagers, with many of them contracting pneumoconiosis....

Interview:

<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1005595/premiering-in-your-inbox-chinas-new-indie-doc-sensation>

Review: <https://www.shine.cn/feature/art-culture/2005087714/>

Trailer: <https://www.orientindiefilms.com/content/documentary/miners-the-horsekeepe-and-pneumoconiosis/>

Rent: <https://www.orientindiefilms.com/content/documentary/miners-the-horsekeepe-and-pneumoconiosis/>

It's not your typical viral hit. Self-directed, self-funded, and shot mostly on a simple camcorder, the film follows the lives of coal workers in rural Hunan, a central Chinese province.

The horsekeeper in the film is Jiang's own father Jiang Meilin, and the dying miner Zhao Pinfeng who is a central character in the film is a fellow villager.

CHINESE GRANDMOTHERS — 2018 (7 MINUTES)

<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1002021/dancing-grannies-share-stories-from-their-past>

There's more to China's elderly square dancers than fast footwork and synchronized moves: Some have fascinating stories to share. In her recent documentary *Chinese Grandmothers*, filmmaker Tan Jiaying brings these vibrant stories to a wider audience. From the tumultuous years of the Cultural Revolution to the decades following China's economic reforms, the film is a kaleidoscope of a changing China, as seen through the lens of four grandmothers, according to the 36-year-old filmmaker. It's also a recollection of a past the women still treasure, despite the myriad hardships they faced....

Stream entire 7-minute film here: <http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1002021/dancing-grannies-share-stories-from-their-past>



A FIRST FAREWELL — 2018 (87 MINUTES)

Wang Lina's experimental debut explores the sensitivity shared by narrative filmmaking and documenting reality, unveiling poetry from the minutiae of Uighurs' life in Xinjiang like none other. Tailing an endearing boy named Isa in Shaya, her heavenly home village surrounded by textured sand dunes and millennia-old trees, she tugs viewers' heartstrings with a story about treasures in his carefree childhood and how they gradually fade away, as love, home, and personal advancement get weighed against another for this generation of minority children, who must bid many farewells to assimilate into the more widely acknowledged best life.

Review: 'A First Farewell' Bids Goodbye to a Uyghur Childhood

<https://supchina.com/2021/02/26/a-first-farewell-bids-goodbye-to-a-uyghur-childhood/>

...Given the horrors in Xinjiang right now, some viewers might be disappointed by its indirectness, but it's only natural that a movie aiming to be approved by Chinese censors has to put what it's saying softly. Talking about a form of oppression as explicit as internment camps is out of the question in China. Although the film is careful, there's a strong theme about the Sinicization of Uyghur culture. Several adults push the kids to speak Mandarin, promoting the notion that it's better and more sophisticated. Nowhere is this attitude stressed more than at the kids' school, where they study classical Chinese poets but learn nothing about their own culture or history. The teachers reigning over these classes are authoritarian and indifferent. Step out of line, or don't meet expectations, and you're berated like poor Kalbinur and her mother...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqT9mvSNCgw>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/a-first-farewell>

THE LAND OF PEACH BLOSSOMS — 2018 (99 MINUTES)

<https://www.idfa.nl/en/film/7ce9edb2-f54c-4820-8ed3-b2b4f4df3bbb/the-land-of-peach-blossoms>

One of the skyscrapers in the Chinese city of Chongqing houses a unique restaurant. The diners at the big round table become part of a spectacular show featuring dance and martial arts, inspired by old traditions and contemporary patriotism. Behind the scenes, the company's founder and authoritarian leader, a bored-looking chain smoker, imposes a strict collectivism. Personal opinions are forbidden, while thinking and behaving like the Leader is the ideal. Self-criticism is a frequently performed ritual. *The Land of Peach Blossoms* follows life in the company over several months and shows the extent to which the staff submits to this brainwashing experience. The title is borrowed from an old fable by Tao Yuanming about a utopian community. Is this restaurant a similar experiment? As the Leader's angry tirades intensify, cracks begin to appear in his team's faith. The exhausting work and the paltry wages don't help in what seems to become a metaphor for modern China.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LoPsxKV8sb4>

**YELLOW IS FORBIDDEN — 2018 (95 MINUTES)**

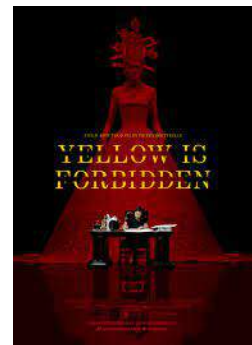
<https://fashionista.com/2018/04/yellow-is-forbidden-guo-pe-documentary>

In the new film, *Yellow Is Forbidden*, veteran documentarian Pietra Brettkelly captures Beijing-born designer Guo Pei's fierce artistic vision and drive, from the designer's prosaic childhood to her remarkable Spring 2017 Couture show in Paris. Along the way, Brettkelly highlights the many opposing forces that conflict with Pei's dream of being selected into the exclusive world of haute couture: Chinese tradition versus Western modernity, acceptance versus prejudice, and maintaining a healthy, lucrative business versus pursuing more expensive and rare techniques. Nevertheless, we watch Pei persevere to become an extraordinary champion for her art and become the first Chinese designer invited into the official *Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture*, the French governing body for couture.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TkobOm1Yx0o&feature=emb_logo

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/yellow-is-forbidden>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5611639>



THE OUTSIDER TRILOGY (DOCUMENTARIES BY YANG ZHENGFAN) DOWN THERE 2018 (11 MINUTES)

A blissful night is unexpectedly interrupted by a sound from downstairs. Different reactions are triggered as well as the relentless indifference.

Director Zhengfan Yang statement: Seeing is believing, hearing is deceiving. Is it?

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/281101082>

WHERE ARE YOU GOING? 2016 (130 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5449374/>

Where Are You Going is the second part of "The Outsider Trilogy", following my (Zhengfan Yang) previous film *Distant* (2013). The one and only character in the film is Hong Kong, a city where I spent five years living there as an outsider. During my stay in Hong Kong, I, together with the city, experienced its intensive economic/political/social changes from 2009 to 2014. Conveyed by thirteen journeys on a taxi wandering around the city, with off-screen conversations between the driver and different passengers, this film explores the moving landscape of Hong Kong, examining the city's past, present and future, as well as unveiling the alienation and confusion of its people after the reform.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiH9S35GDMI>

DISTANT 2013 (88 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3103370/?ref=nm_knf_t3

Distant is a film that is made up of 13 sections, each comprised of a single long take. Each section tells a story about distance between different time and space, focusing on the subtle moments when people are suddenly confronted with modernity and gradually become lost in the transition between this and their present lives. Without any dialogue, simply working with image, sound and actions of the characters, these 13 dramatic, realistic and mysterious scenes are painted. It tries to describe today's human condition in an abstract way - its alienation, abandonment and eternal loneliness.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rihVfNO21Cs>



PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF DESIRE — 2018 (95 MINUTES)

<https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/peoples-republic-of-desire/>

This is not Black Mirror; this is real life.

In an age where the power of technology helps us connect, are we as isolated as ever?

People's Republic of Desire exposed the baffling reality of how virtual relationships are replacing real-life human connections through China's video-based social network YY- a hugely popular gathering place for over 300 million people in China. From the super-rich, who lavish virtual gifts on their favorite live-streamers to the very poor, many of them migrant workers in urban area searching for cheap entertainment and a way to feel connected.



Disturbing and provocative, *People's Republic of Desire* explores the strange world of these live-streaming "showrooms," where the most popular stars can earn hundreds of thousands of dollars a month for adoring fans who "tip" them with digital gifts paid for with actual cash. It is a virtual dystopia, or a chance for a second life? What are the

consequences for all of us when human connections are put up for sale to the highest bidder?

Q & A with Director Hao Wu

<https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/blog/director-explores-live-streaming-revolution-and-how-technology-affects-human-happiness/>

Is This Real Life: The Live Streaming Craze Explained (includes several clips)

<https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/blog/is-this-real-life-the-live-streaming-craze-explained/>

Clip: <https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/videos/peoples-republic-of-desire-vote-for-livestreamers-clip/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HvhJWcdsI30>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/peoples-republic-of-desire>

DEAD SOULS — 2018 (506 MINUTES)

<https://www.dgeneratefilms.com/catalog/DEAD-SOULS>

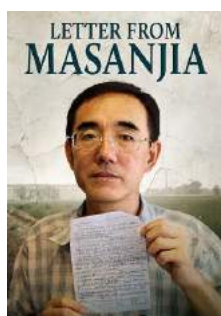
In Gansu Province, northwest China, lie the remains of countless prisoners abandoned in the Gobi Desert sixty years ago. Designated as “ultra-rightists” in the Communist Party’s Anti-Rightist campaign of 1957, they starved to death in the Jiabiangou and Mingshui reeducation camps. The film invites us to meet the survivors of the camps to find out firsthand who these persons were, the hardships they were forced to endure and what became their destiny.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/304640893>



LETTER FROM MASANJIA — 2018 (76 MINUTES)

<https://www.letterfrommasanjia.com/>



Letter from Masanjia begins when mom of two, Julie Keith, finds an SOS note in a box of “Made in China” Halloween decorations from an Oregon Kmart. The desperate note was written by a political prisoner named Sun Yi, from inside China’s notorious Masanjia labor camp. On the crumpled page that travelled over 5000 miles, he details being jailed for his spiritual beliefs and how he is being subjected to torture and brainwashing tactics. His message goes viral and miraculously leads to the closure of China’s entire labor camp system. But their story is far from over.

Peabody-winning Canadian filmmaker Leon Lee is not welcome in his native country because of his prior films about China’s human rights abuses. So, in *Letter from Masanjia*, he teaches Sun Yi to use camera equipment via Skype. For over a year, Sun Yi secretly captures harrowing footage of his daily life as a human rights defender, leading up to his tense run from the Chinese authorities. Meanwhile, just outside Portland, Julie Keith is struggling with her own dilemmas as a mother newly embroiled in this cause.

Together, these unlikely heroes expose China’s ongoing persecution against millions whose ideology differs from the Chinese government.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JogjRLM5j8>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/letter-from-masanjia>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5665998>

THE SILK AND THE FLAME — 2018 (100 MINUTES)

<https://www.siff.net/festival-2018/the-silk-and-the-flame>

As Yao makes his annual trek back to his traditionalist family during Chinese New Year, he struggles to reconcile his Beijing life with his family’s expectations in this intimate, evocative, and bittersweet true story.

Director Jordan Schiele’s debut documentary feature film, *The Silk and the Flame*, is inspired by a Chinese proverb: “Concealing truth is like wearing embroidered clothes and traveling by night.” There is beauty in truth, opines Schiele, but if one cannot display it in the light of day, who will see it? At the center of Schiele’s docu-fable is Yao, a single, middle-aged man whose life choices in Beijing have little or no resemblance to the family life back in his tiny native village hundreds of miles away. When Schiele

accompanies Yao home during Chinese Lunar New Year, it becomes clear that the weight of Yao's secret life, as well as the expectations of his family (especially from his father) and the turbulent convergence of both ancient and modern China are combining to create a combustible cultural showdown of mythic proportions. Having solved every problem his family has faced over the years—illness, poverty, educating his siblings' children, and putting a roof over their heads—Yao now faces his final hurdle: to be present as the man he truly is.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-pJWjGL0Hw>

RIVER'S EDGE — 2017 (96 MINUTES)

<https://www.chinaonscreen.org/program/rivers-edge/>

What happens in director Wang Chao's meditative drama is suggested in the pairing of its Chinese and English titles (the former translates as "Love between a Father and Son"). Love is indeed found at river's edge in this quietly powerful film whose spell lingers long after its last frame fades to black.

River's Edge marks a return to form for Wang who made a critical splash with his 2001 directorial debut *The Orphan of Anyang* and his 2006 Prix Un Certain Regard winner *Luxury Car*. His latest film picks up some of the thematic and formal preoccupations of the earlier titles: parents separated from their children, fathers looking for missing sons, contemplative long takes, and the prolific use of non-professionals – which in *River's Edge* is the entire cast but for one character.

A Beijing businessman travels to a poor, remote village to search for the body of his son who has died in a river-boat accident. By film's end the wealthy out-of-towner has turned accidental witness to a rural China that while placid on the surface is in fact roiled by powerful socioeconomic currents from afar. This breathtaking terrain-shifting, accomplished with the gentlest of touch by Wang, seeps through every aspect of *River's Edge*. A film that begins by articulating the polarity of separate and unequal worlds – living vs. the dead, urban vs. rural, rich vs. poor – gradually collapses those polarities until all are inextricably fused. So absence becomes achingly present, the global reaches into the local, documentary bleeds into fiction, the dead mingle with the living, and perhaps most surprisingly of all, the poetry of American troubadour Bob Dylan echoes melodiously in Chinese.

Review: <https://asianmoviepulse.com/2019/02/film-review-rivers-edge-2017-by-wang-chao/>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_fG5eZfzQY



MAINLAND — 2017 (90 MINUTES)

<http://www.mainlandfilm.com/>

Filmed over three years in China and the U.S., *Mainland* is a multi-layered coming-of-age tale that follows two affluent and cosmopolitan teenagers as they settle into a boarding school in blue-collar rural Maine. Part of the enormous wave of "parachute students" from China enrolling in U.S. private schools, bubbly, fun-loving Stella and introspective Harry come seeking a Western-style education, escape from the dreaded Chinese college entrance exam, and the promise of a

Hollywood-style U.S. high school experience. As Stella and Harry's fuzzy visions of the American dream slowly gain more clarity, they ruminate on their experiences of alienation, culture clash, and personal identity, sharing new understandings and poignant discourses on home and country.



Review for Teachers:

<https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/ea/archives/mainland-directed-by-miao-wang/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpuR-lHaPyA>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/mainland>

PRESENT. PERFECT — 2017 (124 MINUTES)

<https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/livestreaming-china-shengze-zhu-discusses-present-perfect>

...Documentary filmmaker Shengze Zhu first started watching livestreaming shows from China when she heard about the 2017 story of a young man who was recording a stunt on top of a skyscraper and tragically fell to his death. She soon became fascinated by the form of livestreaming itself and recorded more than 800 hours' worth of footage, molding it into the film that would become *Present.Perfect*.

The individuals who host these shows are known as anchors and Zhu found herself drawn to the more quotidian shows, which is reflected in the film. We follow characters that are often seen as peripheral in society. A young mother working in a garment factory, and a man whose face was disfigured by a fire feature prominently, as does a construction worker and a man with dwarfism who creates art on the street. These real-life characters express an authentic sense of intimacy through their recordings, which Zhu organizes into a four-part structure.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmVgbiEDs_0



JIABIANGOU ELEGY: LIFE AND DEATH OF THE RIGHTISTS — 2017 (82 MINUTES)

This documentary series recounts the persecution of inmates at the Jiabiangou labor camp in Jiuquan, Gansu province and examines the way the victims final affairs were handled. During the Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1957-59, more than three thousand people were sent to Jiabiangou for re-education through labor. These people were labeled rightists, counterrevolutionaries, and anti-party dissidents.

Jiabiangou Elegy includes interviews with the few remaining survivors and their children, and presents the conflict between the preservation and destruction of memory.

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://spl.kanopy.com/video/jiabiangou-elegy-life-and-death-rightists-0>

WE THE WORKERS — 2017 (174 MINUTES)

<https://www.dgeneratefilms.com/catalog/WE-THE-WORKERS>

China's economic miracle has been built on cheap labor. And now, that labor is starting to fight back.

Filmed in the southeastern part of the country, *We the Workers* is a vérité documentary that closely follows people organizing workers and fighting for collective bargaining rights. They find themselves up against factory employees who don't understand their rights and fear the consequences of organizing, police and government officials who see them as dangerous troublemakers, and foreign owners who ignore what lax regulations do exist...

Q&A with director: <https://www.chinoiresie.info/we-the-workers-huang-wenhai/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndY1294mVDk>



JIAYI — 2017 (75 MINUTES)

<https://u.osu.edu/mclc/2017/05/09/interview-with-documentarian-jiang-nengjie/>

When he was a child, Jiang Nengjie's parents left him behind in their Hunan village when they went to find work in Guangdong province. Now he's a filmmaker who's made four documentaries about left-behind children.

Unaccustomed to the fast pace of city life, Jiang, 32, lives in his hometown and splits his time between making films and taking care of three village libraries he established in the county for left-behind children.

Jiang Nengjie "I feel empathy for Jiayi [a left-behind girl who is the main character in the film]. Her family reminds me of my childhood. The film is a tribute to my childhood. I can see myself in her. She also has a younger brother. She has to take care of her brother and do lots of household chores. She is like a parent. Because the child is a positive figure, the local government also likes the film. I respect Jiayi's parents. Although they left her behind in the village, they've kept good communication, unlike other parents who are estranged from their children. It's a matter of awareness. Jiayi and her parents talk on the phone every two or three days. During summer holidays, they take Jiayi and her brother to their workplaces and live together for a month."

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/jiayi/413929197?autoplay=1>

Rent: <https://www.orientindiefilms.com/content/documentary/jia-yi/>



AWAKEN — 2017 (62 MINUTES)

<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1001392/the-chinese-fisherman-and-the-sea>

Awaken — Ning Jiawei's 2016 thesis project at southwestern China's Sichuan Fine Arts Institute — is an experimental film with no character introduction, dialogue, narration, or major conflicts. Instead, it centers on one person and his mundane daily routine. Much of the story is told from the fisherman's point of view, and many of the shots were taken by the fisherman himself with a GoPro. The sea also becomes a character in the story, and the ambient sound under and above the water are the lines it speaks. The hourlong film was short-listed in the Mid-Length Documentary category at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), the world's largest documentary film festival, which took place in November 2017. (see interview with filmmaker Ning Jiawei at the above link.)

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YY0qR4OVgtY>

Stream 62-minute film here: <https://filmfreeway.com/1321769>

FOUR SPRINGS — 2017 (105 MINUTES)

https://www.cmu.edu/faces/Previous_Festivals/2019women/foursprings.html



After the popularity of his online diary, *My Father*, filmmaker Lu Qingyi decided to turn a camera on his parents' everyday life in a remote town in Guizhou. Over four springs, we see the flow of life: chores, singing, hikes, celebrations, funerals, reunions, and separation. After a family tragedy forces Qingyi from the role of participant to

observer, he becomes more deeply moved by the open-minded, pristine life philosophy his parents reveal through their everyday interactions with people and nature. Using cinema as a tool, Lu crafts a profound visual diary of family in southwest China that will have the viewer calling their family to say “I love you” as soon as the screen goes dark.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hxfqn3-07s>

AFRICANS IN YIWU — 2017 (6 EPISODES)

<https://www.chinafile.com/library/china-africa-project/new-documentary-portrays-nuanced-view-of-africans-experience-living>

Africans in Yiwu is a 6-episode on-line documentary film produced by the Center for African Film and TV Research of the Institute of African Studies at Zhejiang Normal University. This film focuses on the lives of the African Community in the City of Yiwu, and surrounding areas of Zhejiang Province.

When filmmakers Zhang Yong, Hodan Abdi, and Fu Dong set out to make a new documentary on the African migrant experience in China, they were determined to ensure that their own voices and experiences came through in the story. Until now, most if not all of the documentary films on Africans in China have been produced by Westerners, so it was very important to this filmmaking trio that an authentic, blended Chinese African voice frame the narrative of their film.

Africans in Yiwu is a long-form documentary that portrays the lives of a group of young, ambitious African migrants in the Chinese coastal city of Yiwu. Little known outside of China, Yiwu has been one of China’s leading trading hubs for over 2,000 years and is now home to People’s Republic of China’s second-largest population of African migrants.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0BGLPIyZDE&feature=emb_logo

COMPLICIT — 2017 (89 MINUTES)

<http://www.complicitfilm.org/>

Filmed below the radar in China by Sun Shaoguang (and produced by Heather White and Lynn Chang) and sparking a global campaign with the release of its first trailer, *Complicit* tells the story of Chinese migrant worker Yi Yeting, and his effort to eliminate life-threatening benzene from workplaces producing smartphones.

While struggling with occupational leukemia, he discovers many others have also been poisoned at tech factories in the Pearl River Delta.

Seeking justice Yi travels from his hospital room where he helps other workers, to Silicon Valley and the international stage. Against huge odds, he directly confronts corporate and government interests, while empowering and inspiring the people around him.

With unparalleled access and intimate portraits of the workers behind our devices, *Complicit* is about family, the challenges faced by everyday Chinese citizens, and the young workers sacrificing everything to make the devices we cannot live without.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mL68rayV9_I

Africansinchina.net is the world’s most comprehensive repository about African presence in China.

<https://africansinchina.net/about-2/>

The China Africa Project (CAP) is a multimedia resource dedicated to exploring every aspect of China’s growing engagement with Africa.

<https://chinaafricaproject.com/>

JOSHUA: TEENAGER VS. SUPERPOWER — 2017 (79 MINUTES)

<https://www.sundance.org/projects/joshua-teenager-vs-superpower>

Joshua Wong is not your typical Hong Kong college student. Inside the bespectacled, unassuming teenager simmers a fierce political activist whose question for his compatriots is simple: Why should China decide our values? Armed with a political philosophy of Scholarism and enormous cojones, Wong is so deeply committed to his convictions that he's willing to go up against anyone, including the Chinese regime, to fight for them.

Amid the glistening cityscape, filmmaker Joe Piscatella shows us another side of Hong Kong—where a new generation, in defiance of the ghosts of Tiananmen Square, has asserted its identity against the mood of disillusionment that ignited mass protests in 2014. A powerful, charismatic spokesperson, Joshua comes of age on screen as he rallies tens of thousands to civil disobedience as part of a 79-day campaign to shut down Hong Kong's financial district. Determined not to "dump this problem on the next generation," Joshua risks it all and doubles down as the crackdown intensifies, becoming the face of a movement in the process.

Review:

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/may/27/joshua-teenager-vs-superpower-review-a-hong-kong-schoolboy-takes-the-fight-to-china>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IN9_mQq2mQ

Stream on Netflix: <https://www.netflix.com/title/80169348>



HANZI — 2016 (57 MINUTES)

<https://www.hanzithemovie.com/>

Hanzi is a feature-length documentary exploring international design, visual culture and identity through the lens of modern Chinese typography.

Chinese is one of the oldest and most used languages in the world, yet it is perceived as difficult to learn. Furthermore, there has been a lack of discussion on Chinese typography and its transition into the digital era compared to its western counterparts. Recently there has been a renaissance and reviewing of Chinese characters in Asia and internationally, with typography and lettering books often topping the best selling books, and more and more typographical courses and workshops being held in the cities. We think that's worth exploring to the discussion of design and cultural identity.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtiyfyc1yWQ>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/3214573>



HOOLIGAN SPARROW — 2016 (91 MINUTES)

<http://archive.pov.org/hooligansparrow/film-description/>

Speaking truth to power is dangerous in some places, including modern-day China, where corrupt

government officials deal very harshly with critics.

Chinese officials prove especially displeased when their critics include an activist lawyer, outraged parents, a fearless filmmaker, and a sex workers' rights activist with a wicked sense of humor. *Hooligan Sparrow*, Nanfu Wang's feature debut, centers on a horrible crime



TED: Controlling time through story | Nanfu Wang

Documentary filmmaker Nanfu Wang discusses the impact of major moments in life and how film distorts and manipulates them. In this perspective-shifting talk, she tells us some of her story, from following feminist protesters as she filmed her documentary *Hooligan Sparrow* across China while under the close watch of the government to the heartbreak of her father's untimely death. As they forever changed her, these happenings woke her up to the possibility of how a story can impact the perception time.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NAI77gAlfc>

that took place in 2013: A school principal and a member of the education bureaucracy abducted six female students 11 to 14 years of age, took them to a hotel and sexually assaulted them over a 24-hour period. When parents and their supporters demanded justice, the perpetrators insisted the girls were prostitutes. Then the powers-that-be and their hired thugs really started playing hardball...see this POV website for complete text, interviews, and resources.

NPR Review:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/10/17/497697103/when-6-girls-are-sexually-assaulted-hooligan-sparrow-seeks-justice>



Lesson plan/discussion guides Dissent and Freedom of speech: Using Biography to Compare China and the U.S. <http://archive.pov.org/hooligansparrow/film-description/>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJ1ajITz8_0

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/444568>



STILL TOMORROW — 2016 (88 MINUTES)

<https://www.pbs.org/pov/watch/stilltomorrow/>

A village woman with no high school diploma becomes China's most famous poet, and her book of poetry the best-selling such volume in China in the past 20 years. *Still Tomorrow* follows Yu Xiuhua, a 39-year-old woman living with cerebral palsy, as she faces sudden fame. The film poignantly weaves her personal narrative with that of an ascendant, urbanizing China. (see site for short 2-minute interviews with director Jian Fan).



...This character piece by Jian Fan (*Wu Tu: My Land*) is an appropriately poetic rendering of Yu's life and struggle. The film watches Yu as she gains her voice through her poetry and Jian Fan offers methodical observational shots of the land and countryside that inspire Yu while voiceover and title cards immerse the viewers in her poetry. The peaceful serenity of the countryside and idyll moments of artistic

creation are far more pleasing than the grating presence of her husband. One understands why Yu seeks an escape. *Still Tomorrow* is a touching character portrait that dives right into the heart of a poet and illustrates how the arts empower and sustain us.

Review: <http://povmagazine.com/articles/view/review-still-tomorrow>

Q & A with Fan Jian:

<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1696/q%26a-with-fan-jian-on-documentaries-of-desire>

2022 Update on Yu Xiuhua: https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/EtR4X_7h9qdiFdOAKEPsTw

Trailer: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/watch/stilltomorrow/video-trailer-still-tomorrow/>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/still-tomorrow>

THE LAST DALAI LAMA? — 2016 (82 MINUTES)

<https://tricycle.org/trikedaily/review-last-dalai-lama/>

...Every film begins with a question, Lemle has said—something he's keen to know. *The Last Dalai Lama?* is no exception, though more than one question seems to have inspired him here. An obvious one: does His Holiness hate the Chinese? The answer, in a clip

lifted from *Compassion in Exile*, is no. His Holiness describes his lifelong daily practice of *tonglen*, or taking and giving: he takes the anger, ignorance, and suffering of the Chinese into himself and gives them “positive thoughts” in return. Since the situation in Tibet has worsened, not improved, in the past quarter century, the follow up question is a natural: “Has it worked? Who’s benefitted from your 40 years of that practice?” “Benefit to myself,” His Holiness shoots back, laughing. “It won’t help the actual problem, but immense help to maintain peace of mind”—key to making better decisions that benefit all.

As for the question posed in the film’s title, Lemle follows His Holiness’s shifting thoughts on the subject, even as the Chinese are tightening efforts to control recognition and installation of all future lamas, not just the Dalai Lama. The film reiterates His Holiness’s position: any future Dalai Lama, if there is one, will be born outside Tibet. He hasn’t ruled out reincarnating, but only “where there are some difficulties or problems, where I can make a contribution.”

To the final question—how is he preparing for death?—the answer, predictably, is practice: “If my mind is clear, I’m quite sure I will remember while I’m dying about altruism for sentient beings.”

The Last Dalai Lama? offers no great revelations. But His Holiness’s presence is always uplifting. And on the deep questions, as usual, he gives us food for thought.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5v_Rpg_36ig



GUANGZHOU DREAM FACTORY — 2016 (66 MINUTES)

<https://www.gzdreamfactory.com/about-the-film/>

Guangzhou, a.k.a. Canton, is southern China’s centuries-old trading port. Today the booming metropolis of 14 million is a mecca of mass consumption, its vast international trading centers, crammed with every “Made in China” good imaginable. Every year more than half a million Africans travel to Guangzhou where they buy goods to sell back in in Africa. Over time, some have chosen to stay, and for these Africans China looks like the new land of opportunity, a place where anything is possible. But is it? Featuring a dynamic cast of men and women from Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda. *Guangzhou Dream Factory* weaves the stories of Africans chasing alluring, yet elusive, “Made in China” dreams into a compelling critique of 21st century global capitalism. Following a filmmakers’ journey from Ghana to China and back to Africa, *Guangzhou Dream Factory* provides a rare glimpse of African aspirations in an and of endless outsourcing.

Review: <http://www.cihablog.com/film-review-guangzhou-dream-factory/>

Q & A: Filmmaker Christiane Badgley along with faculty Tristan Ivory and Tao Leigh Goffe moderated by grad student Kun Huang discussed the film with audience members: <https://vimeo.com/516259454>

Trailer: <https://www.gzdreamfactory.com/trailer/>

Stream free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/339271>

PAPA RAINBOW — 2016 (77 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5472146/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

In China, most families have difficulties facing their lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT) children. They have to contend with common social beliefs that homosexuality is shameful, abnormal, a perverted condition caused by deviant family relationships. Many parents see their kids as their property, and fathers often assert their authority to ensure that no harm comes to the family reputation. The documentary

Papa Rainbow features six Chinese fathers who talk openly and freely about their experiences with their LGBT children. Speaking out against discrimination and stigma, they redefine what it means to protect a household. They fully embrace their kids for who they are, and become pioneer activists fighting for an equal and diverse society. Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSfC-RzpLK0>

BORN IN CHINA — 2016 (79 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2017/film/reviews/born-in-china-review-1202027208/>

...*Born in China* makes a number of pointed references to the ravishing glory of the Chinese wilderness, but what's striking about it, really, is that the sections of Western and Central China in which the film was shot look so much like areas of the Rocky Mountains. It's a bit of a revelation, because when we think of China, we tend to imagine either sprawling cities or a certain kind of decorous flat rural farming terrain. To the extent that *Born in China* is, by its very existence, a minor act of cross-cultural diplomacy, its most progressive effect is to unveil the majestic diversity of Chinese landscapes.



And, of course, to show us how pandas really live! China is the only place on earth where these roly-poly creatures exist in the wild, and the story that *Born in China* tells, of a panda named Ya Ya raising her

child, Mei Mei, in the bamboo woods, is one of unadorned love and a kind of becalmed indolence. The tender comedy of pandas is that they really look like what they are: the soulful couch potatoes of nature. They basically sit around stuffing their faces, consuming up to 40 pounds of bamboo a day, but that doesn't mean they aren't good at moving; one of Mei Mei's crucial rituals is to learn how to scurry up a tree. In the most quietly touching story "*Born in China*" tells, these two must finally separate, not because anything harsh happens but simply because life happens, a lesson the movie presents with a simplicity that should resonate with adults and children alike.

Trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGJh7Zhq6SE>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/born-in-china>

THIS IS LIFE — 2016 (106 MINUTES)

<https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-capsule-this-is-life-review-20161119-story.html>

This Is Life, directed by Chen Weijun, opens with an instrumental "Ave Maria" playing over the sound of crying newborn babies while a camera floats angelically above the fray of a hospital floor. It's the single moment of respite in the film until the end, where the film closes with a tender song about motherhood over soaring aerial cityscapes.

What comes in between isn't so gentle. It's a harrowing journey into the bowels of a large urban hospital where high-risk pregnancies and births are tackled with a jarring forthrightness by the doctors.

Weijun and his filmmaking team were granted intimate access to the hospital, and the footage they capture obscures none of the hard, messy truths about childbirth. For Western audiences, there may be something a bit shocking about the brutally honest

Chen Weijun Selected Documentary Filmography

- 2016 *This is Life* (Director)
- 2012 *Education*, *Education* (Director)
- 2012 *Chinese Dream* (Director)
- 2008 *The Biggest Chinese Restaurant in the World* (Director, Cinematographer)
- 2007 *Please Vote for Me* (Director, Cinematographer)
- 2003 *To Live Is Better Than To Die* (Director, Cinematographer)

bedside manner of the doctors, as well as their demands for payment up front. One rural farmer enlists his brother to collect funds so that the hospital will schedule a surgery to save his wife and their premature twins.

With a fly-on-the-wall observational approach, the film's unobtrusive style and loose structure following four different women's experiences can feel overwhelming. But what emerges is a portrait of doctors and staff who work hard to do the right thing for their patients and the babies, who have no voice. It is life, fought for and forged in the most difficult of circumstances.



UNDER THE SAME SKY — 2016 (20 MINUTES)

<https://www.newday.com/film/under-same-sky>

In 2014, the Chinese government started a new national campaign on equal elementary education, but at the same time strengthened the residential registration system to segregate the rural and urban areas. Through this observational documentary we watch as class and regional lines collide to debunk the Chinese propaganda about equality. The truth is revealed that the elementary education in China puts young children under unbearable and shocking pressure, which is what I've personally suffered from while growing up. Now as an adult, in reviewing the education I received in China I discovered the influence it had on me and what it is still doing to children today that come from different backgrounds.

Trailer:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiW_UBiv2IU&list=PLh5xsVxKnSNgBd3ihWJw4PaMWnx3bro5s&index=116

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/3910487>

THE IVORY GAME — 2016 (112 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Ivory_Game

The documentary concerns the poaching of elephants in Africa, related to the ivory trade in China and Hong Kong, and the repercussions of elephant poaching if it is allowed to continue. Directors Keif Davidson and Richard Ladkani spent 16 months undercover along with their crew and several subjects investigating the killing of elephants for their tusks and the smuggling of ivory to China, where it is seen as a status symbol. While illegal, there is a rampant black market where corrupt business practices and dealings occur. The film takes its viewers from Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia to China, Hong Kong, and Vietnam, briefly stopping in London... In China, Andrea Crosta, who is head of investigation for Wildleaks, a whistle-blowing site for "wildlife crime", and Hongxiang Huang, an investigative journalist, go undercover to gather evidence of illegal importing and selling of ivory. China has become the world's biggest market for ivory. The Chinese government releases 5 tons of ivory per year to licensed dealers, making it difficult to discern between legal and illegal ivory. Crosta and Huang, along with their hidden cameras, expose many dealers bragging about having much more ivory than their licenses allow and reveals the many loopholes in ivory regulations which have helped create an intense demand.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-ivory-game-2016>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GPEKKaSmZY>

Stream on Netflix: <https://www.netflix.com/title/80117533>

PLASTIC CHINA — 2016 (86 MINUTES)

<https://filmsfortheearth.org/en/films/plastic-china>

...*Plastic China's* main character Yi-Jie is an unschooled 11-year-old girl whose family works and lives in a typical plastic waste household-recycling workshop. As much as her life is poor and distorted, she's a truly global child who learns the outside world from the waste workshop that her family lives in and works in - also known as the "United Nations of Plastic Wastes." She lives her happiness and sorrows amongst the waste, as well. Small packs of discarded instant black powder tells her the bitter taste of "coffee"; the English children's learning cards teach her words like "summer" and "father's day"; and broken Barbie dolls are her best friends to talk to. This is her world.

Where Will Your Plastic Trash Go Now That China Doesn't Want It?

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/03/13/702501726/where-will-your-plastic-trash-go-now-that-china-doesnt-want-it#:~:text=A%20lot%20of%20the%20plastic,thus%20not%20profitable%20to%20import.>

Her father has promised to send her to school five years ago but not yet delivered on it. Instead, he spends his hard-earned money from the plastic workshop on alcohol. However, Yi-Jie keeps her wish alive of going to school one day, and we see her holding her playful campaign towards learning and schooling. Will she succeed to sit in a classroom and learn? Or will she succeed her parents as an illiterate laborer in the recycling workshop? What is her future?

Kun, the owner of this household-recycling workshop, represents money, power and the educated class for Yi-Jie. He looks down on Yi-Jie's family, but also depends on them to do the dirty labor that nobody else wants to do. Often, he teaches Yi-Jie to read and write, when he is in a good mood.

Kun works day and night and ignores the physical and mental health problems of his own family and himself, just to save for a sedan car like any other factory boss in the region. He's afraid of being looked down upon and owning a car is the status symbol of being successful in the world.

Following these families' daily lives, *Plastic China* explores how this work of recycling plastic waste with their bare hands takes a toll not only on their health, but also their own dilemma of poverty, disease, pollution and death. All of this to eek out a daily living..

Use in class: <https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/ea/archives/plastic-china/>

Teacher Guide: http://misc.docuseek2.com/gej/guides/gj-022a_guide.pdf

Trailer: <https://www.cnex.tw/plasticchina>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/plastic-china>



BITTER MONEY — 2016 (153 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/11/movies/bitter-money-review.html>

...Wang Bing's subject is the mass migration to Huzhou, where a boom in clothing manufacturing seems roughly comparable to the North Dakota oil rush in the United States. Residents from rural areas have gone to Huzhou for jobs. Mr. Wang documents the bustle on a crowded train to the city, though typically, he doesn't provide statistical details until the closing title cards.

Only some of the workers, filmed between 2014 and 2016, stand out. The most tense interaction occurs early, when a woman who has left her abusive husband returns to him seeking money. Mr. Wang films

the resulting altercation in a 10-minute take, with his camera crouching outside a shop door like a voyeur. The director's methods are open to ethical debate, but the power of his filmmaking, at its best, is not.

Review: <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/bitter-money-ku-qian-film-928706>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSXj5d7f41w>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/bitter-money>

TA'ANG — 2016 (148 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/04/movies/taang-review-wang-bing.html>

The documentary filmmaker Wang Bing is a dogged chronicler of China's downtrodden. His *Ta'ang* also documents a kind of limbo. During armed clashes in Myanmar in February 2015, refugees from the Ta'ang and other ethnic minority groups in the country's northeastern Kokang region fled across the border into China.

Mr. Wang spends time on the Chinese side, observing daily life in refugee camps and at other sites along the mountainous border. The refugees cut sugar cane to sell and scrounge for money for personal transport. We learn of separated families. It's a mild shock whenever someone uses a cellphone — a rare reminder of modernity.

Incorporating his typically arduous, slow-paced style, Mr. Wang doesn't make things easy for viewers. His subjects aren't identified directly; the person speaking is frequently off camera. This vagueness may be a universalizing strategy, reflecting a place where people are, in one man's words, "here one minute, gone the next." But it's also a double-edged sword that prevents most participants from standing out.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lcgo7YDk64>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/taang>

NANGCHEN SHORTS — 2016 — WATER (8 MINUTES), RITUAL OBJECTS (15 MINUTES), AND TSAMPA (7 MINUTES)

<http://www.btgproductions.com/nangchen>

Nangchen Shorts, a triptych of short films, were filmed in and around Kala Rongo, a Buddhist Monastery exclusively for women in Kham, Tibet.

In *Water*, a Tibetan woman collects water near her family's yak farm, in a ritual that takes her an hour to complete. In the developing world, water-gathering is primarily a woman's job - rural Tibet is no exception. Several times a day, she carries a bucket to a potable source of water and brings it back home 80-pounds full. This task is physically debilitating, and keeps her from seeking education, wage-earning jobs, and rest from her other exhausting tasks.

Ritual Objects explores three traditional Buddhist rituals via the implements that are used in them. A young nun shares the meaning and mechanics of the iconic Tibetan Prayer Wheel. The visit of a High Lama to their remote monastery prompts a group of nuns to prepare a customary welcoming procession. And an old monk gently instructs one of the nuns on how to prepare the tormas for an intricate Tibetan Buddhist ceremony.

Trailer: <http://www.btgproductions.com/nangchen>

In *Tsampa*, a young nun quietly preparing tsampa in a traditional yak tent and are treated to a brief lesson in how to make eating a mindful act. Tsampa - sometimes called the Tibetan national food - is a mixture of roasted barley flour, yak butter and tea, and is often the only food available to the subsistence farmers and yak herders of rural Tibet.



In 2019, *Water* was selected for the Italian educational program "BETWEEN CINEMA AND NATURE: Training for Sustainable Development." This initiative pairs films with a country-wide school curriculum raising awareness of the 17 goals of the United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030. *Water* has been chosen to enrich the discussion of Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation.

Trailer: <http://www.btgproductions.com/nangchen>

SKY LADDER — 2016 (76 MINUTES)

This documentary is directed by Scotland-born Kevin McDonald. *The Sky Ladder* is a 1,650-foot ladder of fire climbing into the skies above artist Cai Guo-Qiang's hometown. Creating ambitious signature pieces on the largest imaginable scales, Cai's electrifying work often transcends physical permanence while burning its philosophies into the audience members' minds. Told through the artist's own words and those of family, friends and observers, the film tracks Cai's meteoric rise and examines why he engineers artworks that loom as far as the eye can see.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/sky-ladder-the-art-of-cai-guo-qiang-2016>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILTT8ogRf50>

ANOTHER YEAR — 2016 (181 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5886728/>

Thirteen dinners of a Chinese migrant worker's family over the course of fourteen months. The film portrays a series of random occurrences. Joys, frustrations and the struggle for survival. The meals unfold in real-time through thirteen static, long takes. Each take captures with vivid detail the reality of the relationships between the different family members. As the seasons unfold, so does time and the echoes for better working conditions penetrate the frame. Issues such as the one-child policy and the possibilities for better wages weigh heavily on the minds of the three-generation family. Thus, the room where the family gathers night after night becomes an observational microcosm of the transformations that the Chinese working class faces on a daily basis. By examining the lives of migrant workers, who left their rural hometowns to look for a better life in cities, the film creates a powerful and moving meditation on China's economic boom and massive urbanization...

Reviews: <https://theartsofslowcinema.com/2016/04/12/another-year-shengze-zhu-2016/>

<https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/shengze-zhu-introduces-her-film-another-year>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nROUeZlqtY>

FACTORY YOUTH — 2016 (196 MINUTES)

<https://www.chinaindiefilm.org/films/factory-youth/>

Shenzhen, yet another economic miracle of contemporary global China. What do the towering skyscrapers, the glossy malls and the endless apartments mean, however, to those scraping to survive in this new Industrial Revolution? Starting from visions of the factory floor as their bleak life space, Guo Xizhi follows youths through the city, where they seek tawdry escape, and the damaged countryside they are now alienated from, probing the depths of change and loss that mark a generation.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEPR3xN5MNo>

WHERE ARE YOU GOING? — 2016 (130 MINUTES)

<https://theartsofslowcinema.com/2016/02/08/where-are-you-going-zhengfan-yang-2016/>

Where Are You Going? is an apt title for a film, which puts you in the seat of a taxi, or a bus, or anything on four wheels that takes you from A to B. The standard first question a taxi driver asks you becomes a metaphor in Zhengfan's film, though. The film is not

only divided into several car journeys across Hong Kong. I found that, more than anything, the question was metaphorical for where the characters (want to) go in their lives. Who are they? Zhengfan doesn't show them. Sometimes we're not even sure whether there is someone with us in the car which is travelling through the night or through the busy streets of Hong Kong under the sizzling sun. Their voices are the protagonists. The characters become a face only through their voices, and those voices create not only a personality but an entire life of that personality in front of your eyes. You cannot see the character, but you get to know him/her in an astonishingly detailed way.

Every character has a story to tell but only reveals pain, frustration, anger and sorrow slowly and gradually over the course of a long take. The viewer gets a glimpse of Hong Kong society through the eyes of people from very different backgrounds and social status.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiH9S35GDMI>



UNDER THE DOME — 2015 (104 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Under_the_Dome_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Under_the_Dome_(film))

Under the Dome is a 2015 self-financed Chinese documentary by Chai Jing, a former China Central Television journalist, concerning air pollution in China. It was viewed over 150 million times on Tencent within three days of its release, and had been viewed a further 150 million times by the time it was taken offline four days later.

Chai Jing started making the documentary when her as yet unborn daughter developed



a tumor in the womb, which had to be removed very soon after her birth. Chai blames China's air pollution for the tumor. The film, which combines footage of a lecture with interviews and factory visits, has been compared with Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* in both its style and potential impact. The film openly criticizes state-owned energy companies, steel producers and coal factories, as well as showing the inability of the Ministry

of Environmental Protection to act against the big polluters.

Despite demonstrating the failure of China's regulations on pollution, the Chinese government at first did not censor the film. Instead, the *People's Daily* reposted the film alongside an interview with Chai, while Chen Jining, the recently appointed minister for environmental protection, praised the film, expressing in a text message his gratitude.^[2] However, within a week, the Communist Party's publicity department confidentially ordered the film to be removed. An employee of China Business News was suspended for leaking the order.

Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/07/world/asia/china-blocks-web-access-to-documentary-on-nations-air-pollution.html>

Stream entire film here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6X2uwIQQOM&feature=emb_logo



BEHEMOTH — 2015 (95 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2015/film/festivals/behemoth-review-1201625962/>

Maverick indie helmer Zhao Liang continues his muckraking tour of China's social and environmental woes with the stunningly lensed, cumulatively moving *Behemoth*. Acting

as a modern-day Dante on a tour through Inner Mongolia's coal mine and iron works, Zhao (*Together, Petition*) eschews narrative for an impressively self-shot poetic exercise in controlled righteous outrage, emphasizing the contrasts between rapidly dwindling green pastures and dead landscapes disemboweled by toxic mining. The human toll is also here in the final sections, making starkly clear the price impoverished workers pay for back-breaking labor. Zhao's quiet yet powerful indignation will play to the arthouse crowd, and his striking visuals ensure that *Behemoth* receives berths beyond environmental fests...

Interview with Zhao Liang: <https://www.slantmagazine.com/film/interview-zhao-liang-talks-behemoth-and-censorship/>

Review: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2016/aug/21/behemoth-zhao-liang-review>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfO_0B6_YYY

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/bei-xi-mo-shou>

Stream for free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/2612663>



ANGEL OF NANJING — 2015 (67 MINUTES)

<https://fullerstudio.fuller.edu/angel-of-nanjing/>

Through the city of Nanjing, China, runs the Yangtze River, and through that river runs many tragic ends. From the bridge which broods over it, an alarming number of suicides have occurred. There are actually a harrowing 290,000 suicides annually in China – a third of the global average. *Angel of Nanjing* is a documentary about Chen Si, a man who talks, counsels, and urges people away from the edge – of this bridge and life. The inquiries that compose the heart of this work are those that first compelled Chen Si to intervene in 2003. Why this bridge? Why these people? Why suicide? He evokes and embodies a Chinese notion: The prosperity of the nation is everyone's responsibility.

This man is something of a superhero. In the first encounter shown, he's wearing a bright red jacket with the words "Cherish Life Everyday" printed on its back. Donning sunglasses and a New York Yankees cap, he calls out to a man walking upon a railing that divides the walkway from traffic speeding by. It's a vision into the cataclysm. Directors Jordan Horowitz and Frank Ferendo, along with their editor Alison Shurman, do a stunning job of putting the viewer in the moment. It's tense and disturbing, yet with Chen Si as a guide, the situation feels calm and controlled. It's a meeting that punctuates the film in various forms. This coaxing away from death's edge runs a thread through the film. 290,000 suicides in one year is unwieldy for even the most sensitive of empaths; watching the fateful encounters between Chen Si and those he saves is an aesthetic of urgent compassion that reveals the data behind the reality...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QA93svbHgok>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/angel-of-nanjing>

Stream free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/11431912>

This American Life: # 628 Troubled Bridge over Water

<https://www.thisamericanlife.org/628/in-the-shadow-of-the-city/act-two-9>

**3-minute video update
regarding the man who
saved hundreds from
suicide (4/16/21).**

<https://www.scmp.com/video/china/3129938/chinas-angel-nanjing-man-who-saved-hundreds-suicide-yangtze-bridge>

**Photo gallery update
(4/19/21)**

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/photos/news/photos-china-s-angel-of-nanjing-has-helped-hundreds-back-from-the-brink-101618749658478-9.html>

WU TU: MY LAND — 2015 (83 MINUTES)

https://www.berlinale.de/en/archive/jahresarchive/2016/02_programm_2016/02_filmdatenblatt_2016_201606522.html#tab=video25

Vegetable farmer Chen Jun runs a telephone hotline for Beijing's migrant workers. He helps them fight for their rights. The municipality whose land he has farmed for many years now wants to earn money by building tower blocks for China's burgeoning new middle class. But Chen Jun and his wife refuse to be fobbed off without compensation; instead they take up the fight against all kinds of intimidation, even if that means years of living in the midst of a building site without electricity or water. They are idealists, full of civic spirit and a deep sense of solidarity with fellow migrant workers in a country in which the laws do not appear to apply to everyone in the same way.

Since 2010, director Fan Jian has accompanied these two activists who, alongside their commitment to fighting for their rights, are raising two children, instilling in them a healthy respect for the land and a critical perspective on the powerful. A universal and touching story of two people engaged in a struggle against great adverse powers; a couple who refuse to be browbeaten and who, in spite of everything, manage to retain their humanity and decency...

Review: <https://medium.com/@filmvore/wu-tu-my-land-b454987acc43>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFnrpf40ssk>

Fan Jian: *In the last few years, my creative direction has shifted somewhat. I'm less interested in big social issues now and more interested in people's psychology. That's a transformation or a development in how I understand the art of documentary.*

Even in my past films, I was always interested in people's personal lives, in delving into their individuality. In "My Land," a big part was looking at the relationships and emotions in [migrant farmer couple] Chen Jun and Xiao Feng's family. There was little that directly addressed social problems. I left that for audiences to reflect on themselves, merely creating a space in which they could consider those issues.

I want to eliminate the topic-ness, eliminate the Chinese-ness, because when a Chinese documentary appears on the international stage, people see it as an analysis of contemporary China and its issues. That's not really what I want to do as a creator.



THE VERSE OF US / IRON MOON — 2015 (96 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/11/movies/iron-moon-review.html>

The Qin Xiaoyu and Wu Feiyue documentary *Iron Moon* has a slowly mounting, but lingering, impact. The film concerns poets in Southern China who, while enduring arduous, sometimes hazardous conditions in working-class occupations, preserve their spirits with verse. Its inspiration is Xu Lizhi, the 24-year-old poet and laborer at a Foxconn electronics

factory in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, who leapt to his death in 2014. Mr. Xu was one of the

countless workers from the countryside who travel to China's growing cities seeking employment, only to be eaten alive by the tedious, pitiless demands of industry.

Iron Moon (the title comes from Mr. Xu's "I Swallowed an Iron Moon" examines four living poets, some writing pseudonymously. The young Blackbird (whose real name is Wu Niaoniao) attends a job fair and performs at a reading with other worker-poets. Lucky Chen (Chen Nianxi), a demolitions expert, risks his life daily underground while tending a paralyzed father and aging mother living in rural squalor. Old Coalmine (Lao Jing), a coal miner for 25 years, writes of "ghosts between coal seams and rock crevices." In her poem "Sundress," Dawn (Wu Xia), 33, a seamstress since she was 14, considers the affluent woman who will enjoy the fruits of her labor amid wealth Ms. Wu will never know.

*I swallowed s moon made of iron
They refer to it as a nail
I swallowed this industrial
sewage, these unemployment
documents
Youth stooped at machines die
before their time
I swallowed the hustle and the
destitution
Swallowed pedestrian bridges,
life covered in rust
I can't swallow any more
All that I've swallowed is now
gushing out of my throat
Unfurling on the land of my
ancestors
Into disgraceful poem*

With arresting images, *Iron Moon* powerfully addresses China's moral crisis in the wake of economic prosperity. Today, "if you don't have money or power, it's really hard," says Xu Lizhi's father. Especially if you're working the line.

Q & A with director Qin Xiaoyu: <https://uschinatoday.org/qa/2017/06/22/qa-with-xiaoyu-qin-on-iron-moon/>

Reviews: Is there room for poetry in contemporary society? *Iron Moon* an award-winning documentary that splices together the working-class life of its subjects with their work, suggests poetry is more important now than ever.

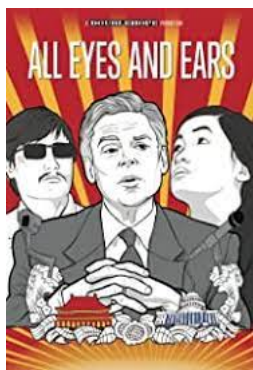
<https://supchina.com/2019/05/10/iron-moon-a-beautiful-portrait-of-chinas-working-class-poets/>

<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/929/poet-worker-documentary-hits-cinemas-through-crowdfunding-0>

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/186456414>

ALL EYES AND EARS — 2015 (90 MINUTES)

<https://www.indiewire.com/2016/12/all-eyes-and-ears-clip-president-obama-jon-huntsman-1201751968/>



Documentarian Vanessa Hope's first full-length feature focuses on the complex relationship between the United States and China, effectively combining both very personal stories and a broader look at international relations in general.

All Eyes and Ears combines stories involving the U.S. Ambassador to China Jon Huntsman, his adopted Chinese daughter Gracie Mei, and blind legal advocate Chen Guangcheng, to create a smart (and very timely) exploration into a relationship between super powers that has always come with its own complications.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fsaf66LB_u4

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/all-eyes-and-ears>

ALL CATCHING THE SUN — 2015 (75 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catching_the_Sun_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catching_the_Sun_(film))

Directed by Shalini Kantayya, the film features portraits of diverse personalities and their roles in the transition to solar power. Unemployed workers in Richmond, California, businessmen in China, Tea Party activists, and would be White House adviser are all featured in the film. The film debunks a false dilemma that clean energy requires sacrificing economic prosperity.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjTi1j4enl4>

THE ROAD — 2015 (95 MINUTES)



<https://www.idfa.nl/en/film/a20a8ca0-5bb3-414c-acfd-1491d2d1bd3c/the-road>

In four chapters, director Zanbo Zhang documents the abuses surrounding the construction of a giant highway through Hunan province from the perspective of the local population, the construction company and the laborers. In 2008, the Chinese government decided to invest \$586 billion on infrastructure in an effort to stimulate the economy. The new highway is part of President Hu's three-stage strategy, a process of modernization that has been underway for some 30 years now. In reality, the project is being run by corrupt Party

members, bad employers and local gangsters. Many homes belonging to local people have been damaged by explosives, and the private construction company is endlessly dragging its feet when it comes to paying its employees. Behind the scenes at the construction company, we hear their plans to deal with dissent: “If people obstruct the construction with no reason, we must strike back without mercy and arrest them if needed.” Meanwhile, a building inspector has discovered that the construction of the highway is both unsound and completely illegal. It also turns out that many of the laborers haven’t been paid, and on a neighboring highway construction site 19 get killed in an explosion in a tunnel. Everyone is at odds – it would seem that building a highway is a little like fighting a war. Nevertheless, the Xu-Huai Highway was opened with great fanfare in 2013.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/169221433>



THE MUSIC OF STRANGERS — 2015 (95 MINUTES)

<https://www.silkroad.org/tmos>

The Grammy-nominated documentary *The Music of Strangers*, follows members of the Ensemble as they gather in locations across the world, exploring the ways art can both preserve traditions and shape cultural evolution.

Blending performance footage, personal interviews, and archival film, Oscar-winning director Morgan Neville and producer Caitrin Rogers focus on the personal journeys of a small group of Silkroad Ensemble mainstays — Kinan Azmeh (Syria), Kayhan Kalhor (Iran), Yo-Yo Ma (France/United States), Wu Man (China), and Cristina Pato (Spain) — to chronicle passion, talent, and sacrifice. Through these moving individual stories, the filmmakers paint a vivid portrait of a bold musical experiment and a global search for the ties that bind.



Curriculum Guide: <https://www.silkroad.org/resources-tmos>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pim7mvgXerg>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-music-of-strangers>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/11282295>



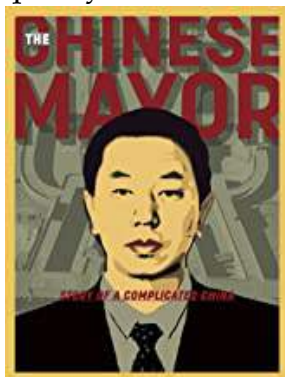
THE CHINESE MAYOR — 2015 (89 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2015/film/reviews/sundance-film-review-the-chinese-mayor-1201419888/>

Granted remarkable access to the daily business of a high-ranking mainland Chinese official, Zhou Hao’s *The Chinese Mayor* offers a fascinating verite portrait of the collision between progress, politics, corruption and citizens’ rights in a rapidly changing People’s Republic. This rare peek behind the usual scrim of government image management is a natural for niche broadcasters and anyone else interested in quality current-events documentary features.

In Datong, a Crumbling Legacy of China’s Most Extreme Urban Makeover

<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1006277/in-datong%2C-a-crumbling-legacy-of-chinas-most>



Fifty-four-year-old Geng Yanbo is the mayor of Datong, a metropolis of 3.4 million in Shanxi province that was long a coal-industry capital. But now that business is in decline, leaving as its major legacy the status of China’s most polluted city. Geng has made it his mission to transform Datong into a tourist-magnetizing cultural center, highlighting its important role throughout central dynasties of Imperial Chinese history. ...The film’s breathlessly on-the-run progress suggests Zhou had almost unlimited access — an intimacy underlined near the close

when Geng asks just what the director has been filming, as he'd become so accustomed to the one-man crew he'd long since forgotten he was there. Compelling as both nonfiction narrative and character capture, the pic has a laserlike focus strengthened by the lack of soundtracked music or other packaging filigree.

Review: <https://medium.com/east-asia-on-screen/datong-%E5%A4%A7%E5%90%8C-movie-review-a-two-faced-chinese-mayor-fe228a7fb861>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHJlVDTl6IQ&has_verified=1

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-chinese-mayor>

PATHS OF THE SOUL — 2015 (118 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/13/movies/review-paths-of-the-soul-a-road-trip-unlike-any-other.html>



Paths of the Soul is rare in several respects, not least that it is a depiction of Buddhism in Tibet that has passed muster with Chinese censors. Directed by Zhang Yang, it dramatizes a 1,200-mile pilgrimage by the actual residents of the Tibetan village of Nyima. The movie so upends the traditions of documentary and narrative filmmaking that “dramatizes” may be inaccurate — the filmmakers followed the real pilgrims for a full year, after all. But the movie is so well made and engaging that such distinctions will make little difference to the viewer.

Walking for hundreds of miles is difficult, especially when the 11 pilgrims who set out for Lhasa and its Jokhang Temple, the most revered site in Tibetan Buddhism, are purposefully falling to the ground every few steps. With cut wooden blocks protecting their palms, they dive downward and stretch out, making sure to touch their foreheads to the earth. It's tricky devotional work, and dangerous, too, given the terrain and the traffic on winding roads up and around mountains. The group contains a couple of “types” — the village drunk, a wise elder — but they and others don't bring Western-style narrative intrigue to the journey. Instead, we see a united and good-humored community pulling together under increasingly extraordinary circumstances, including childbirth.

The views of Tibet are spectacular; you get the impression of traveling through an ancient world. The group doesn't traverse a modern city until over an hour into the film, and Mr. Yang plays down the pilgrims' attachment to technology: It's only a little after they leave the city that we learn that at least one is carrying a cellphone. That comes as something of a relief, as by this time, I was fervently concerned for their safety.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07FFZK8uH1I>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/paths-of-the-soul>

TWENTY TWO — 2015 (112 MINUTES)

<https://raifilm.org.uk/films/twenty-two/>

The film, *Twenty Two*, focuses on Chinese ‘comfort women’ during World War II. At the time of filming, only 22 of the 200,000 Chinese victims forced into sexual slavery remained alive. Quietly humanistic, this challenging film follows these elderly women as they go about their lives, listening to them talk about their experiences and their own perspectives, including both

The film, *Twenty Two*, got its name from the number of surviving Chinese “comfort women” in 2014, when director Guo Ke prepared to make the film. In 2012, Guo's first short documentary was named *Thirty Two*. His documentary presents the true story of Wei Shaolan and follows her traumatic and courageous journey from forced prostitution to life today with her Japanese son.

Watch this 44-minute film here:

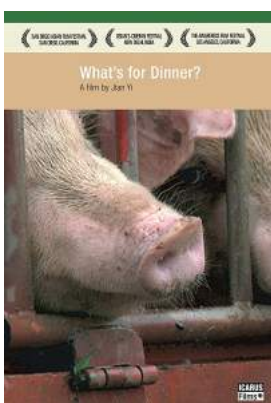
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRxO_MitId0

suffering and happiness. Avoiding intrusiveness, the film assembles and preserves fragments of histories both factual and highly personal, ensuring their voices are heard. Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQcQAGS7w3Y>

A BITE OF CHINA: CELEBRATING THE CHINESE NEW YEAR — 2015 (89 MINUTES)

https://www.timeoutshanghai.com/features/Film-Film_features/49611/12-unmissable-Chinese-Documentaries.html

A full-length feature coming from one of China's top TV series, *A Bite of China: Celebrating The Chinese New Year* not only introduces local food culture, but also illustrates how families across the country celebrate the most important holiday of the year. This film will fill you with joy, appreciation and (perhaps above all) hunger. Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8C2rizBCHtI>



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? — 2009 (29 MINUTES) SIX YEARS ON — 2015 SEQUEL (29 MINUTES)

<http://wfdinner.com/home/>

What's For Dinner? examines the rapidly increasing consumption of animal-based foods in China that has mirrored the country's swift economic growth in recent years. Average pork consumption has doubled over the past ten years, with both western and home-grown fast food chains becoming commonplace in urban centers and creating a \$28 billion-a-year market in the country. None of this would be possible without the adoption of U.S.-style systems of intensive production.

But strains are showing: manure run-off from so-called "factory farms" housing thousands of pigs, chickens, and ducks is fouling groundwater and rivers; only two generations after a national famine killed millions, nearly a quarter of Chinese adults and a fifth of Chinese children are overweight or obese; and diet-related chronic diseases now kill more people in China than any other cause.

In the film (Mandarin and various Chinese dialects with English subtitles), award-winning independent director Jian Yi captures the shift in how China eats and produces food through interviews with people across Chinese society – such as Zhou Shuzhen, a retired pig farmer from Jiangxi province; Wang Ronghua, a young livestock entrepreneur who's expanding his pig and poultry farms; and Wen Bo, one of China's leading environmentalists.

The film offers a unique look into China's rapidly changing food and agricultural landscape and sheds light on some of its consequences for public health, sustainability, the environment, climate change, and animal welfare. Much of the footage documents places, people, and events that have never been filmed before in China.

Director interview:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=UUtXrQsgpxagcmGHy571A0CQ&v=rPQZSFW7iis&feature=emb_logo

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwtMphRuhAg&feature=emb_logo

Six Years On revisits some of the places and people (including the film crew) featured in the 2009 film *What's For Dinner?* and poses questions about the future of the country's



Download Classroom Resources which includes pre- and post-viewing questions, background information, and resources for further research: <http://wfdinner.com/guides/> OR http://wfdinner.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/wfdinner_vie_wing_guide_letter.pdf

food production and consumption. What has and hasn't changed in their lives and their awareness and understanding of animal agriculture?

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DszcdNsUWVc&feature=emb_logo

MY LIFE IN CHINA — 2014 (70 MINUTES)

<https://www.mylifeinchina.org/synopsis>

An unvarnished portrait of the life and memories of a stoic and reticent man committed to his family, *My Life in China*, retraces the perilous steps filmmaker Kenneth Eng's father chanced in search of a better life. Exploring themes of home, exile, and belonging, the film is a story about promise, purpose, and living life without regrets.

My father fled the Cultural Revolution in 1966. After risking his life to get to America, he started our family in Boston. But when his restaurant went bankrupt and my mom got sick, he began to feel like he'd failed at the American Dream.

A story of migration is passed down from father to son, as we retrace the precarious steps he took in search of a better life. Ultimately asking the question, what does it mean to be both Chinese and American?

Education about Asia Review:

<https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/ea/archives/my-life-in-china/>

Trailer: <https://www.amdoc.org/watch/media/988/>

EDGE OF THE BAZAAR — 2014 (27 MINUTES)

<https://livingotherwise.com/2015/02/28/the-edge-of-the-bazaar-a-documentary-about-uyghur-rural-life/>

...In the film we see men who have been working for decades in the same trades. While they received little formal education, we see the skill with which their hands can work with wood and reeds – using very few tools – to produce something precise and beautiful. We see men who know the desert, plants, and trees with an intimacy of someone who has lived close to the earth over the long duration of their lives. There is a beauty to the pace of life we see in the film; a poetics of movement, of form, and of the stark reality of the environment at the edge of an oasis town...

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59MgouO78pM>

NOWHERE TO CALL HOME: A TIBETAN IN BEIJING — 2014 (83 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/24/movies/nowhere-to-call-home-examines-prejudices.html>

When the Tibetan farmer Zanta's husband died, she was forced by local custom to move in with her in-laws, who forbade her son to attend school. Instead, she packed up and moved to Beijing, where she was helped by a relative from another lifetime.

That is the beginning of *Nowhere to Call Home*, a documentary by a foreign correspondent in Beijing, Jocelyn Ford, showing at the Museum of Modern Art this month. The film follows Zanta (who, like many Tibetans, goes by one name) here and in her hometown, where she confronts her father-in-law. Along the way, it becomes clear that the relative from another lifetime is Ms. Ford, who breaks the traditional wall between journalist and subject by becoming a friend.

The film breaks down the sometimes romantic Shangri-La view that Westerners have of Tibet, showing it to be a place with many hidebound traditions, especially discrimination against women. It also offers a shocking portrait of the outright racism that Zanta and other Tibetans face in Chinese parts of the country. And

2018 discussion
with filmmaker
Jocelyn Ford:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jy3-RW5MGOU>

it shows how many members of minorities lack even basic education: Zanta's sisters are illiterate, unable to count their change in the market or recognize the numbers on a cellphone. But maybe most surprising is that Ms. Ford has been quietly showing the film in China itself, eliciting admiration and unease that such a penetrating film was made by a foreigner...

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/46664189>



JIA ZHANGKE, A GUY FROM FENYANG — 2014 (105 MINUTES)

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/jia-zhangke-a-guy-from-fenyang-2016>

...From the first, Jia has established himself as a realist who looks intently at specific places, people and situations with clear-eyed sympathy but without sentimentality or rhetorical intent. In doing so, he has provided a remarkable chronicle of China as it has been transformed by capitalism, globalization and technology. He has also been an intrepid stylistic innovator, especially in his use of digital cinema. While Salles' portrait gives a very incomplete account of the man and his art, it pays tribute to a filmmaker who remains among the medium's foremost and most fascinating creators.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2Jcmq4tJuo>

Stream film for free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5838001>



UNDERGROUND CHINESE HIP-HOP — 2014 (45 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2061607/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

Chinese Hip-Hop Underground is an insider documentary following the story of Weber - one of Mainland China's first rappers. Weber's uncanny musical talents allow him to spearhead the creation of Chinese rap music - a free form of creative self-expression that spreads like wildfire amongst those struggling the most; young working class students and grassroots migrants left out of the country's meteoric rise.

Even while Weber's music electrifies China's youth and gains a huge following, he is challenged by enemies posing a threat to his musical existence: state censors, on the one hand, and armies of state-backed pop stars seeking to steal the name of hip-hop for their own gain, on the other. Can Weber and underground musicians like him survive this assault? Will Underground Chinese hip-hop survive?

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xL4xN6oM00>

Stream free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/1969008>

Four Documentaries on Hip Hop:
<https://radiichina.com/chinese-hip-hop-documentaries/>

OUT OF FOCUS — 2014 (88 MINUTES)

<https://www.torchfilms.com/products/out-of-focus>

On a steamy summer day, director Shengze Zhu (*Another Year*) began to teach photography at Lingzhi Elementary School in Wuhan, Central China, to a group of 23 "migrant children" aged 8-12. Lingzhi is known as the "rooftop" school because its classes are held in a worn-down, four-floor apartment building with a rooftop playground, accommodating about 200 students.

All of the students are originally from rural areas but have moved to Wuhan, as their parents chase urban work and the possibility of a better life. When the children migrated from the tranquil countryside to the most populous city in Central China, most fell in love with the bustling city at first. They were intrigued by city life and ambitious about the future and their various dreams.

As it tells the stories of this group, the film focuses in detail on one pupil, Qin, and her family. An ambitious adolescent impatient to learn new technologies, Qin is furious

that her parents have had three children. Forced to endure miserable low-income living conditions, and a discriminatory household registration policy known as hukou, Qin and her classmates share a common reality. The distance between the innocence of the their hopes and the brutality of their lives could hardly be starker.

Trailer: <https://www.torchfilms.com/products/out-of-focus>

FALLEN CITY — 2014 (60 MINUTES)

<http://archive.pov.org/fallencity/>

In today's go-go China, an old city completely destroyed by a devastating earthquake can be rebuilt — boasting new and improved civic amenities — in an astoundingly quick two years. But, as *Fallen City* reveals, the journey from the ruined old city of Beichuan to the new Beichuan nearby is long and heartbreaking for the survivors. Three families struggle with loss — most strikingly the loss of children and grandchildren — and feelings of loneliness, fear and dislocation that no amount of propaganda can disguise. First-time director Qi Zhao offers an intimate look at a country torn between tradition and modernity.

Lesson Plan: Memorializing Tragedy: <http://archive.pov.org/fallencity/lesson-plan/>

Download 13-page Discussion Guide: <http://archive.pov.org/fallencity/discussion-guide/>

Trailer: <http://archive.pov.org/fallencity/>



CHINA DREAMERS — 2014 (21 MINUTES)

<http://www.chinafile.com/multimedia/video/chinese-dreamers>

In a country that has long defined its interests in collective terms, people are no longer waiting for their goals and sacrifices to be decreed from above. In Sharron Lovell's insightful short film, she shows us the Chinese Dream not as a slogan but as the possession of the ordinary young men and women who will determine China's future. Stream entire film here: <https://www.chinafile.com/multimedia/video/chinese-dreamers>

CHINA DREAMS: THE DEBATE — 2014 (11 MINUTES)

<http://vimeo.com/80820310>

Since Chinese President Xi Jinping announced the 'China Dream' as his official slogan in November 2012, many people inside and outside the PRC have been asking 'What is the China Dream?' Is it for national greatness or for a comfortable life? This 11 minute video explores how academics and artists in China and Singapore answer this key question about Chinese identity, politics and international relations.

Stream 11-minute discussion here: <http://vimeo.com/80820310>

COTTON — 2014 (93 MINUTES)

<https://watson.brown.edu/events/2017/cotton-screening-and-discussion-film-maker-zhou-hao>

For over a decade, Zhou has been making independent documentaries probing many of China's most urgent social issues, including migrant labour, drug abuse, law enforcement and political corruption, and *Cotton* continues this by exploring the lives and experiences of the unseen work force behind China's cotton trade.

The character driven documentary follows four principal characters, including a farmer, a cotton picker and workers in cotton factories, and takes the viewer on an odyssey into the heart of an incredibly labor-intensive industry, from planting and growing cotton in

the North-Western province of Xinjiang through to fashion events in Southern Guangdong. Through their experiences Zhou examines the 'social contract' offered by the Chinese leaders to the citizens of the country, supposedly aimed at bringing about a new and harmonious society, but which is instead recreating the old class systems previously destroyed by the communist ideals and revolution of Mao. With ruthless commercial competition and a win at all costs attitude driving the industry, the incredibly humanistic film depicts its protagonists being subjected to harsh conditions as they try desperately to climb the social ladder of modern China, though at the same time maintaining extraordinary courage and dignity.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUmLBm5uoIU>

XMAS WITHOUT CHINA — 2013 (63 MINUTES)

<https://www.icarusfilms.com/bf-xmas>

Xmas Without China is an intimate portrait of two families living in the San Gabriel Valley of Los Angeles, California wrestling with our drive to consume cheap products, but also with our desire for human connection and a sense of who we are in a fast-changing world.

Exploring the intersection of consumerism and immigration in American culture, the documentary filmmakers follow their friend and fellow filmmaker Tom Xia on an intimate, humorous journey to get to know his community. Tom has spent his life in between Chinese and American culture, constantly negotiating between his home life and everything else in the California suburbs where he's grown up since emigrating from Harbin, China at age eight. With deep ties to his extended family back home and increasing pride in China's huge steps forward in the new millennium, Tom is incensed by how China is so misunderstood by Americans, particularly in the media.

Devising a plan to put American fears of China in context, Tom decides to challenge a local family to go through the Christmas season without any Chinese products. At a neighborhood street fair, Tom meets the Joneses, a young family trying to keep their children safe during a series of Chinese toy recalls that had driven them to have their son tested for lead-poisoning. Taking on Tom's consumer "mission-impossible," the Jones family discovers that they're giving up not just their toys, plates, lamps, and clothes...but also the beloved hair dryer, coffeemaker, Xbox, and most of their Christmas decorations. With their house dark and their tree bare of Christmas lights, Tim Jones gets out his tools and begins making his own strand from American and Mexican electrical parts.

In a nearby neighborhood, Tom's parents are finishing construction on their new home, using Chinese materials to proudly build their American dream. While they conscript Tom to help them decorate their first Christmas tree, the Joneses are trying to live without their Chinese-made stuff, which is now all in a huge storage container in their driveway, and must seriously rethink how to celebrate Christmas. With the holiday approaching, Tom's dad warns him not to ruin the Joneses' Christmas with his challenge. Getting way more than he bargained for, Tom finds himself challenged by the Joneses to confront his own identity between cultures.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSYjssSqOZg>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/xmas-without-china>

EMERGENCY ROOM CHINA — 2013 (89 MINUTES)

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/emergency-room-china-ji-chen-634290>

A gritty, low-budget documentary offering yet another nuanced look at how civil servants -- well-meaning medical staff this time -- operate amidst red tape and rough and tumble members of the Chinese public.

Starting in 2010 with *The Transition Period* (which tracks the daily life of a municipal-level party cadre — complete with sequences about dodgy dealings and all — and then in 2011 and 2012 with the *Cop Shop* diptych (which explore how police officers perform their duties with a very flexible approach to citizens' rights), Zhou is seemingly working his way down the power chain. With *Emergency Room China* — which just won the Best Feature award at Hong Kong's annual Chinese Documentary Festival — he has reached the frontline of social schisms with a look at life among doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers and ever-returning patients at a hospital in the southern Chinese metropolis of Guangzhou.

SILK ROAD OF POP — 2013 (58 MINUTES)

<https://livingotherwise.com/reviews/silk-road-of-pop/>

'The Silk Road of Pop' sketches a unique portrait of the explosive pop music scene among the Uyghur Muslim minority in north-west China. Featuring traditional musicians, hip-hop crews, rock stars and dynamic music fans, this documentary taps into the rhythmical zeitgeist of what it means to be young and Uyghur in China, showing how music becomes a liberating element for a minority trying to assert its identity within a repressive environment.

Review: <https://livingotherwise.com/reviews/silk-road-of-pop/>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AC66_JDVIng&t=3s



THE REVOLUTIONARY — 2013 (92 MINUTES)

<https://revolutionarymovie.com/>



Sidney Rittenberg (whose Chinese name is Li Dunbai) arrived in China as a GI Chinese language expert at the end of World War II. Discharged there, he joined the Chinese Communist Party, and was an active participant in the Chinese communist revolution and its aftermath. An intimate of the Party's leadership, including Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, he gained prominence at the Broadcast Administration, one of the most important agencies of government. But in the convulsions of a giant country constantly reinventing itself, he twice ran afoul of the leadership, and served a total of 16 years in solitary confinement. He returned to the United States in 1980.

Rittenberg captivates the audience with his exceptional intellect, uncompromising honesty, and engaging personality. Over a five-year period, award-winning former-CBS journalist and China specialist, Irv Drasnin, interviewed Rittenberg to produce a compelling, complex and unique understanding of the 20th century's biggest revolution. From Sid first meeting Mao in the caves of Yan'an, to his becoming famous and powerful during the Cultural Revolution, to his battling insanity in solitary, his journey and his profound insight illuminate a much greater history—a history few Chinese are aware of, let alone many Americans, told by an American who was there.



Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/12/movies/the-revolutionary.html>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vH9w34onSC8>
Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-revolutionary-2012>
Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/118208>

VILLAGE DIARY — 2013 (100 MINUTES)

<http://www.cccbbrussels.be/coming-soon/cs-events/cmn-village-diary.html>

During a year, documentary director Bo Jiao and his crew settled in a small rural village in the province of Shandong, China. *Village Diary* is the outcome of their experience and records the daily life of several farmer families. From their folk customs to their day-to-day struggle and hopes in a fast-changing China, the farmers open up to the crew that is soon considered as the 168th family of the village of Shaoyu.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJwYkK9djFI&feature=emb_logo

VALLEY OF THE HEROES: TIBET'S SHIFTING CULTURAL LANDSCAPE — 2013 (54 MINUTES)

<https://www.machikkhabda.org/valley-of-the-heroes.html>

Valley of the Heroes offers a rare glimpse at a pivotal moment of cultural and linguistic transition among Tibetans and Muslims in Hualong County, a remote community in Amdo, Tibet, part of what is now eastern Qinghai Province, PRC. Over the past several decades, Tibetans living in Hualong have experienced rapid cultural shifts accelerated by language loss – today more than 30% are unable to speak their own native language. The film spends time with village residents and elders who reflect on the changes taking place in their community, and also documents a unique Tibetan language program that is attempting to address the situation.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYPfi7Ls38A&feature=emb_logo

'TIL MADNESS DO US PART — 2013 (227 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2013/film/global/venice-film-review-til-madness-do-us-part-1200610004/>

There are endurance tests, and then there is Wang Bing's nearly four-hour plunge into the daily tedium and long-term despair of life in a mainland Chinese mental hospital. An unsparing chronicler of the abused and neglected in his country's darkest corners, Chinese documentarian Wang Bing pushes his starkly immersive strategies to a grueling yet empathetic extreme in *Til Madness Do Us Part*. There are endurance tests, and then there is this nearly four-hour plunge into the daily tedium and long-term despair of life in a mainland mental hospital, patrolling the same tightly enclosed quarters in a manner that seeks to reproduce, without compromise, an inhabitant's sense of physical, mental and spiritual entrapment.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQ1sy7AIkn0>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/til-madness-do-us-part>

THE ROAD TO FAME — 2013 (80 MINUTES)

<http://www.famethedoc.com/>

Wu Hao's *The Road to Fame* tells a unique story of coming-of-age with Chinese characteristics. The film chronicles the staging of the American musical Fame—China's first official collaboration with Broadway—by the senior class at China's top drama academy as their graduation showcase. During the eight-month process, five students compete for roles, struggle with pressure from family and



authority, and prepare to graduate into a cutthroat and corrupt show business. Part of China's Single-Child generation, they were spoiled growing up but are now obliged to carry on the failed dreams of their parents. They must confront complex social realities and their own anxieties, and, in the process of staging Fame, negotiate their own definitions of path to success in today's China.

Review: <https://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/11/china-s-brash-young-actors-swap-ideology-for-a-chance-at-fame/281327/>

Trailer: <http://www.famethedoc.com/trailer.html>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-road-to-fame>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/159470>

THE TRAIL FROM XINJIANG – 2013 (36 MINUTES)

https://cscs.sas.upenn.edu/events/2014/March/Trail_Xinjiang

Musa and his friends, all men, all young, all from Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region on China's northwestern border, now wander great cities in the East talking, shooting up, remembering home and practicing the one true skill they have: they steal. Since China's market transition in the 1990s, child trafficking has become rampant in Xinjiang. Thousands, like Musa, spent their childhoods drifting from city to city with the pickpocket gangs. As the discriminative phrase, 'Xinjiang thieves,' has become nationally known over the past decade, Musa and the young men find lives frittered away in their struggle to establish an identity in a society caged by the pleasures and pains of transformative economic development.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/85207033>

Stream this 36-minute short documentary:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wB9o9-IIQJY>

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/video-dept/reeducated-film-xinjiang-prisoners-china-virtual-reality>

CHINA IN THREE WORDS — 2013 (15 MINUTES)

https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.4cabda6d-bcc1-7f85-0221-5b2e299a80f6?autoplay=1&ref=atv_cf_strg_wb

Author Yu Hua is one of the only "honest writers to survive in China," as Ian Johnson recently wrote. This makes him not only a rarity, but also an inspiration. This short documentary takes its cue from an interview with Yu Hua about his latest book, "China in Ten Words," focusing on words common in the Chinese vernacular, "Leader," "Revolution," and "Disparity," with a fourth bonus word, "Bamboozle," thrown in with a wink to its meaning. Each word is illustrated with a personal story and insightful, witty analysis of the breakneck social and economic change happening in China today.

Trailer: https://www.fandor.com/films/china_in_three_words

WEB JUNKIE: TREATMENT FOR INTERNET ADDICTION IN CHINA — 2013 (76 MINUTES)

<http://archive.pov.org/webjunkie/>

Internet addiction has been declared a national health crisis in China, the first country in the world to classify this evolving diagnosis. Web Junkie follows the treatment of three Chinese teenagers, obsessive gamers whose preference for the virtual world over the real one is summed up in one jarring statement: "Reality is too fake." Israeli filmmakers Shosh Shlam and Hilla Medalia gained extraordinary access to a three-month military-



Lesson plans, discussion guides, clips for the classroom found here:

<http://archive.pov.org/webjunkie/>

style rehab program in Beijing, illuminating a process that, while stern, may help set a standard as the wider world comes to grips with the devastating consequences of excessive Internet use.

MBUR's On Point 48-minute podcast with filmmaker:

<https://www.wbur.org/onpoint/2015/07/13/internet-addiction-web-junkie>

Trailer: <http://archive.pov.org/webjunkie/video/video-webjunkie-trailer/>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/web-junkie>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5293878>

THE LAST MOOSE OF AOLUGUYA — 2013 (100 MINUTES)

<http://cinemaontheedge.com/the-last-moose-of-aoluguya/>

Award-winning filmmaker Gu Tao's weirder-than fiction documentary is a portrait of Weijia, a hunter-poet with a tumultuous life. Weijian is a member of the Ewenki minority, whose homeland is near Siberia in far northeastern China. Forbidden to continue hunting, the Ewenki have been forced to move from their forests into dreary Chinese government-designed permanent villages. Deprived of means of livelihood like many of his people, Weijia spends his time drinking and being a poet... when all of a sudden, as in a fairytale, a young teacher from Hainan, the tropical paradise island in China's far south, comes to marry him and sweep him away. Weijia, clad in tropical print shirts, doesn't quite fit into paradise, and his story turns dark, with intimations of madness and violence.

The final installment in a trilogy of documentaries charting the struggling Ewenki ethnic minority in northern China, *The Last Moose of Aoluguya* is perhaps also the broadest in its scope. Employing footage shot across five years -- a period during which he finished the series' first two entries, *Aoluguya*, *Aoluguya* (2007) and *Yuguo and His Mother* (2011) -- Gu Tao has pieced together the trying existence of a creative and contemplative man whose artistic gift and generosity of spirit is whittled away by the natural or artificial realities in the margins of society.

Review: <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/last-moose-aoluguya-han-da-694709>

Rent/Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/thelastmooseofaoluguya>

AI WEIWEI: THE FAKE CASE — 2013 (87 MINUTES)

<https://www.metacritic.com/movie/ai-weiwei-the-fake-case>

After 81 days of solitary detention, world famous Chinese artist Ai Weiwei is put under house arrest. He suffers from sleeping disorder and memory loss, 18 cameras are monitoring his studio and home, police agents follow his every move, and heavy restrictions from the Kafkaesque Chinese authorities weigh him down. Journalists, the art world and his family all want a piece of him and on top of that he is met with a gigantic lawsuit from the Chinese government, soon to be named The Fake Case. Ai Weiwei is shaken, but during the year on probation he steadily finds new ways to provoke and challenge the mighty powers of the Chinese authorities in his fight for human rights. Ai Weiwei strongly believes that China is ready for change. And he will do everything to make it happen.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/ai-weiwei-the-fake-case-2014>

Movie clips: <https://weta.org/watch/shows/pov/ai-weiwei-fake-case>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lth2L8-Xhsw>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/ai-weiwei-the-fake-case>

THE MOSUO SISTERS — 2013 (80 MINUTES)

<http://www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c850.shtml>

A tale of two sisters living in the shadow of two Chinas, this documentary by award-winning filmmaker Marlo Poras (*Mai's America; Run Granny Run*) follows Juma and Latso, young women from one of the world's last remaining matriarchal societies. Thrust into the worldwide economic downturn after losing jobs in Beijing and left with few options, they return to their remote Himalayan village. But growing exposure to modernity has irreparably altered traditions of the Mosuo, their tiny ethnic minority, and home is not the same. Determined to keep their family out of poverty, one sister sacrifices her educational dreams and stays home to farm, while the other leaves, trying her luck in the city. The changes test them in unexpected ways. This visually stunning film highlights today's realities of women's lives and China's vast cultural and economic divides while offering rare views of a surviving matriarchy.

Clip: <https://www.pbs.org/video/global-voices-mosuo-sisters-jumas-conflict/>

THE AFRICA-CHINA CONNECTION: A THRIVING BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP — 2013 (50 MINUTES)

<http://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=30656&r=SR>

While Europe and the U.S. were once the destinations of choice for workers migrating from low-wage countries, Africans looking to raise their standard of living have now proclaimed China "the new promised land." This program goes to Nigeria Town in Guangzhou to investigate the strong economic relationship between Africa and China and what it may mean for the West. Political scientist Achille Mbembe (*On the Postcolony*) provides background on this partnership, in which roughly \$30 million in cash and goods moves from China to Nigeria every day and China opens its borders to even more African workers. In addition, World Bank vice president Ian Goldin explains how migrants can be a source of economic dynamism, something that Europe sorely needs but may miss out on due to its immigration policies.

Clip: <https://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=30656&r=SR>

CHINA CONCERTO — 2012 (50 MINUTES)

<https://icarusfilms.com/df-chc>

An observational essay shot in the southwestern city of Chongqing, *China Concerto* probes the uses of public spectacle in contemporary China.

Born and raised in Chongqing, filmmaker Bo Wang visited his hometown at the height of now-disgraced politician Bo Xilai's campaign to revive Mao-era "red culture", promoting among other things the public singing and dancing of Communist songs. Alongside these participatory street performances, *China Concerto* looks at images from the media, including Michelangelo Antonioni's *Chung Kuo-China*, and news media and advertising that address the capitalist present in forms reminiscent of the communist past.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-WWOYiHd6I>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/china-concerto>

CROCODILE IN THE YANGTZE: INSIDE A CHINESE INTERNET JUGGERNAUT — 2012 (77 MINUTES)

<http://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=25764>

Starting out as an English teacher and small-scale Web site builder, Jack Ma became China's first Internet entrepreneur, gradually assembling the Alibaba Group—a digital

empire that faced off against eBay and won. This award-winning independent film was created by an American who worked in Ma's company for several years. It draws on a vast archive of footage shot between 1995 and 2009, presenting a candid portrait of the visionary businessman and documenting Alibaba's journey from scrappy start-up to stratospheric success. The result is an astonishingly relevant chronicle, told from the standpoint of an American fly on a Chinese wall, so to speak—an eyewitness account of the strategies Alibaba put in place during the period in which China's economy began to rival that of the U.S.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHIT3QxMqCs>

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkVJNOQ7B74>



HIGH TECH, LOW LIFE — 2012 (88 MINUTES)

<http://archive.pov.org/hightechlowlife/>

High Tech, Low Life follows the journey of two of China's first citizen reporters as they travel the country – chronicling underreported news and social issues stories. Armed with laptops, cell phones, and digital cameras they develop skills as independent one-man news stations while learning to navigate China's evolving censorship regulations and avoiding the risk of political persecution. The film follows 57-year-old "Tiger Temple," who earns the title of China's first citizen reporter after he impulsively documents an unfolding murder and 27-year-old "Zola" who recognizes the opportunity to increase his fame and future

prospects by reporting on sensitive news throughout China.

From the perspective of vastly different generations, Zola and Tiger Temple must both reconcile an evolving sense of individualism, social responsibility and personal sacrifice. The juxtaposition of Zola's coming-of-age journey from produce vendor to internet celebrity, and Tiger Temple's commitment to understanding China's tumultuous past provides an alternate portrait of China and of newsgathering in the 21st century.

This site includes book lists, discussion guides, interviews, bios, slideshows, etc.

Discussion Guide: <http://archive.pov.org/hightechlowlife/>

Lesson Plan: <http://archive.pov.org/hightechlowlife/lesson-plan/>

Trailer and classroom clips: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/hightechlowlife/additional-video.php>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/high-tech-low-life>

MY REINCARNATION — 2012 (80 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/myreincarnation/>

Filmed over 20 years by acclaimed documentarian Jennifer Fox, *My Reincarnation* chronicles the epic story of exiled Tibetan Buddhist master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and his Western-born son, Yeshe. As Namkhai Norbu rises as a teacher in the West, Yeshe, recognized from birth as the reincarnation of a famed Buddhist master, breaks away to embrace the modern world. Can the father convince his son to keep the family's spiritual legacy alive? With intimate access to both the family and H.H. The Dalai Lama, Fox distills a decades-long drama into a universal story about love, transformation, and destiny.

Lesson Plan: <http://archive.pov.org/myreincarnation/lesson-plan/>

Discussion Guide: <http://archive.pov.org/myreincarnation/discussion-guide/>

Trailer and classroom clips:

<http://archive.pov.org/myreincarnation/>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/my-reincarnation>

AI WEIWEI: NEVER SORRY — 2012 (91 MINUTES)

<http://aiweiweineversorry.com/>

Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry is the inside story of a dissident for the digital age who inspires global audiences and blurs the boundaries of art and politics. First-time director Alison Klayman gained unprecedented access to Ai while working as a journalist in China. Her detailed portrait provides a nuanced exploration of contemporary China and one of its most compelling public figures.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MYFOzP6Xns>

Stream entire film here: (part Mandarin/some English interviews):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIIdt3j9nKA>

Ai Weiwei

<http://aiweiwei.com/>

Ai Weiwei is China's most famous international artist, and its most outspoken domestic critic. Against a backdrop of strict censorship and an unresponsive legal system, Ai expresses himself and organizes people through art and social media. In response, Chinese authorities have shut down his blog, beat him up, bulldozed his newly built studio, and held him in secret detention.

ORDOS 100 — 2012 (61 MINUTES)

<http://paassc.com/social-documentaries-at-ybca/>

Ordos 100 is a massive construction project in inner Mongolia, curated by Herzog & de Meuron and Ai Weiwei, who had previously worked together on Beijing's "Bird's Nest" stadium. One hundred architects from 27 countries were chosen to design a 1000-square-meter villa to be built in a new community. The 100 villas would be designed to fit a master plan designed by Ai Weiwei. In January 2008, the 100 architects gathered in Ordos for a first visit to the site. The film documents a total of three site visits, during which time the master plan and design of each villa was completed.

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQNVUH-duCE>

CHINA: FROM CARTIER TO CONFUCIUS — 2012 (45 MINUTES)

<http://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=29219>

Surging economic strength, expanding military capabilities, and an undeniable impact on the existing global order—these make up the dramatic narrative of 21st-century China. Meanwhile, a small group of philosophy students at Shanghai's prestigious Fudan University convenes each Friday night to study texts by Confucius and other classical philosophers. These young scholars have embraced—or at least do not disavow—China's consumerist-driven ascendancy, but they are insecure about the lack of principles to guide it. In the process of rediscovering values that were buried during the Cultural Revolution, a core question emerges: Will Confucianism regain more than a tentative foothold amid the fervor of state capitalism? Will the ruling class eventually welcome the ancient ideas and their implications for neo-conservatism and nationalism?

Post-Film Screening Q & A with co-producer Ying Zhu (37 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGz4CeJ71uc>

Stream entire film here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2j_2GBWqu_Y

RICH CHINA: AN EMERGING CLASS OF WEALTHY ELITES — 2012 (28 MINUTES)

<http://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=24717&r=SR>

In China, optimism is unyielding. Soon-to-be billionaire Zhang Yue has developed a stunning prefab building model that slashes construction time, and he predicts his company will soon be “the biggest in the world.” Beijing restaurateur Zhang Lan is similarly ambitious. She has built her Szechuan eatery chain, South Beauty, into a culinary empire employing 10,000 people, and she estimates that by 2020 she’ll have 500 restaurants around the globe. And what of 34-year-old Yan Zhihui, co-owner of Jincheng electronics? With a net worth of a few million yuan, he considers himself to have entered “the lower end of China’s middle class.” This program puts a spotlight on the country’s new paradigms of wealth and status, going inside the world of Chinese tycoons to examine the scope of their business plans and their dazzling luxury lifestyles. Yet the economic climate is changing and the good times may not last forever for China’s high rollers. Can their momentum continue?

<https://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=24717&r=SR>

A HOME FAR AWAY — 2012 (100 MINUTES)

<http://ahomefaraway.com/en>

The extraordinary destiny of two people. After the Second World War, Lois is an actress in Broadway theatre, television, and Hollywood films. Her husband, Edgar Snow, is world famous. A pioneer fascinated by China, he is the first journalist to film and interview Mao Tse-tung. Suspected by the American authorities of Communist sympathies, Ed and Lois are blacklisted. Together with their two small children, they go to Switzerland, mid-way between China and America, where they find a new home. A story of revolution, utopia, disillusionment, and hope

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNZnzf3RaHk>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/a-home-far-away>



CHINA HEAVYWEIGHT — 2012 (94 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/06/movies/china-heavyweight-a-documentary-by-yung-chang.html>

There are no heavyweights in *China Heavyweight* Yung Chang’s dispassionate look at the aspirational lure of Chinese amateur boxing programs. None, that is, unless you count the cinematographer, Sun Shaoguang. Illustrating the film’s rags-to-ring narrative with panoramic mountain views and compact shots of young bodies punching their way up the food chain, Mr. Sun straddles ancient and modern, tranquility and turmoil, with equal sureness.

Appropriately for a documentary whose Chinese title translates as “To Be Tried and Tested a Thousand Times Over,” the story concentrates on the mental and physical hurdles of two talented friends from Sichuan Province. Recruited as 12-year-olds in 2004 (five years before we meet them) and installed in boxing training camp, the boys respond very differently to the punishing schedule and barracks like accommodations...

Clip: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/chinaheavyweight/73175733?autoplay=1>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8utBPHp88PY>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5318365>

MAMA RAINBOW — 2012 (80 MINUTES)

<https://asianmoviepulse.com/2020/05/documentary-review-mama-rainbow-2012-by-popo-fan/>

彩虹伴我心 MAMA RAINBOW



In this uplifting and touching documentary, filmmaker and gay rights activist Popo Fan follows six “mamas” and their gay sons and daughters and allow them to tell us about their personal experience of acceptance and empathy. Homosexuality is a sensitive issue in China; it is not illegal but often frowned upon and its cinematic representation almost nonexistent. The strongly family-centered Chinese society is one of the main pressures that gay people have to face in a culture where a heterosexual marriage blessed by children is considered a life’s final destination. Despite discussions on the issue of same-sex marriage emerging in China (at the moment there is only a

“guardianship agreement”) and the public opinion towards LGBT+ people is becoming more tolerant; homosexuality is still a stigma for many people who must resort to lies or silence in order to avoid troubles. As the documentary immediately remarks, their families also suffer and find it difficult to talk to others about it...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFTVOnaixKM>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/mama-rainbow>

THREE SISTERS — 2012 (153 MINUTES)

<https://icarusfilms.com/df-sis>

One of his generation's most important documentary filmmakers, director Wang Bing is at the height of his powers in *Three Sisters*. The film introduces viewers to 10-year-old Ying Ying, 6-year-old Zhenzhen and 4-year-old Fenfen, who live alone in Xiyangtang, a tiny rural village in the high mountains of China's Yunnan province. Their father is away working in the city; their mother left the family long ago.

The girls help their grandfather or aunt in exchange for meals. They spend their days at grueling tasks: herding sheep, goats and pigs, searching for firewood, collecting dung. Games are few and far between. The eldest, Yingying, is her sisters' primary caretaker, shouldering responsibilities far beyond her years.

Wang's hand-held footage beautifully captures the region's dramatic landscapes and plunging, mountainous scenery in *Three Sisters*, an essential part of the international film canon

Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/10/movies/three-sisters-a-documentary-by-wang-bing.html>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlnjJoVDLVo>

EDUCATION, EDUCATION — 2012 (59 MINUTES)

<https://www.thewhy.dk/films/education-education>

“In China, the most lucrative industry is Education.” Wang Zhenxiang, Tutor, Hongbo Education. There is a worldwide economic crisis, but everywhere parents are told that their children may escape the worst if they are educated, and everywhere children are pressured to climb the rungs of the ladder and acquire the totem of middle-class life – a university education. But does education secure what it is supposed to? Can a degree really get you out of poverty? Weijun Chen’s film, set in Wuhan in central China, looks at the realities of Chinese education through the lives of Wang Zhenxiang, a tutor at the private Hongbo Education college, Wang Pan, high school graduate and would be student, and Wan Chao, graduate job seeker who goes from one unpromising interview to another.

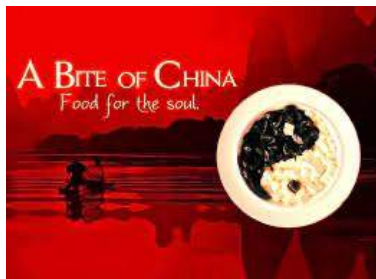
Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QoAo6Evc2Pc>

Watch entire 59-minute film here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BP61LwODTnY>

A BITE OF CHINA/SERIES — 2012 (50-MINUTE SEGMENTS)

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/wordofmouth/2012/sep/12/bite-of-china-finest-food-tv-ever>



... *A Bite of China* began airing in May 2012 ... Thirty of the country's most respected filmmakers worked for more than a year filming the seven 50-minute episodes. They shot throughout the country, from the frozen lakes of the north-east and the bamboo forests of Liuzhou to the frenetic chaoses of Beijing and Hong Kong... Each episode adopts a theme: preserving by salt, pickling or wind, staple foods, the "gifts of nature" or "our rural heritage". The filmmakers

explore the central idea using examples from across the country. Perspective shifts from the macro – helicopter shots of neon cities or canopied mountains rearing out of lakes – to the micro – a single bamboo shoot pushing through the earth.

Stream entire *The Secret of Kitchen* (50 minutes) episode here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QxvbeZ-9m4>

THOUGH I AM GONE — 2012 (68 MINUTES)

<http://icarusfilms.com/df-gone>

Pioneering artist Hu Jie uncovers the shocking story of girls' school headmistress who was beaten to death by her students during the Cultural Revolution.

In 1966, the Cultural Revolution exploded throughout China, as Mao's Red Guards persecuted suspected Rightists. Bian Zhongyun, the vice principal of a prestigious school in Beijing, was beaten to death by her own students, becoming one of the first victims of the revolutionary violence that would engulf the entire nation.

In *Though I am Gone*, Hu draws upon photographs taken by Bian's husband, Wang Jingyao, whose impulse to document his wife's death makes him a spiritual forebear to Hu's fearless work. Hu also incorporates vivid accounts from surviving witnesses and archival footage to depict the deadly madness of the era.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/44405926>

WHEN THE BOUGH BREAKS — 2012 (144 MINUTES)

<https://icarusfilms.com/df-wbb>

On the outskirts of Beijing, two teenage girls from a migrant family struggle to earn the money to pay for their brother's schooling with little help from their troubled and eccentric parents.

Growing up in a rickety hut on a garbage-filled lot, Xia, Ling, and Gang recognize that a good education is their only possible ticket to a better life. Their older sister, who left school to begin working, has disappeared, likely kidnapped and sold into prostitution. As migrants, they are prevented by China's hukou (residence permit) system from attending a free public school, and when the school that had provided them with scholarships closes, they are forced to look for new options. With very little money to their name, they place all their hopes in Gang, the older brother.

Their complicated home life doesn't make things any easier. Their alcoholic father and their mother are frequently at one another's throats, and do not seem to understand the gravity of their children's situation.

Director Ji Dan, one of China's preeminent female filmmakers, first met Xia, Ling, and Gang in 2004, while making a film about education in China. This intimate, patient portrait grew out of their close relationship over many years.

When The Bough Breaks at once explores the particular dynamics of one family and exposes the widespread difficulties faced by migrants living at the margins of Chinese society.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQH1Xh-an_8

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN — 2012 (88 MINUTES)

<https://docuseek2.com/gd-sb?hsCtaTracking=6ad18b2c-5dcb-431e-8984-175ba3d6c011%7C4ff4078a-768d-44d0-b5a2-77b2b00f725f>

While many adoption-focused documentaries give voice to adoptive parents, *Somewhere Between* explores the emotional and cultural impact of adoption from the point of view of four teenage girls, all adopted from China. This award-winning film shares their personal journeys as these adoptees convey the experiences of a generation of young people attempting to reconcile their multiple identities. A recent adoptive parent of her own Chinese baby, filmmaker Linda Goldstein Knowlton opens the film expressing her concerns for her daughter. How will she build a strong sense of identity as she grows older? Will she feel like an “outsider” living in a family with two Caucasian parents? How will she supplement the missing pieces of her early life? Goldstein Knowlton seeks these answers by chronicling the experiences over two years of Haley, Jenna, Ann, and Fang, all struggling to find their place in the world. Shedding stereotypes and a one-size-fits-all identity, *Somewhere Between* poignantly conveys the vulnerability, confusion, and courage of these girls as they wonder, “Who am I?” As *Somewhere Between* plunges the viewer into their ordinary and sometimes extraordinary experiences, we too, are encouraged to pause and consider who we are — both as individuals and as a nation of immigrants and people from diverse backgrounds.

Trailer: <https://docuseek2.com/gd-sb?hsCtaTracking=6ad18b2c-5dcb-431e-8984-175ba3d6c011%7C4ff4078a-768d-44d0-b5a2-77b2b00f725f>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/somewhere-between>

SHEWKET'S SUMMER — 2012 (88 MINUTES)

<https://www.codastory.com/disinformation/uyghurs-movies-propaganda/>

This film follows a young Han singer, Luobin, who longs to escape from a hectic life in the capital. In Xinjiang, he meets young Shewket and his father, Tahir, a Uyghur folk musician who helps him recapture his creative muse and collect

songs to be recorded for his Beijing-based label. The film appears to be loosely based on the real-life story of composer Wang Luobin who, until his death in 1996, was renowned for his Mandarin-language interpretations of Xinjiang-style music. Wang was accused of appropriating folk songs from the region and selling them for his own benefit.

Uyghur Hip-Hop as Folk Music

<https://livingotherwise.com/2013/12/26/uyghur-hip-hop-as-folk-music/>

Shewket's Summer which is both a “coming-of-age” and “parent-trap” melodrama, highlights the way conflicts resolved at the level of the family have larger implications for society. Although the film is heavy in the propaganda of ethnic harmony (a Han character named [Luobin](#) [!] is featured as an aspiring musician in search of “original” tunes and then as an inspiration to the Uyghur characters), the slick production values and money behind the film present Uyghur folk arts in a strongly positive light... A close reading of the film reveals that the heroism of the reluctant Han savior is undermined by the force of Uyghur music. It also shows us a hip-hop infected by the contagion of deeply felt Uyghur self-expression.

Although *Shewket's Summer*, like other films of its kind, seeks to promote the Chinese state's vision of pan-ethnic and peaceful coexistence, it actually underscores a reality in which representations of Uyghurs rest almost exclusively in the hands of an increasingly authoritarian regime.

Stream entire 88-minute film/Chinese subtitles only

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7e27pjmh1M8>

SHATTERED — 2011 (100 MINUTES)

<https://iffr.com/en/2012/films/shattered>

Tang Xixin is a retired railway official who has lost little of his outspoken character at the age of 80. He does not like to receive his adult children in his ramshackle home, but he makes an exception for this daughter Caifeng. She runs a brothel and is involved in equally illegal mining practices. In other words, a woman of the world who tries energetically to keep out of the hands of the law.

Xu Tong films the family the way it is. The old Tang, with his flood of words, is an ideal witness to the 20th century; his daughter is a colorful symbol of the new China. Even though in the views of the state she is undoubtedly far from being a role model. Xu Tong's intimate, occasionally raw style of filming fits in well with that. He does not make any moral judgment and that makes him controversial in China. The result is nevertheless sincere and authentic.

Trailer: <https://iffr.com/en/2012/films/shattered>

FLOATING — 2011 (93 MINUTES)

<http://icarusfilms.com/df-flo>

Yang is a vagrant singer from China's rural Henan region: he earns his living by singing in the subways of urban business centers. Every day he brings with him his temporary residency card and identification to avoid being detained by local police. In order to keep his work, he bribes the security guards in charge of the subways, deals circuitously with city workers, and squeezes out other street artists. From time to time, many of his busking friends are detained by local police and repatriated back home, only to return to the city and continue their drifting life. Yang, in the thirtieth year of his life, considers going back to his hometown to marry his first girlfriend, while old and new lovers make his life even more chaotic. Eventually he is caught by local police while singing, detained, and finally sent back home. *Floating* is directed by Huang Weikai.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HC-1TUp0Hjo>



THE TRANSITION PERIOD — 2011 (114 MINUTES)

<http://icarusfilms.com/df-trans>

Filmed with unprecedented access to a Communist Party leader, investigative filmmaker Zhou Hao offers a startlingly candid look inside Chinese politics at the local level.

As Chinese Communist Party secretary, Guo Yongchang was the most powerful man in his county, located in the rural inland province of Henan. Guo invited acclaimed documentary filmmaker Zhou Hao to record his final months in office. Through Zhou's lens, we see Guo work tirelessly to achieve his greatest desire: for Henan

to match the affluence of booming coastal areas. Zhou also captures the sordid details of local-level politics in pursuit of growth: lavish parties with foreign investors, threats to local workers protesting unpaid wages, and offers of bribes and kickbacks.

Hailed by international press as an exceptional work of investigative filmmaking, *The Transition Period* captures the daily life of a Chinese official with incredible ground-level detail. With boastfully candid interviews from Guo and fly-on-the-wall coverage of closed-door dealings, Zhou lays bare the unsavory dynamics within China's top-down power structures. Penetrating in scope yet objective in its approach, *The Transition Period* reveals the conflicting forces shaping China's path to prosperity

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oeXjGAPsgjQ>

THE INTERCEPTOR FROM MY HOMETOWN — 2011 (90 MINUTES)

<https://www.ji-hlava.com/filmy/narusitel-z-meho-mesta>

The Chinese government allows its citizens to file official complaints against their local governments, but at the same time unofficially prevents them from doing so. This documentary is the result of Zhanbo Zhang, the director's random encounter with an old classmate whose job is to convince people not to file their complaints. In long monologues by the director's acquaintance, which take up most of this critical portrait of modern China, we hear a sense of shame at his job, but also helpless resignation.

YUGUO AND HIS MOTHER — 2011 (45 MINUTES)

<https://www.tidf.org.tw/en/films/42057Liuxia>

Yuguo's mother, lost her husband when her child was young. Suffered from excessive drinking, she was not able to support Yuguo. Thanks to the financial aid from the society, Yuguo was sent to Wuxi to accept free education. In a winter vacation, Yuguo came back to his hometown—While he has no longer the child when he left his home but a teenager. Yuguo then had to face his drunk mother, the frustrated uncle, the innocent tribes people, and the familiar but strange forest. He was going through a period of confusion...

Rent/Trailer:

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/yuguoandhismother/390989284?autoplay=1>



TO THE LIGHT — 2011 (69 MINUTES)

<http://shearwaterfilms.com/to-the-light/>

The bright lights of China's booming economy are powered by the hard labor of its minors, who work deep in perilous coal shafts around the country. When a miner dies, his family receives a death pension greater than the amount of money he would have made in his lifetime had he stayed alive. In rural China, where farming alone cannot sustain families, miners have no alternative but to risk their lives daily, descending hundreds of meters underground to dig out the black ore fueling China's massive electrical grid.

To the Light delves into the hopes and struggles of the mining families in Sichuan. The father of two, Luo originally became a coal miner to pay off the fine for violating China's One Child Policy. Hui, son of another miner, prefers to be coal-train driver than take work far from home. For many families, coal mining has become a principal source of income and the only alternative to factory jobs in distant cities. But the mines are notorious dangers and thousands are killed every year. Going deep underground, the film exposes the perils faced by these miners, the slim rewards, and dire consequences when things go wrong. In spite of the risks, the working poor

continue to flock to the minds, unable to heed the warning that earning a living wage may also mean dying for it.

Trailer: <http://shearwaterfilms.com/to-the-light/>

Stream movie here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFcN30pj3mQ>

RESTORING THE LIGHT — 2011 (57 MINUTES)

https://www.restoringthelight.com/?page_id=2

Restoring the Light is a feature documentary that travels deep into the heart of Ningxia, one of China's poorest regions, to uncover the hopes and adversities of the rural population that has been left behind in the wake of China's dizzying economic boom. China's new mantra, "You go through school, then you get a good job and you leave the rural areas" has created an unending flow of migrant workers streaming to prospering cities. But what happens to the faceless millions who stay behind and who must struggle for basic survival and limited access to healthcare and education? Unlike those who have migrated, ophthalmologist Zhang Xubin has chosen to return to his roots. Dr. Zhang grew up in a crude cave dwelling in Ningxia as a child. In spite of his humble beginnings, he attained a successful medical career, then decided to forego the comfortable city life in order to start his own medical practice in Ningxia, operating a non-profit mobile eye clinic for underprivileged rural patients. However, financial difficulties cause mounting pressure for him and his family as they face eviction. *Restoring the Light* explores the personal and professional sacrifices of this unique doctor-entrepreneur in China and journeys into the lives of two benefiting disabled families in rural Ningxia:

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xakBrbQH2Zk&feature=emb_logo

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/restoring-the-light>

THE NEXT LIFE — 2011 (81 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1972796/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

In the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake, 5,335 students were killed. As China has one-child policy, the earthquake took away the only child of many families. This film is about a mother -Ye Hongmei and her friends' different fate of having a new baby. Ye Hongmei, 40-year-old, started her second IVF treatment to get pregnant. Her 8-year-old daughter

was killed in the 2008 Sichuan earthquake. Refusing to come to terms with the reality, Ye believes that giving birth to another girl would mean the return of her gone daughter. So pregnancy becomes an ordeal for her. Then she has to bear extraordinary pains: she travels 50 miles every day just to receive injections and blood tests. Can she make it?

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-next-life>



THE WARRIORS OF QIUGANG: A CHINESE VILLAGE FIGHTS BACK — 2011 (39 MINUTES)

<https://e360.yale.edu/features/the-warriors-of-qiugang-a-chinese-village-fights-back>

This exclusive e360 video report, *The Warriors of Qiugang* — co-produced by Yale Environment 360 — tells the story of how the villagers fought to transform their environment, and, in the process, found themselves transformed as well. The 39-minute video focuses on an unlikely hero — farmer Zhang Gongli, now almost 60, who leads the village's fight to shut down the chemical plant. Soft-spoken and easy-going, but with a backbone of steel, Zhang — who has only a middle-school

Nominated for Best Documentary Short, Academy Awards 2011

education — quickly learns how to use China's more stringent federal environmental laws to put pressure on the factory owners and their cronies in local and regional government.

Stream entire film here:

<http://e360.yale.edu/feature/the-warriors-of-qiugang-a-chinese-village-fights-back/2358/>

TRUE BELIEVERS: RELIGION IN TODAY'S CHINA — 2011 (24 MINUTES)

<http://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=23280&r=SR>

China is on the rise economically, but the post-Mao era has also seen an increasing hunger for something beyond material prosperity. From the novice Taoist monk honing tai chi skills atop a sacred mountain to the uncountable worshippers of the underground house church movement, this program reports on modern China's emboldened—yet still cautious—religious population. In the city of Wenzhou, evangelical pastor Zheng Datong agrees to be interviewed, despite secret police looking on. Pastor Samuel Lamb, another lightning rod for security surveillance, insists that “oppression simply leads to more believers,” while Pastor Joseph Gu, leader of a mainstream Three-Self Patriotic Movement church, describes the rapid growth of his congregation. For a much different yet equally spiritual perspective, the film turns to Daoist kung fu master Zhong Yunlong at a monastery in the Wudang Mountains, where a sacred shrine still attracts pupils and travelers.

PBS: CHINA'S TERRA COTTA WARRIORS — 2011 (54 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/secrets/chinas-terracotta-warriors-watch-the-full-episode/844/>

The life-sized terracotta warriors of China are known throughout the world. This clay army of 8,000 including infantry, archers, generals and cavalry was discovered by archaeologists in 1974 after farmers digging a well near the Chinese city of Xian unearthed pieces of clay sculpted in human form. An amazing archaeological find, the terracotta warriors date back more than two thousand years. But what was the purpose of this army of clay soldiers? Who ordered its construction? How were they created? *Secrets of the Dead* investigates the story behind China's Terracotta Warriors and documents their return to former glory for the first time.

Trailer/stream PBS episode: <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/secrets/chinas-terracotta-warriors-about-this-episode/812/>



WAKING THE GREEN TIGER — 2011 (78 MINUTES)

<https://www.chinadialogue.net/books/6557-Waking-the-green-tiger-the-rise-of-China-s-green-movement/en>

The documentary film describes how the media, NGOs and locals joined forces to block construction of a dam at Tiger Leaping Gorge on the Jinsha River in Yunnan - a campaign seen as a turning point for China's environmental movement.

<https://www.videoproject.com/Waking-the-Green-Tiger.html>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFQsvTnEVUg&feature=emb_logo

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/175599>



BEIJING BESIEGED BY WASTE — 2011 (72 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=8258

Award-winning photographer Wang Jiu-liang travels to more than 500 landfills, fearlessly documenting Beijing's unholy cycle of consumption through poignant observational visits with the scavengers who live and work in the dumps. While China's economic ascent commands global attention, less light has been shed upon the monumental problem of waste spawned by a burgeoning population, booming industry, and insatiable urban growth.

Wang focuses his lens upon the grim spectacle of waste, excrement, detritus, and rubble unceremoniously piled upon the land

surrounding the China's Olympic city, capital, and megalopolis, Beijing.

Eking out a dangerous living within are the scavengers, mostly migrant workers from the countryside, who struggle to uphold familial and cultural systems amid their occupation's Dickensian bleakness. Wang renders the decimation of once-essential rivers and farmlands in the backdrop of gleaming high-speed trains, stadiums, and skyscrapers; the sinister cyclical pattern of construction's consumption and garbage and moving images of the daily lives of scavengers who labor at their own risk.

Teacher Guide: https://misc.docuseek2.com/gej/guides/gj-006a_guide.pdf

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=juJLxiVD9nU>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/beijing-besieged-by-waste>



GOOGLE CHINA STANDOFF — 2011 (47 MINUTES)

<http://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=26460&r=SR>

Whether Google Inc. expanded into China because of the country's vast consumer market or out of a sincere desire to make information available may be up for debate.

The company is known for its idealistic corporate culture, but the controversy regarding Google China's censorship policy became so fierce that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton felt compelled to make a worldwide call for Internet freedom. This program examines Google Inc.'s operation in China and its battle between political and economic sensitivity and unlimited access to information. Differing points of view are presented by Beijing professor Hu Yong; Kaiser Kuo, director of communications at the Chinese Web services company Baidu; CUNY professor Ying Zhu; Ken Auletta, author of *Googled*; and others.

Related Lecture: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Faz16ZSrStc>

Trailer: <https://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=26460&r=SR>



TOGETHER — 2010 (83 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Together_\(2010_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Together_(2010_film))

Together is a 2010 Chinese documentary directed by Zhao Liang. It was filmed beside the Chinese film *Love for Life* and chronicles the everyday lives of a variety of different people living in China with HIV/AIDS. The documentary depicts the living conditions of those living with HIV in China, as well as their own personal thoughts on their disease. *Together*, like the film *Love for Life*, was commissioned by the Ministry of Health and backed by the Chinese government. Zhao Liang has been seen as a rebel director, producing

documentaries that expose the Chinese government of wrongdoing....

The documentary *Together* begins on the set of the film, with Zhao Liang asking cast members and crew about their opinions on HIV/AIDS. Liang also reveals to cast members and those working on the film that there are cast members who have HIV/AIDS. This revelation receives mixed reactions from the crew, demonstrating a lasting stigma around the disease despite working on a film to promote awareness on HIV/AIDS. Liang also follows actors from the film and extras who have the diagnosis and uses the documentary to let these individuals both share their stories and offer insight to the disease and the effect on their lives and relationships with others. For instance, it is revealed in the documentary that Hu Zetao, who plays the narrator in the film *Love for Life*, has HIV/AIDS. The documentary looks closely at Zetao's life and relationships with family members; *The Lancet* noted in 2011 that of the participants in the film, Zetao, who contracted the virus from his mother, was the least isolated by his diagnosis. In fact, most of the participants asked that their identities remain secret.. ...*Together* was filmed beside *Love for Life*, marking the first time the blood selling scandal of the 1990s had been featured in mainstream Chinese media. More still, the Chinese government backed the film, and used it as a way to advocate public health information on HIV/AIDS, and the living condition and social impact it has on those who contract it.



Clips and teacher resources: <https://www.yimovi.com/en/movies/together-1>

YAK DUNG — 2010 (50 MINUTES)

<https://asiasociety.org/new-york/events/screening-farmers-struggle-and-yak-dung>

For nomadic families on the Tibetan Plateau, yak dung is a renewable and readily available energy source for staying warm, making sacrifices and providing light. Yak dung is also used to build homes and fences, fertilize grass, and as a medicinal ingredient, detergent, and material for sculptures. It is an indispensable part of the Tibetan culture and livelihood. Living with yak dung is part of a lifestyle that has coexisted with nature for centuries. But more and more people on the plateau are drifting away from this way of life.

Having never before made a film, director Lanzhe attended film training workshops organized by the Shanshui Conservation Center, a Beijing-based environmental NGO that works in Qinghai, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Shaanxi provinces in western China. Its program “Eyes of the Village Nature and Culture” trains and empowers amateurs to make films to document lives in their own habitats. Many of these trainees, such as Lanzhe, were picking up a camera for the first time in their life.

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZfpTHOhExGI>

FORTUNE TELLER — 2010 (183 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1847591/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

Li Baicheng is a charismatic fortune teller who services a clientele of prostitutes and marginalized figures whose jobs, like his, are commonplace but technically illegal in China. He practices his ancient craft in a village near Beijing while taking care of his deaf and dumb wife Pearl, who he rescued from her family's mistreatment. Winter brings a police crackdown on both fortune tellers and prostitutes, forcing Li and Pearl into temporary exile in his hometown, where he revisits old family demons. His humble story is told with chapter headings similar to Qing Dynasty popular fiction.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNAjKrJkfY&feature=emb_logo



SUMMER PASTURE — 2010 (84 MINUTES)

<http://www.khamfilmproject.org/summerpasture/>

Filmed in the high grasslands of eastern Tibet, *Summer Pasture* is an intimate glimpse into the life of a young nomad couple and their infant daughter.

Locho and his wife Yama live in Dzachukha, nicknamed *Wu-Zui* (5-Most) for being the highest, coldest, poorest, largest, and most remote county in China's Sichuan Province. They depend on their herd of yaks for survival, much as their ancestors have for generations. But in recent years, Dzachukha has undergone rapid development, and Locho and Yama are finding their traditional way of life increasingly difficult to maintain.

Summer Pasture is an exploration of Locho and Yama's personalities, relationship, and the changes taking place around them. Over the course of the film we witness their experiences with illness, infidelity, and the dissolution of their community. In the face of mounting challenges, Locho and Yama ultimately reveal the personal sacrifice they will make to ensure their daughter's future. Directors: Lynn True and Nelson Walker. *Summer Pasture* aired on PBS's *Independent Lens* series in 2012 and earned a Peabody Award.

Film clips: <https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/summer-pasture/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79-8uatcry4>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/summer-pasture>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/11219732>



BEIJING TAXI: TRANSFORMATION IN CHINA'S ANCIENT CAPITAL — 2010 (78 MINUTES)

<http://www.beijingtaxithefilm.com/>

This feature-length documentary captures the rapid transformation of Beijing during the 2008 Olympics. The main characters of the film are three taxi drivers, who continue on their journey with no particular destination, taking turns at various crossroads of modern-day Beijing. The Olympics gave the city its first moment in the spotlight for decades, pushing the speed of infrastructure development to the extreme. Each of the three cab drivers, who each have their own intimate story, sees the transformation in a different light.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHSbaauC1sI&feature=emb_title

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/beijing-taxi>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/1969006>



I WISH I KNEW — 2010 (138 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/23/movies/i-wish-i-knew-review.html>

...The focus of *I Wish I Knew* is Shanghai, one of the largest cities in China. (The movie had its premiere at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival.) In genre terms, it resembles a city symphony, one of those urban portraits that emerged in the 1920s and that reveal degrees of excitement and dread about the rapidly changing world. But like other more recent examples of the city symphony (and like Jia Zhangke's other work), *I Wish I Knew* has a tone that is more elegiac



than excited, more meditative than bustling. At times, it feels like a eulogy for a city that — with mounds of detritus below and construction cranes soaring above — looks like it is being razed and rebuilt while you watch....

Certain historical and political nuances will likely remain elusive for some viewers (they did for me). This isn't a barrier to the movie. Every city is different for every traveler; my New York is not your New York, even if they seem to look much the same. Perhaps this explains why Jia adds so many voices here, including that of the great Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-Hsien, whose family fled the mainland during China's civil war. In effect, with "I Wish I Knew," Jia is building not just a portrait of a city, but of a fragmented people — one story and memory at a time. He is finding meaning in collective remembrance and revealing a world, to borrow a phrase from Walter Benjamin, "under the gaze of the melancholy man."

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/i-wish-i-knew-movie-review-2020>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6Vees2VL5E&feature=emb_logo

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/i-wish-i-knew>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/10614086>

PBS POINT OF VIEW: WO AI NI (I LOVE YOU) MOMMY — 2010 (90 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/woainimommy/>

What is it like to be torn from your Chinese foster family, put on a plane with strangers and wake up in a new country, family and culture? Stephanie Wang-Breal's *Wo Ai Ni (I Love You) Mommy* is the story of Fang Sui Yong, an 8-year-old orphan, and the Sadowskys, the Long Island Jewish family that travels to China to adopt her. Sui Yong is one of 70,000 Chinese children now being raised in the United States. Through her eyes, we witness her struggle with a new identity as she transforms from a timid child into someone that no one — neither her new family nor she — could have imagined.

Teacher Guide: <http://archive.pov.org/woainimommy/>

Trailer / Clips: <https://www.pbs.org/video/pov-wo-ai-ni-i-love-you-mommy-trailer/>



KARAMAY — 2010 (356 MINUTES)

<http://dgeneratefilms.com/catalog/karamay>

In 1994, the oil-rich city of Karamay in Northwest China was the site of a horrible fire that killed nearly 300 schoolchildren. The students were performing for state officials and were told to stand by while the officials exited first. After the fire, the story was heavily censored in the Chinese state media. To this day, the families of Karamay have not been allowed to publicly mourn their children. In *Karamay*, filmmaker Xu Xin helps a community break the silence nearly two decades after their tragedy. The film is structured around a series of first-person accounts from families, teachers, and survivors, interspersed with rare archival footage. Each narrative represents a complete and self-contained story in which the subjects recount their reaction to the carnage and how it colored their view of nation, society, education, law, party institutions and human nature.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bG1cazL6prs>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/karamay>

CHINA: THE REBIRTH OF AN EMPIRE — 2010 (86 MINUTES)

<http://www.films.com/ecTitleDetail.aspx?TitleID=23686&r=SR>

Can China replace the U.S. as the world's preeminent power? And if it did, what type of power would it wield? In Pakistan and Afghanistan, China's investment in

infrastructure along with a flow of low-cost goods has beat out U.S. foreign policy in winning the hearts of the people. Yet China's relations with India become strained over the issue of Tibet, and in Hong Kong brutal crackdowns on Falun Gong make a mockery of the slogan "one country, two systems." This program travels throughout Asia to study the relationships China has with its closest neighbors, and to examine the U.S.-China balance of power. Chalmers Johnson (*The Blowback Trilogy*) discusses American hegemony, Rebiya Kadeer addresses concerns of the Uyghur minority, and exiled dissident Wei Jingshen provides commentary throughout.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9LiKmWGzho>

Stream for free: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/china-the-rebirth-of-an-empire>

COP SHOP — 2010 (56 MINUTES)

COP SHOP II — 2011 (70 MINUTES)

<http://screeningchina.blogspot.com/2012/01/frontline-policing-in-guangzhou-zhou.html>

Zhou Hao's documentaries explore the daily operations of police officers at a police station near the Guangzhou Train Station.

NEW CASTLE — 2010 (112 MINUTES)

<https://www.anu.edu.au/events/new-castle-%E6%96%B0%E5%A0%A1>

Guo Hengqi's *New Castle* is an unflinching documentary of the changes wrought by urbanization in a remote mountain village in Shanxi Province sustained by local mining operations. The first part of *New Castle* focuses on the miners who have come from different parts of the country looking for work. In the run up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics approaches, as part of the campaign to clean up the pollution, mines are closed and the miners sent back home. The documentary then shifts its attention to the lives of villagers. Faced with bleak economic prospects, the local government's solution is – not surprisingly – urbanization: the destruction of the old village and creation of new apartments. The film poignantly captures the various ways in which villagers cope with upheaval to their lives, from protesting, to praying in Church, to giving in to the imperative of urbanization by administrative decree.

In the words of the director:

'When you see the destitute but honest lives of these peasants and miners on the verge of being moved into two-story apartment buildings, you can't help but wonder, can the construction of these new buildings bring them happiness? Why is there such a discrepancy between the state's macro-narrative and the micro-level of individual people's lives?'

A LOVE SONG, MAYBE — 2010 (114 MINUTES)

<https://www.chinaindiefilm.org/films/a-song-of-love-maybe/>

Zhang Zhanbo's film is a troubled love story from a woman's perspective. A KTV waitress is involved in a relationship with a customer who had come for pleasure and relaxation. However, this relationship has been plagued from the very beginning by lies, desire, impetuosity, confusion, and pain. The brightness and darkness of human nature, the warmth and coldness of the city, stage themselves alternately and continuously, just like those vulgar pop songs the girl had grown so familiar with while working in the KTV's private rooms.

WHEN MY CHILD IS BORN — 2010 (75 MINUTES)

Take a rare glimpse into the life of a young academic couple in Beijing. Jun is finishing her Ph.D. in Australia and is a Virginia Woolf specialist. Long, who has just returned from a research study in Germany, is struggling to finish his dissertation on Marx and Kant. An unexpected pregnancy propels the couple to marry quickly and navigate the world of parenthood. An overbearing mother-in-law enters their private world and expects to be in every part of child rearing. The film offers a candid and intimate portrait of two people caught between freedom and responsibility, career and family, and the new and old.

Stream entire film here: <https://cultureunplugged.com/documentary/watch-online/play/5813/When-My-Child-Is-Born>



WHEN CHINA MET AFRICA — 2010 (74 MINUTES)

When China Met Africa tells the story of China's foray into Africa, through the lens of a Chinese farmer, a road builder and Zambia's minister of trade to reveal the expanding footprint of a rising global power.

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/11300144>

NEW BEIJING: REINVENTING A CITY — 2009 (52 MINUTES)

As China emerges as the new economic powerhouse of the 21-century, no one can disrupt the biggest construction boom in the world's history. We marvel at the Beijing's bright new face as international architects create new icons - the Watercube, Birds Nest, Stadium, and National Theatre. The architects of the iconic buildings and their visions for the future contrast with those of heritage activist Zhang Jinqi. His photography exhibition 'Memories of China' documents the last heritage districts of the old city which are soon to be demolished. With 400 cities of the size of Beijing to build by 2020 the China has little time to reflect on the past. Directed by Georgia Wallace-Crabbe
Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAdARUnJRnY>

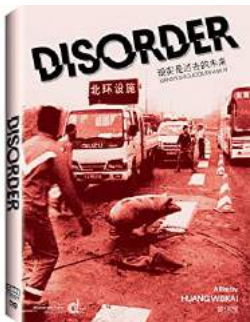
DIAMOND IN THE DUNES — 2009 (52 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1367181/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

Muslim Uyghur and Han Chinese students at China's Xinjiang University live segregated lives, except on the baseball field. Lacking enough students from a single ethnic group, they need each other to play baseball. Diamond in the Dunes follows this team and their charismatic captain, Parhat Ablat, as they overcome ethnic differences and prepare for their only game of the season.

Review: <https://livingotherwise.com/reviews/diamond-in-the-dunes/>

Stream here: <https://vimeo.com/347186031>



DISORDER — 2009 (58 MINUTES)

<http://icarusfilms.com/df-diso>

Huang Weikai's one-of-a-kind news documentary captures, with remarkable freedom, the anarchy, violence, and seething anxiety animating China's major cities today. As urbanization in China advances at a breakneck pace, Chinese cities teeter on the brink of mayhem. One man dances in the middle of traffic while another attempts to jump from a bridge before dozens of onlookers. Pigs run wild on a highway while dignitaries swim in a polluted river. Unshowable on China's heavily controlled television networks,

Disorder reveals an emerging underground media, one that has the potential to truly

capture the ground-level upheaval of Chinese society.

Huang Weikai collects footage from a dozen amateur videographers and weaves them into a unique symphony of urban social dysfunction. Huang shatters and reconstructs a world that's barely comprehensible, though with palpable energy - vibrant, dangerous, and terrifying.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/44399931>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/disorder>

EAST WIND STATE FARM — 2009 (101 MINUTES)

<http://icarusfilms.com/df-ew>

Condemned "Rightists," sentenced to 21 years of thought reform in the countryside, share harrowing first-person accounts of life in a Chinese labor camp.

In 1957, 200 teachers, students, and cadres were labeled as "Rightists" for voicing criticism of the Communist Party and sent to the East Wind State Farm in southwest China. As part of China's disastrous Great Leap Forward, these inmates were forced to take part in ill-conceived deforestation, agricultural and industrial projects that led to wide-scale famine. Later they endured the Cultural Revolution when their camp was visited by large groups of "sent-down" youth from the cities. After 21 years of "remolding," the "Rightists" were finally "rehabilitated" in 1978 and allowed to leave in 1978. *The East Wind State Farm* re-examines the tragic events of Chinese modern history during the height of Maoist rule. Director Hu Jie collects dozens of extensive interviews with both inmates and staff who served through three decades of the camp's existence.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/27742062>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-east-wind-state-farm>

MOUTHPIECE — 2009 (108 MINUTES)

<https://www.chinaindiefilm.org/films/mouthpiece/>

In a democratic polity the media is supposed to be the mouthpiece of the public.

However, in a Shenzhen TV station protecting the interests of the Chinese Communist Party is paramount and reporters are simply mouthpieces of the government. 'First Spot' is an investigative TV programme focusing on social inequality, but most of its coverage ends up being buried. This Guo Xizhi film documents the day-to-day operation of the TV station, following reporters as they attempt to capture a city and its people in all its myriad forms.

DISTURBING THE PEACE — 2009 (80 MINUTES)



<https://hirshhorn.si.edu/explore/film-screening-ai-weiweis-disturbing-the-peace/>

Tan Zuoren is a civil rights advocate who investigated the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, including the deaths of 512 Wenchuan students, and the corruption which resulted in poor building construction. For his efforts, he was charged with "inciting subversion of state power." During his trial, police violently detained witnesses, which is an obstruction of justice. He was sentenced to five years in prison. *Disturbing the Peace* is a confrontational film, with Ai Weiwei directly taking on the police and other authorities and paying a heavy price for doing so.

Review: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/evan-osnos/ai-weiwei-disturbing-the-peace>

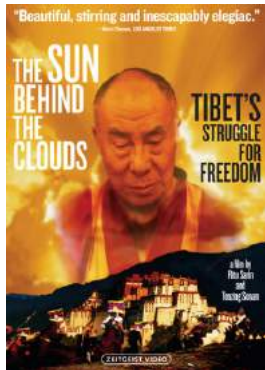
Stream: <https://vimeo.com/42394199>

Stream free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5452332>



THE SUN BEHIND THE CLOUDS — 2009 (79 MINUTES)

<https://zeitgeistfilms.com/film/sunbehindthecLOUDS>



A provocative and potent look at the Dalai Lama's ceaseless struggle for justice and recognition for the Tibetan people, *The Sun Behind the Clouds* focuses on the pivotal and particularly tumultuous events of 2008. From the four-month march of exiled Tibetans to the Indo-Tibet border and Buddhist monks' protests in Lhasa, to the Beijing Olympics and the contentious talks between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama's emissaries, the film uncovers the growing rifts between younger Tibetans and their most respected spiritual leader. While His Holiness advocates for political autonomy within China rather than secession from it, a younger generation within Tibet has grown impatient and begun to chart a more confrontational course.

Following the Dalai Lama's political life with unprecedented personal access, Tibetan filmmaker Tenzing Sonam and co-director Ritu Sarin bring an impassioned focus to the myriad complexities in finding a peaceful solution based on compromise and dialogue.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34cLHNfFiZg>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/search>

THE TRANSITION PERIOD — 2009 (114 MINUTES)

<https://emro.libraries.psu.edu/record/index.php?id=4909>

The Transition Period documents a Communist party leader—Shu Ji in Chinese—and his economically disadvantaged county in mainland China. The film takes a closer look at the last month of Guo Yongchang in Gushi County before a job transition. With simple yet realistic cinematography, the audience will be wowed by Guo's impressive political legacy as well as the corrupt life behind the scenes.

Guo aimed to urbanize the county in his term. To accomplish this goal, he was steadfast when he fought for reducing government deficits; he put on a poker face when he socialized with investors across the country and beyond; he was even in tears when he said farewell to local residents. However, due to greed and the pursuit of power and materialism, Guo was eventually sentenced to seven years in prison for corruption and accepting bribes.

In China, political legacy matters so much that many government officials strive to do anything to impress their peers and take credit. Although the global media takes a critical view of China's economic boom, local governments never slow down the leap of development and modernization. The transition period for Mr. Guo is smooth, but economic reform in China is going through an uneven and painful path. The visual and audio quality may not be satisfying, but the film stands out for its realistic and rare first hand records. The film comes with Henan dialect and English subtitles.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oeXjGAPsgjQ>

A FARMER'S STRUGGLE — 2009 (30 MINUTES)

<https://asiasociety.org/new-york/events/screening-farmers-struggle-and-yak-dung>

Desertification has been threatening livelihoods in many parts of China. In Minqin, Gansu province, an aging farmer and his wife are the only inhabitants left in this small village that is increasingly swallowed by the advancing desert. Growing up fishing in a local lake that has since dried up, the farmer now has to drive to another village for water. While the government encourages families to move to Xinjiang with the offer of a subsidy, the old couple stays put — at least for now — to defend their home.

CHINA'S UNNATURAL DISASTER: THE TEARS OF SICHUAN PROVINCE — 2009 (39 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China%27s Unnatural Disaster: The Tears of Sichuan Province](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China%27s_Unnatural_Disaster:_The_Tears_of_Sichuan_Province)

China's Unnatural Disaster: The Tears of Sichuan Province is a 2009 documentary film co-directed by Jon Alpert and Matthew O'Neill of the Downtown Community Television Center, and produced by MZ Pictures for HBO Films.

Nominated
2009 Academy
Award for Best
Documentary,
Short Subject

The documentary covers the aftermath of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake on May 12, which killed around 70,000 people—of which 10,000 were children, many of whom were killed when their schools collapsed. The film focuses on the grieving families and communities of the children as they mourn their loss and question the government over the construction standard of the schools.

Alpert and O'Neill sent the raw footage of the film by courier to the United States, before they were detained and questioned by local police for eight hours as they tried to leave the country themselves. In September 2009, the filmmakers were scheduled to present the film at the Shanghai International Film Festival, but were denied visas by the Chinese government

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpdN8_ac0iE

FALLING FROM THE SKY — 2009 (145 MINUTES)

<https://www.brown.edu/campus-life/arts/bell-gallery/events/2012/10/03/film-screening-falling-sky>

Little-known Suining county lies directly in the path of falling debris from the Xichang Satellite Launching Base, one of three satellite

launching bases in China. Ten times in the last 20 years, the county has been visited by dangerous “aliens from the skies”: falling satellite debris that smashes into the tranquil lives of the 160,000 impoverished local inhabitants. In China, 2008 was both “the year of the Olympics” and “the year of space exploration.” While the people of Suining, like their fellow countrymen and women, eagerly awaited the Olympic Games, their pride about

Chinese development, particularly in terms of space exploration, was tempered by the fact that they had to endure falling wreckage from

constant satellite launches.

Director's Statement

The film *Falling from the Sky* aims to represent the life under the strong will of nation in a magical and realistic area of Suining and wishes to raise awareness to our homeland and subsistence with the concern of individual life under the will of the nation. The title *Falling from the Sky* not only refers to the debris; it is an allusion to fate, something befalling of these people. Moreover, its meaning can be extended to point to a kind of heavenly destiny looming over their heads, hinting not only to the physical sky, but also the ancient Chinese concept of the “mandate of heaven”, the will of the nation.

Thus, the expression of the film about remote Suining is somehow much closer to a real China rather than the splendid Olympics and Shenzhou 7 spaceship in 2008.



2016 NYT Q & A
Zhang Zhanbo: A
Chinese Documentary
Filmmaker Returns to
His Roots
<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/09/arts/international/zhang-zanbo-a-chinese-documentary-filmmaker-returns-to-his-roots.html>



PETITION — 2009 (124 MINUTES)

<http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/petition/>

The last decade has brought an extraordinary wave of remarkable documentaries from



China, many of them revealing the social and political transformations that have occurred as the country has become an economic giant, and that have often taken a grave toll on the lives of its citizens. *Petition*, filmed over the course of more than 10 years, is among the very finest of these often heroic attempts to bear witness. Since 1996, Zhao has documented the 'petitioners' who come from all over China to make complaints in Beijing about abuses committed by their local authorities. Gathered near the complaint offices, living in most cases in makeshift shelters, the complainants wait for months or years to obtain justice. Peasants thrown off their land, workers from factories which have gone into liquidation, small homeowners who have seen their

houses demolished but received no compensation, they pursue justice with unceasing stubbornness, facing the most brutal intimidation and most often finding that their hopes are in vain. Unfolding like a novel by Zola or Dickens, but with the existential absurdity of Beckett, *Petition* reveals the persistent contradictions of China in the midst of powerful economic expansion.

Background: The Petitioning System in China: <https://www.diritticomparati.it/the-petitioning-system-in-china/>

Stream entire movie here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TeQQJRytag>



LAST TRAIN HOME — 2009 (87 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/lasttrainhome/>

Every spring, China's cities are plunged into chaos as 130 million migrant workers journey to their home villages for the New Year in the world's largest human migration. *Last Train Home* takes viewers on a heart-stopping journey with the Zhangs, a couple who left infant children behind for factory jobs 16 years ago, hoping their wages would lift their children to a better life. They return to a family growing distant and a daughter longing to leave school for unskilled work. As the Zhangs navigate their new world, *Last Train Home* paints a rich, human portrait of China's rush to economic development.

This site includes book lists, discussion guides, interviews, bios, slideshows, etc.

Trailer and additional clips: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/lasttrainhome/additional-video.php>

Lesson Plans: Confucianism in a Changing World:

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/lasttrainhome/lesson-confucianism.php>

The Ethics of Outsourcing to China:

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/lasttrainhome/lesson-ethics-outsourcing.php>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/last-train-home>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5318369>



PBS POINT OF VIEW: UTOPIA PART 3: THE WORLD'S LARGEST SHOPPING MALL — 2009 (13 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/utopia/>

Is nothing American sacred anymore? The largest mall in the world turns out not to be the famous Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn. It's the South China Mall outside of

Guangzhou, China. Outdoing the techniques of American consumerism, South China Mall is Disneyland, Las Vegas and Mall of America rolled into one. There are carnival rides, mini-parks, canals, and lakes amid classic Western-style buildings with space for hundreds of shops. But along with the glitz and glory of middle-class shopping, the mall's Chinese developers seem to have imported something else — a cautionary tale of capitalist hubris. Alex Hu, a local Guangdong boy who made it big in international business, wanted South China Mall to be a hometown monument to his success — even though his home town has no major airports or highways nearby. Four years after its construction, the mall sits virtually empty of both shops and shoppers. But the Chinese have imported yet another concept familiar to Americans — South China Mall is considered too big to fail. Employees line up for flag-raising ceremonies and pep talks about “brand building” before going off to maintain the deserted concourses meticulously. If China is the future of the world economy, *Utopia, Part 3: The World's Largest Shopping Mall* just may be a startling peek at what's to come.

Teacher Guide: <http://archive.pov.org/utopia/lesson-plan/>



1428 — 2009 (117 MINUTES)

<https://www.dgeneratefilms.com/catalog/1428>

Du Haibin's award-winning documentary of the earthquake that devastated China's Sichuan province in 2008 explores how victims, citizens and government respond to a national tragedy. The Great Sichuan Earthquake took place at 14:28 on May 12, 2008, causing 70,000 deaths and 375,000 casualties. Days later, Du Haibin visited Sichuan to capture the devastation as well as the recovery effort. Survivors were reduced to salvaging destroyed pig farms in the mountains, selling scrap metal for pennies, and pillaging homes. Seven months later, as the nation celebrated Chinese New Year, Du returned to see how life had changed in the stricken villages. Sidestepping the highly controlled media tours, Du found scenes not seen on official TV, exposing the gap between the Party's promises and the disaster victims' reality.

Review: <https://asianmoviepulse.com/2019/11/film-review-1428-2009-by-haibin-du/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUv5caIzjIM>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/1428>

PORTRAITS OF LOSS AND THE QUEST FOR JUSTICE — 2009 (22 MINUTES)

<http://www.hrichina.org/en/content/6719>

Consisting of footage shot by the Tiananmen Mothers, a group of family members of those killed during the violent crackdown on the 1989 Democracy Movement, *Portraits of Loss and the Quest for Justice* presents the stories of six victims told by their family members, and of two survivors told by themselves. In the absence of official accounting of the casualties of June Fourth, these stories humanize a tragic episode in contemporary China that the government has continued to suppress for nearly a quarter century. Background Information/Stream entire film here: <https://www.hrichina.org/en/content/6719>

HOLLYWOOD CHINESE – 2009 (90 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/episodes/hollywood-chinese/introduction/1146/>

The 90-minute film illuminates a century of Chinese American cinematic history, from rare silent classics such as Marion Wong's *The Curse of Quon Gwon* (1916) to the contemporary critical and commercial success of Ang Lee's *Brokeback Mountain* (2005). The film features a treasure trove of clips, punctuated with personal accounts from the movie industry's most accomplished Chinese and Chinese American talent.

ONCE UPON A TIME PROLETARIAN: 12 TALES OF A COUNTRY — 2009 (76 MINUTES)

<http://asiasociety.org/new-york/events/once-upon-time-proletarian>

Thirteen chapters provide poignant snapshots of individuals navigating the modern China. An old peasant calls his country “shit” and yearns for the old days when greed and corruption were less rampant; a young car washer from the countryside calls Beijing huge and unfriendly; a young woman at a hair salon wants to find a rich husband; businessmen sit around and chat about the prices of Russian prostitutes... This meditative film offers an existentialist take on the common experience of disillusionment and disorientation in an evolving social and economic landscape that is far removed from the bygone days of Mao.



READYMADE: THE LIVES OF CHAIRMAN MAO IMPERSONATORS— 2009 (79 MINUTES)

<https://spl.kanopy.com/video/readymade>

Mao Zedong died in 1976, but his impersonators are alive and well. This film documents the lives of two people who resemble Mao and assume Mao roles. Peng Tian is a villager from Mao's home province of Hunan, who walked into the Beijing Film Academy one day in full Mao dress to study film acting. Chen Yan is a housewife from Sichuan Province, whose mother realized she looked like Mao twenty years earlier, but it isn't until the twenty-first century that Chen gives the role a try. Stream for free at Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5452346>



DISTURBING THE PEACE — 2009 (78 MINUTES)

<http://paassc.com/social-documentaries-at-ybca/>

Tan Zuoren is a civil rights advocate who investigated the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, including the deaths of 512 Wenchuan students, and the corruption which resulted in poor building construction. For his efforts, he was charged with “inciting subversion of state power.” During his trial, police violently detained witnesses, which is an obstruction of justice. He was sentenced to five years in prison. *Disturbing the Peace* is a confrontational film, with Ai Weiwei directly taking on the police and other authorities, and paying a heavy price for doing so.

Review: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/evan-osnos/ai-weiwei-disturbing-the-peace>

Stream: <https://vimeo.com/42394199>

Stream free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5452332>

FAIRYTALE — 2008 (152 MINUTES)

<http://paassc.com/social-documentaries-at-ybca/>

Fairytale documents Ai Weiwei's project of the same name for Europe's most innovative art event, *documenta 12*, in Kassel, Germany in 2007. Ai Weiwei invited 1001 Chinese citizens of different ages and from various backgrounds to live in an abandoned factory for a massive-scale performance art project. It was the most sensational artwork at the exhibition. This 152-minute film documents the whole process, from the preparations for the project to the challenges the participants had to face before actually travelling to Germany as well as the artist's ideas behind the work.

Stream: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3dLiVfgt-I>

QUEER CHINA, COMRADE CHINA — 2008 (60 MINUTES)

<https://icarusfilms.com/df-qc>

China's most prolific homosexual filmmaker presents a comprehensive historical account of the queer movement in modern China. *Queer China, 'Comrade' China* documents the changes and developments in Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender culture that have taken place in China over the last 80 years. Unlike any before, this film explores the historical milestones and ongoing advocacy efforts of the Chinese LGBT community. The film examines how shifting attitudes in law, media and education have transformed queer culture from being an unspeakable taboo to an accepted social identity. The film culminates with the submission of Dr. Li Yinhe's Same-sex Marriage Bill to the Legislative Affairs Commission of the National People's Congress in 2003, a major landmark event in the ongoing struggle for acceptance of queer identity in China.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obia9-91uIA>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/queer-china-comrade-china>



MAI MAI TI'S 2008 — 2008 (91 MINUTES)

<https://www.codastory.com/disinformation/uyghurs-movies-propaganda/>

In the film, a soccer coach starts a local youth team and convinces parents to help their children to “pursue their dream” and attend the Olympic opening ceremony in Beijing.

Uyghur villagers are portrayed as ignorant and uneducated, living in a barren landscape and traveling by horse-drawn carriages. At first, they do not understand what either soccer or the Olympics are, but eventually embrace the importance of the event and the game as an aspirational, international sport.

Their children, on the other hand, represent not only hope for a better future, they are also ideal citizens. While there are no significant Han characters, the coach functions as a link between the Uyghur village and the state, reminding his charges that “they are all Chinese.”

The members of his team take the names of Han soccer stars and look forward to futures as bakers or traditional drum makers.

Their ambitions show that carefully selected elements of Uyghur culture, such as food and music, are tolerated within a Han-dominated nation. Islam, however, is rarely mentioned in contemporary cinematic depictions of Uyghurs.

Stream entire 91-minute film here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36UsZYA6ebw>

Article: For Uyghur Torch Bearer China's Olympic Flame Has Gone Dark (2/3/22)

<https://www.theintelligencer.net/winter-olympics-2022/2022/02/for-uyghur-torchbearer-chinas-olympic-flame-has-gone-dark/>

MY BEIJING BIRTHDAY — 2008 (52 MINUTES)

<https://www.mybeijingbirthday.com/>

My Beijing Birthday takes a heart-felt and humorous look at the rapidly changing lives of a group young Beijingers through the eyes of a New Yorker, Howie Snyder. The story shows us the group as 8-year-olds in 1996 studying Chinese stand-up comedy with Howie and their teacher Mrs. Ma. We visit the group again in 2008 as they reflect on their lives and their new dreams for the future. This generation of children, known as China's new little emperors, is the first in the world to grow up without brothers and

sisters. They have grown up amid the most rapid economic growth the world has ever seen.

In *My Beijing Birthday* Howie breaks through language and cultural barriers to shows us how these children - and Beijingers in general - are a lot like his native New Yorkers: rough on the outside, but tender on the inside.

21-page Study Guide:

https://www.mybeijingbirthday.com/assets/documents/Study_Guide.pdf

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTinwp5piQo>

Stream entire movie here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dravLSYUXXQ>

The original, uncut version of *My Beijing Birthday* was filmed in 1996.

Stream original 48 minute film here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dravLSYUXXQ>



24 CITY — 2008 (112 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1103963/>



In Chengdu, factory 420 is being pulled down to make way for multi-story buildings with luxury flats. Scenes of factory operations, of the workforce, and of buildings stripped bare and then razed, are inter-cut with workers who were born in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s telling their stories - about the factory, which manufactured military aircraft, and about their work and their lives. A middle-aged man visits his mentor, now elderly; a woman talks of being a 19-year-old beauty there and ending up alone. The film concludes with two

young people talking, each the child of workers, each relaying a story of one visit to a factory. Times change.

Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/05/movies/05twen.html>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzs3ew526Gc>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/24-city>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5636624>

An experimental fiction-nonfiction hybrid, it takes place in the southwest city of Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province. (It was shot before last year's catastrophic earthquake.) The focus is a state-owned factory building, a ruined monument to precapitalist China, or rather to its workers, who helped turn the country into a global power.

THE BIGGEST CHINESE RESTAURANT IN THE WORLD — 2008 (80 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1286510/plotsummary?ref_=tt_ov_pl

West Lake Restaurant in South China's Changsha can safely call itself the biggest Chinese restaurant in the world, with its staff of 1,000 working 5,000 tables and serving no fewer than 150 ducks per day and 200 snakes per week. The words of the restaurant's staff and guests are used in the film to paint a picture of modern China: the proprietress, one of the city's 20 self-made millionaires, speaks candidly about her failed marriage; a bridegroom-to-be who is celebrating at the restaurant explains the modern Chinese customs associated with the wedding party; and a waitress visits her poor parents in the countryside. Through these scenes, we gain insight into the unique combination of the ancient religious values and the new capitalist values with which China is stepping into the 21st century. What becomes very clear is that not everyone is set to benefit from the economic boom. In an approach comparable to Jia Zhang-ke's in his portrait of a theme park called "The World," by focusing on the microcosm of the

West Lake Restaurant, this film manages to gain a perspective on the huge changes China is going through.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0VXQQrvEAY>

Watch film here (edited to a 44-minute Why Story Documentary)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlmFLEhR0uY>

UMBRELLA — 2008 (93 MINUTES)

<https://www.dgeneratefilms.com/catalog/UMBRELLA...>

...Filmed in a purely observational style, with no narration or commentary, *Umbrella* shows the workaday life of young employees in a factory in Zhongshan, Guangdong Province, where they engage in monotonous, endlessly and rapidly repeated routines to manufacture umbrellas, for which they are paid a meager piece rate. At a massive shopping mall, the "World's Largest Small Commodity Market," in Yiwu, Zhejiang Province, those multicolored, multi-patterned umbrellas are sold at much higher prices by wholesale merchants, who are among China's nouveaux riche. The film also shows throngs of young people filling out applications at a job fair in Shanghai or undergoing physical drills and ideological regimentation at a provincial garrison of the People's Liberation Army. Finally, on a farm in Luoyang, Henan Province, we watch a group of elderly farmers struggle to salvage a premature harvest of drought-impacted wheat...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qw-d6hXBcg>

GHOST TOWN/FEI CHENG — 2008 (180 MINUTES)

<https://china-underground.com/wp/movies/fei-cheng-ghost-town/>

A remote village in southwest China is haunted by traces of its cultural past while its residents piece together their existence. Zhiziluo is a town barely clinging to life. Tucked away in a rugged corner of Yunnan Province, Lisu and Nu minority villagers squat in the abandoned halls of this remote former Community county seat. Divided into three parts, this epic documentary takes an intimate look at its varied cast of characters, bringing audiences face to face with people left behind by China's new economy. A father-son duo of elderly preachers argues over the future of their village church. Two young lovers face a break-up over harsh financial realities. A twelve-year-old boy, abandoned by his family, scavenges the hillside to feed himself.

Director's Statement: *When China took the brutal path of the Cultural Revolution, it lost sight of the most fundamental understanding of the value of human life. In the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, as Chinese busied themselves with becoming materially prosperous to the point of sacrificing even their own well-being, they once again lost sight of the cultural and spiritual meaning of life – and what little was left of our culture again faced extinction. As our past has been erased, our history has become mere legend. In this film I wanted to explore the idea of these lost histories and ravaged cultures, and by extension my own cultural identity, by delving into the lives and spirit of the abandoned city.*

Review:

<http://movies.nytimes.com/2010/03/15/movies/15ghost.html>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0D6cypVpDk>

MAN ZOU: BEIJING TO SHANGHAI — 2008 (86 MINUTES)

<http://manzoumovie.com/index.html>

Man Zou: Beijing to Shanghai is an independently produced feature-length documentary shot in China in the fall of 2008. Arriving in

慢走

"Man Zou" is a common phrase in Mandarin that translates literally to "Walk Slow." Used as a farewell, it is a way of reminding one another to be careful and mindful on our journey and take the time to see things along the way.

Beijing three weeks after the Olympics, four American (Seattle!) friends and their Chinese guide set out on a month-long trip to bicycle 1,000 miles of China's countryside, filming their adventures along the way. Without support vehicles, they were able to capture an intimate and unfiltered look at parts of China that are typically bypassed or flown over. In more ways than one, the bicycle trip is the vehicle to explore the environmental, economic and sociological issues facing China today, as the film intersperses the experiences of the team with the opinions of residents, expats, and academics.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/manzou/17099375>



YOUNG AND RESTLESS IN CHINA — 2008 (106 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/youngchina/>

Chinese society is changing at breathtaking speed. As China's economy has grown, its young people have become Westernized, savvy about today's interconnected world, ambitious—and often torn between their culture and their aspirations. This module focuses on a sampling of young, urban Chinese who struggle with business ethics and striking the right balance between work and family. Their choices could have economic, social, and political consequences that affect us all.



Teacher Guide: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/teach/youngchina/>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5346788>

LEAVING FEAR BEHIND — 2008 (24 MINUTES)

<http://www.leavingfearbehind.com/projects/leaving-fear-behind>

Leaving Fear Behind (in Tibetan, *Jigdrel*) is a heroic film shot by Tibetans from inside Tibet, who longed to bring Tibetan voices to the Beijing Olympic Games. With the global spotlight on China as it rises to host the XXIX Olympics, Tibetans wish to tell the world of their plight and their heartfelt grievances against Chinese rule. The footage was smuggled out of Tibet under extraordinary circumstances. The filmmakers were detained soon after sending their tapes out and remain in detention today.

Stream entire film here: <https://vimeo.com/50220285>



DEMOLITION — 2008 (62 MINUTES)

<https://vimeo.com/64235823>

Demolition is a portrait of urban space, migrant labor, and ephemeral relationships in the center of Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province in western China. Attending first to the formal dimensions of the transforming worksite — including the demands of physical labor and the relationship between human and machine — the film shifts focus to the social dynamics of a group of thirty men and women who have come from the countryside to work in this ever-changing urban landscape. In exploring the various banal yet striking interactions

between these members of China's "floating population," the city's residents, and the filmmaker, *Demolition* simultaneously expresses and resists the fleeting nature of urban experience.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/64235823>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/demolition-2008>

A DISAPPEARANCE FORETOLD — 2008 (86 MINUTES)

<https://ihs.co.in/urbanlens/films/a-disappearance-foretold/>

A film about a popular neighborhood in Beijing, and what happened there in relation to the 2008 Olympic Games. Qianmen is a popular neighborhood in the very heart of Beijing, just south of the Tiananmen Square. In the perspective of the 2008 Olympic Games, the city decided that the six hundred years old neighborhood has to be “rehabilitated”. It is now in the line of fire of the promoters, and the 80000 people living there are facing drastic (and dramatic) changes. The film follows the rapidly changing life in the neighborhood for more than a year and a half, from one reality to another, completely different one. Little by little, fragment per fragment, the film is drawing a portrait of a neighborhood, recording memory of a soon disappearing reality. A story of China today.

PBS FRONTLINE/WORLD - CHINA: GREEN DREAMS A NOT SO MODEL VILLAGE — 2008

http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/fellows/green_dreams/

The village of Huangbaiyu in rural northeast China was supposed to be a model for energy-conscious design. The initial project was to build four hundred sustainable homes, collaboration between U.S. architect William McDonough and the Chinese. But something went awry. *Frontline/World* reporter Timothy Lesle traveled to the region to investigate.

Teacher resources:

http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/fellows/green_dreams/resources/links.html



PBS WIDE ANGLE: CHINA PREP — 2008

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/china-prep/introduction/810/>

China Prep follows five Chinese students through their final high-pressure year at an elite high school in Sichuan Province.

Eighteen hundred students vie for spots in Beijing’s top two universities. Last year only 59 made it. Studying seven days a week, the students’ lives are regimented almost every minute of the day as they prepare for the end-of-year exam that can determine their fate. For many students from poor or rural backgrounds, a strong performance on the test is the only way to climb the social ladder and excel without connections.

Competition is fierce and the majority of high school seniors will be relegated to vocational schools....How do the ambitions of these teenagers reflect the realities of today and tomorrow’s

China? Who among them will be most likely to succeed – the daughter of the Party official or the farmer’s son? Who will be the boss?

Teacher resources: <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/uncategorized/china-prep-resources/2417/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2S522C-41g>

Stream Part 1 of 4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MnuH6Bu-8FE>

Stream Part 2 of 4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoVSWFTP4AE>

Stream Part 3 of 4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2TlmJ1bFd0Y>

Stream Part 4 of 4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0u7sNKkg-4>



TWO MILLION MINUTES — 2005 (55 MINUTES)

This documentary explores how students in the U.S., India, and China spend their 2 million minutes of high school years.

Stream for free:

<https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/844335>

PBS POINT OF VIEW (POV) — UP THE YANGTZE — 2008 (93 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/watch/uptheyangtze/>



Nearing completion, China's massive Three Gorges Dam is altering the landscape and the lives of people living along the fabled Yangtze River. Countless ancient villages and historic locales will be submerged, and 2 million people will lose their homes and livelihoods. The Yu family desperately seeks a reprieve by sending their 16-year-old daughter to work in the cruise ship industry that has sprung up to give tourists a last glimpse of the legendary river valley. With cinematic sweep, *Up the Yangtze* explores lives transformed by the biggest hydroelectric dam in history, a hotly contested symbol of the Chinese economic miracle.

[I wanted to make] a movie about tourists on this Yangtze cruise boat — a kind of 'Gosford Park' idea that shows the social hierarchy, the lives above and below the decks. I realized that the people working on the boat were all from the Yangtze area and that many of their families were affected by the dam. — Yung Chang, Filmmaker



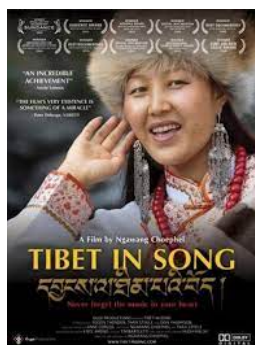
Teacher Guide: <http://archive.pov.org/uptheyangtze/discussion-guide/>

This grades 6-12 lesson plan is designed to be used with the film *Up the Yangtze*, which shows how China's Three Gorges Dam project is changing the Yangtze River and the lives of those who live along its path. Classrooms can use this lesson to explore the social, economic and political changes caused by technological advances. Also, students will increase their skills for analyzing visual imagery.

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5322092>

BBC EARTH: WILD CHINA — 2008 (SHORT CLIPS)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00bv6lk/clips>



TIBET IN SONG — 2008 (82 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tibet_in_Song

Tibet in Song tells the story of Ngawang Choephel, a Tibetan exile and former Fulbright scholar at Middlebury College, who returns to Tibet in 1995 to videotape traditional music and dance. The film follows his travels throughout the country recording music and understanding the impact of Chinese communist rule on Tibetan culture and everyday life. The movie contends that the Chinese authorities re-purposed traditional Tibetan music to forward their own agenda and propaganda. Two months into the trip, after he'd

sent a batch of material back to friends in India, Chinese intelligence agents arrested Choephel and confiscated his camera, notes, and videotape. He was convicted of spying, without a trial, and sentenced to 18 years in prison. While in prison he continued his research, transcribing songs from prisoners and eventually memorizing songs after his notes were confiscated. His mother launched a tireless campaign for his freedom, and in January 2002, he was released.

Review: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/films/reviews/view/20192>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdAqU2PdVU4>

TONGZHI IN LOVE — 2008 (30 MINUTES)

<http://store.cinemaguild.com/nontheatrical/product/2338.html>

Directed by Ruby Yang and produced by Thomas Lennon - the filmmakers behind the 2007 Academy Award-winning documentary *The Blood of Yingzhou District* - *Tongzhi in Love* explores what it's like to be gay in modern China. "Frog" Cui and his gay friends are torn between the lures of city life and the stern demands of Chinese tradition. They live in cosmopolitan Beijing, reveling in the freedom that it affords them. But

traditionally, a Chinese son's solemn duty is to produce a child and carry forward the family line. That China's laws limit most families to a single child only compounds the pressures on gay men. Many resort to sham marriages...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XHXqwwjRng&t=2s>

USING — 2008 (105 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1677711/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

An unusual relationship develops between an urban Chinese couple struggling with heroin and a filmmaker chronicling their addiction, in this provocative documentary on drug abuse, filmmaking and friendship. For three years, filmmaker Zhou Hao chronicled the lives of Long and Jun, a couple struggling with heroin addiction in Guangzhou. Zhou captures Chinese junkie subculture, its members languishing in a slum flophouse, the equivalent of a modern day opium den. When Long is hospitalized after a failed robbery, Zhou speaks out from behind the camera to intervene. Still, Long and Jun persist, soon dealing drugs full-time to make ends meet. As the couple increasingly offers lies for answers, Zhou must confront his ethical responsibilities to them, as a friend and a documentarian. *Using* probes a dark, cruel reality of contemporary Chinese society that has rarely been seen by any audience. Addicts disclose techniques for dealing with police, confronting sham suppliers and staying high throughout the day. Zhou's unflinching depiction of his friends' repeated attempts to quit blurs the line between filmmaker and subject, and raises provocative questions about the ways in which each uses the other.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hgwrasm97wE>



WHEAT HARVEST — 2008 (98 MINUTES)

<https://www.chinaindiefilm.org/films/wheat-harvest/>

The film shows the life of Niu Hongmiao, a 20-year-old country girl who works as a prostitute in Beijing. Around harvest time, she goes back home to Dingxing County, Hebei Province, to help her parents and to care for her severely ill father. She also leaves all her savings behind. Xu Tong sketches a picture of the sex industry in Beijing, showing the loyalty and dignity of the men and women who work in it. A hidden world emerges before the camera with its own language, rituals and rules, centered on strong, self-assured women, who are, just like the subject, rare in Chinese films and documentaries.

SPIRAL STAIRCASES OF HARBIN — 2008 (109 MINUTES)

<https://www.chinaindiefilm.org/films/spiral-staircase-of-harbin/>

In a high-rise apartment at the top of a hill, a mother lives with a daughter who is preparing for college. In a run-down tenement at the foot of the hill, a couple lives with their troubled son. The frustrated teenagers feel that nobody understands them. The parents spin in anxious circles, alternately scolding and spoiling their children. Entering their late forties, the adults are stranded in the face of their midlife crisis and the imminent independence of their children. Is it possible to find happiness, living for oneself and not for the family? As the pace of contemporary society accelerates, the Harbin-born director captures the sighs that drift through the skies above the city with a warm-hearted and insightful eye.

WIND, FLOWERS, SNOW, MOON — 2008 (88 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1859648/>

In a small village in the northwest of Sichuan, ninety-year-old Yang is the ninth male successor in a family of *fengshui* geomancers. The local geomancers main function is to preside over village funerals. The film follows the Yang family as they must deal with several deaths: the tragedy of a father who must bury his son, the disputes between siblings over funeral expenses, a pair of lovers who died one after another. Meanwhile, Mr. Yang celebrates the birth of his two great-grandchildren while he is forced to bury his own son who succumbed to cancer.

FAIRYTALE — 2008 (153 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ai_Weiwei#Fairytale

Fairytale covers Ai Weiwei's project Fairytale, part of Europe's most innovative five-year art event Documenta 12 in Kassel, Germany in 2007. Ai invited 1001 Chinese citizens of different ages and from various backgrounds to travel to Kassel, Germany to experience a fairytale of their own. The 152-minute-long film documents the ideation and process of staging Fairytale and covering project preparations, participants' challenges, and travel to Germany.

Along with this documentary, Fairytale was documented through written materials and photographs of participants and artifacts from the event.

Fairytale was an act of social subversion, improving relationships between China and the West through interactions among participants and the citizens of Kassel. Ai Weiwei felt that he was able to make a positive influence on both participants of Fairytale and Kassel citizens.

Interview: <https://vimeo.com/68202707>

Info clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJndGgpzfxQ>

Stream entire movie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3dliVfgt-I>

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT — 2007 (122 MINUTES)

<https://windowsonworlds.com/2019/09/06/crime-and-punishment-%E7%BD%AA%E4%B8%8E%E7%BD%9A-zhao-liang-2007/>



The life of a small-town policeman is an often thankless one. When they're not dealing with petty neighborhood disputes, people who are essentially just lonely, and acts of elaborate busywork, there's not much else to do but wear the uniform with pride. Unfortunately, the uniform can eventually consume the person inside it, turning them into fastidious prigs obsessed with the letter of the law. Locating

itself in a small town near the North Korean border, Zhao Liang's *Crime and Punishment* paints an ambivalent portrait of local law enforcement, in this case operated by the Military Police who are themselves perhaps victims of the austerity of the system.

Book chapter:

https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvfrxqcz.52?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

Article:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/290329181_Filming_power_and_the_powerless_Zhao_Liang's_crime_and_punishment_2007_and_petition_2009

BING AI — 2007 (116 MINUTES)

<https://letterboxd.com/film/bing-ai/>

Feng Yan spent seven years in the Three Gorges region following a peasant woman Bingai, who refused to give up her land (for new development). Feng is greatly moved by Bingai's uncompromising personality. Feng says that most Chinese people give up their land too easily, like losers. Meanwhile the extraordinary effort Feng puts into making this documentary is comparable to Bingai's perseverance. In this sense, the filmmaker and her subject are mirror image of each other.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSRTqfOfJ9g>

BRAVE FATHER — 2007 (93 MINUTES)

<https://www.chinaindiefilm.org/films/brave-father/>

In 2002, Han Peiyin's son Shengli was accepted into university and arrived in the city of Xi'an from his rural home. To pay for Shengli's living expenses and tuition, Han sold off all the valuable things in his home and came to work in Xi'an to make money. Though a lifelong farmer, Han firmly believed knowledge had the power to change destinies and expected his son to be successful. Jobs for migrant workers were getting harder to find as more and more farmers came to the city. Han could barely make RMB 400 a month, yet Shengli needed RMB 9,000 a year for college. The place Han stayed cost one RMB a night. At night, he used a brick as his pillow. Shengli would think about what to eat after class. He saw the bottled water his classmates were holding and could only think of selling the empty for money. Graduation was near. A shy youth, Shengli's job prospects were dim. He felt the city was becoming further away from him. Despite his education, he might end up earning less than his father. For years the elder Han carried with him a notebook, in which he entered records of his borrowings. Most of them were small sums of 10 or 20 RMB. He also noted his expectations for his son: "Around the year 2013 or so, that is, roughly in my sixties, Shengli will take our family to Beijing for a sightseeing visit. We will have plenty of money by then..."

Clip: <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-asia-pacific-14090058>



PLEASE VOTE FOR ME — 2007 (58 MINUTES)

<https://itvs.org/films/please-vote-for-me>



An experiment in democracy is taking place in Wuhan, the most populous city in central China. For the first time ever, the students in grade three at Evergreen Primary School in Wuhan, China have been asked to elect a class monitor. Traditionally appointed by the teacher, the class monitor holds a powerful position, helping to control the students, keeping them on task and doling out punishment to those who disobey. The teacher has chosen three candidates: Luo Lei (a boy), the current class monitor; Cheng Cheng (a boy); and Xu Xiaofei (a girl). Each candidate is asked to choose two assistants to help with his or her campaign...For all three children, the campaign takes its toll, especially for the losing candidates and their assistants. Viewers are left to decide if the experiment in democracy has been "successful" and what it might mean for democracy education in China. *Please Vote for Me* challenges those committed to China's democratization to consider the feasibility of, and processes involved in, its implementation.



Documentary Discussion Guide (7 pages):

https://cdn.itvs.org/please_vote_for_me_discussion.pdf

Democracy Educator Guide (44 pages) https://cdn.itvs.org/vote_democracy-educator-guide.pdf

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCEB-uH49AQ>

Stream 44-minute film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KD1QsX2hOnk>

CHILDREN OF THE CHINESE CIRCUS — 2007 (58 MINUTES)

<https://asiasociety.org/new-york/events/double-bill-children-chinese-circus-brave-father>

Take a behind-the-scenes look at the training of some of the world's best acrobats and circus performers. In this Shanghai circus school, a highly disciplined environment, small children endure excruciating and dangerous training regimes. Mostly from poor families, these children are sent to the school by their parents in the hope that the specialty training will secure them a future. While small children endure agonizing daily practice, the teachers are also under tremendous pressure to produce award-winning stunts. A faculty meeting turns into a Cultural Revolution-styled criticizing session. This film is set to change your perception of acrobatic performances forever.

CHINA'S POLLUTION BUSTERS — 2007 (26 MINUTES)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OR8WInWv5eQ&feature=channel_page

In the past six years, infant birth defects in China have increased by an unprecedented 40%. This rise is being blamed on pollution from factories. Now green campaigners are taking on the multinationals. "The untreated waste is pumped out secretly at night", states activist Wu Deng Ming, pointing at a water outlet leading from a factory into a river. "People living along the river have enlarged livers", claims one local. They suffer from: "loss of appetite or cancer and all sorts of terminal diseases". Although strong laws governing pollution exist, these are regularly flouted. "Some local officials give protection to polluters", claims Ma Jun. In an attempt to put pressure on polluters, campaigners are naming and shaming guilty companies online. "We let people know that this company, with such a popular brand, is violated waste water discharge standards". There are also signs that central government is taking the problem more seriously...

Stream entire film here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OR8WInWv5eQ&feature=channel_page

ELECTRONIC TRASH VILLAGE — 2007 (10 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch/ZHTWRYXy2gE>

Every year, 35 million tons of electronic waste is exported to China to be scrapped. There the rubbish is broken down by hand, poisoning workers and polluting the environment.

Stream entire film here: <https://www.journeyman.tv/film/3682>

SUPER, GIRLS! — 2007 (73 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTqjXXhfqb0>

Super, Girls! follows ten female teenagers on their quest to become instant superstars on China's biggest television show. The Chinese equivalent of "American Idol," the "Super Girls Singing Contest" spawned an unprecedented pop culture phenomenon. Drawing over 400 million viewers, the show's runaway popularity spurred the Chinese

government to ban it after only two seasons. The film provides unparalleled, intimate access into the contestants' lives over several months. Through candid interviews and footage of nail-biting auditions and competitions, *Super, Girls!* offers a fascinating look inside what the Chinese media have dubbed "the Lost Generation" and their startling takes on sexuality and success in the new China.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTqjXXhfqb0>

AOLOGUYA, AOLUGUYA — 2007 (80 MINUTES)

<https://www.chinaindiefilm.org/films/aoluguya-aoluguya/>

In the Greater Xing'an mountains of northern China, there is a group of people who share their life with the reindeer. These Ewenki people came from Siberia over 300 years ago. They have been living in the dense primeval forest and surviving on hunting and raising reindeers in their own traditional way

In 2003, the Reindeer Ewenkis came out of the forest and moved down to the new settlement built by the government. Now with hunting also banned, the Reindeer Ewenkis find themselves in a dilemma.

The reindeer could not survive the "city life" either. So, a small number of the tribe moved back into the mountains again, back into their forest.

Liushia, a woman whose husband has passed away, numbs herself with alcohol.

Besides the reindeer and her son, who is far away, there is nothing left for her in this world. Her younger brother, Weijia, is an alcoholic artist who is increasingly disorientated by life. He expresses the sadness in his heart through his harmonica.

Time is passing... the sounds of deer bells are fading away... Maria Suo, the last chief of the tribe, watches time pass helplessly.

But does the forest the Ewenkis used to know still belong to them?

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/aoluguyaaoluguya/390989512?autoplay=1>



WE ARE THE ...OF COMMUNISM — 2007 (94 MINUTES)

<https://icarusfilms.com/df-wrth>

The mysterious closing of a Beijing school sends hundreds of migrant children on a desperate struggle to reclaim their right to an education.

The Yuanhai Migrants Children's School, which serves children of migrant laborers in Beijing, is shut down by city officials for reasons never made clear. The students and teachers manage to continue class, first by sneaking into the shuttered campus, then moving inside a ruined factory, and even setting up class on the street. One after another, these makeshift classrooms fail. Over the course of the semester, attendance drops from 720 to 16. Due to

the dedication of the school staff and parents, the students persist in taking lessons, whether inside a decrepit minibus or in their teacher's tiny apartment.

Filmmaker and activist Cui Zi'en spent months depicting a social plight that threatens the tens of millions of migrant workers children in China. These students face both social and administrative prejudice due to their families' marginalized status. They are typically relegated to makeshift schools for migrants, with poor facilities and sporadic shutdowns by local officials. Following the personal journeys of students as they battle bureaucratic corruption for their right to learn, Cui exposes a crisis of social values in the wake of China's economic reforms.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DIVsQBzG-g>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/we-are-the-of-communism>



MADE IN CHINA: MIGRANTS IN RURAL CHINA — 2007 (57 MINUTES)

<https://spl.kanopy.com/video/made-china>

This documentary by Jean Yves Cauchard tells one of the millions of stories of migrants from rural China who comprise the backbone of the Chinese economic miracle. It provides a human face behind the ubiquitous label "Made in China." This massive dislocation of people may well represent the largest, most rapid migration in human history. The film demonstrates how one generation of Chinese is experiencing the culture shock of an Industrial Revolution which took centuries in the West. It is inevitably both an elegy for a lost way of life and a grassroots view of what could become the most powerful economic power on earth.

Made in China follows the lives of a typical migrant couple, Heqing and Heping Fan, including their first trip home after two years in the city. They both work in the Cixi Industrial Zone, a manufacturing center with over 1,000,000 workers, mostly former peasants, south of Shanghai, in a plant making bathroom products for export. They work seven days a week, twelve hours a day for approximately \$.45 an hour or about \$250 a month. Each month they save about \$150 dollars to send back to their village. The factory owner feels he is doing his workers a service; rural China is overpopulated, and industrialization is the only answer for surplus peasants.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvBI05OR264&feature=emb_logo

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/139701>

THE SILENT HOLY STONES — 2006 (102 MINUTES)

<https://www.buddhistfilmfoundation.org/festival-media/the-silent-holy-stones/>

Pema Tseden (*The Search, Old Dog*) is the first Tibetan graduate of the Beijing Film Academy, and this is his dramatic feature debut. Made on location in a village in the Amdo region, the film follows a young lama assigned for Tibetan New Year to attend to the seven-year-old Living Buddha (tulku) of a mountain monastery. The young lamas try to balance their strict training with explorations of the outside world through the novelty of television and make some surprising choices. Like all great neo-realist films, *The Silent Holy Stones* has the immediacy of a documentary, and Tseden delivers a compelling and intimate insider's view of everyday life in his hometown.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0t_rVTEAXrE

The place where the story took place is none other than my home village, where the mountains and waters have always haunted my dreams. I long to tell the true stories—in my own way—that have come up in my home village, to disclose the real looks of her, and to reveal the genuine conditions of life of the people there...a reciprocal infiltration between tradition and modernism." —Pema Tseden

USELESS — 2006 (81 MINUTES)

<https://www.newyorker.com/goings-on-about-town/movies/useless-4>

In this promotional film from 2007 commissioned by the fashion designer Ma Ke, the Chinese director Jia Zhangke eludes the genre's constraints to provide a revelatory documentary view of inner and outer life in contemporary China. Showcasing Ma's handmade haute-couture line is the pretext for a triptych that begins in the vast and oppressive clothing factories of Guangdong. After viewing laborers in their numbing routines, Jia follows Ma at work in her serene studio and records her meditations on the moral aspect of handicrafts. The film concludes with Jia's visit to a coal-mining town in his native Shanxi province, where he speaks with a traditional tailor who has

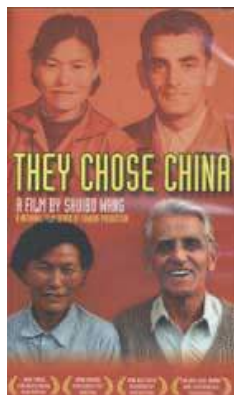
abandoned his needle and thread to work as a miner. Jia's plaintive images suggest the dehumanization that has come with China's industrial revolution and the soul-killing authority on which it depends: a long, poignant shot of laborers squeezing through or climbing over a pointlessly locked gate is a stunning visual metaphor for a society of excessive restrictions in which living normally means breaking the rules.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/9580063>



THEY CHOSE CHINA — 2006 (53 MINUTES)

<https://emro.libraries.psu.edu/record/index.php?id=2625>



This well-made documentary film is the epitome of professionalism. It has excellent camera work, acceptable audio, carefully edited live action and archival footage woven into a unified piece of AV fabric, and it tells a compelling story, all of which combine to make it a good view. The bottom line, however, is that it is also disturbing, because its subject is easily used manipulatively for propaganda purposes. This reviewer could not help but sense an underlying agenda, well camouflaged, that seems to lurk beneath the surface. Ostensibly, it claims to serve the goals of historical documentation and world peace; but, perhaps, these worthy goals are being interpreted from a particular perspective.

...Viewers learn that the three central figures are ordinary Americans.

Unlike their comrades-in-arms, however, they came to believe what they were told about Communism and its desire for world peace and equality for all. The men held strong anti-war views they felt would bring McCarthy's wrath on their heads and were painfully aware of the inequalities of American life, especially the African Americans. That what they heard was all part of a POW indoctrination program is explicitly stated, but that these men might have been selected for special treatment for reasons only the Communists knew for sure, is not.

Why did they go home? One says that when he first came to China, he was called "Comrade" and made to feel part of China's "family." After several years, he was called "Peace Fighter," which was still good, but no longer family. After several more years, he started to be called "Mister," indicating rejection from family status and China's force for world peace.

They Chose China can support courses teaching about prisoner of war experiences in general and the Korean War in particular. Viewers should not neglect, however, thinking about who is telling this particular story and what their motives in telling it might be.

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/2772971>

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDTPhT8mZ9o>

THE BLOOD OF YINGZHOU DISTRICT — 2006 (40 MINUTES)

<http://yangruby.com/the-blood-of-yingzhou-district/>

No-one knows how old Gao Jun is. Four? Older? Younger? Whatever his biological age, he has none of the verbal babble, or ready tears, of a child his age.

The film tracks this orphan for a year as his closest surviving kin -- his uncles -- weigh what to do with him. The older uncle's dilemma: if he allows his children to play with Gao Jun, who is HIV-positive, they will be ostracized by terrified neighbors. The younger uncle's

2006 Academy
Award-
winning
documentary
short

dilemma: so long as Gao Jun remains in the house, the young man may not be able to find a wife.

Gao Jun is one of just a handful of children we come to know in this film: Nan Nan, who after her parents' death, was shunned by relatives and left to live without adult care with "Little Flower," her teenage sister; and the Huang siblings, who vividly describe their ostracism at school. The suffering of these orphans is all the more devastating for being largely unnecessary, the function of misinformation about the nature of the disease.

Yet the film is more than a mere catalogue of woes. Nan Nan reveals her impish humor and joy; the Huang children resolve to become educated and outstrip those who shun them; and Gao Jun, in the closing scenes, demonstrates his ferocious determination to live.

Filmmaker interview: <https://www.documentary.org/online-feature/meet-academy-award-nominees-ruby-yang-blood-yingzhou-district>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwaWZMd75hg>

THE BLOOD OF YINGZHOU DISTRICT REVISITED — 2013 (9 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwaWZMd75hg>

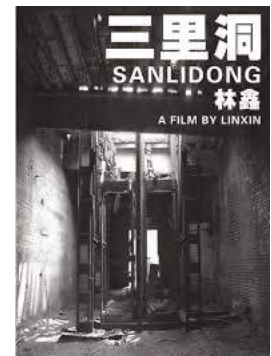
After 10 years, much has changed for the children featured in *The Blood of Yingzhou District*.

SANLIDONG: A PORTRAIT OF COAL MINERS — 2006 (172 MINUTES)

<https://www.chinaindiefilm.org/films/sanlidong/>

This is a documentary film made by the son of a miner about his father's generation. In the year 1955, more than 300 ardent youths from Shanghai City came to the Sanlidong Coal Mine with the hope of realizing their dream of contributing to the development of the Great Northwest. 50 years on, few of them are still alive. The sound of miners breathing is omnipresent in that land of buried black coal. This film is divided into 15 sections, and records the lives of miners still living there, those who have already died, as well as an era that has almost ended. The images of the lives of these miners are testimony to their incredible tenacity and dignity.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfzBn8Esmtc>



MANUFACTURED LANDSCAPES — 2006 (90 MINUTES)

<https://www.edwardburtynsky.com/projects/films/manufactured-landscapes>



Manufactured Landscapes is a feature length documentary on the world and work of renowned artist Edward Burtynsky. Burtynsky makes large-scale photographs of 'manufactured landscapes' – quarries, recycling yards, factories, mines, dams. He photographs civilization's materials and debris, but in a way people describe as "stunning" or "beautiful," and so raises all kinds of questions about ethics and aesthetics without trying to easily answer them.

The film follows Burtynsky to China as he travels the country photographing the evidence and effects of that country's massive industrial revolution. Sites such as the Three Gorges

Dam, which is bigger by 50% than any other dam in the world and displaced over a million people, factory floors over a kilometer long, and the breathtaking scale of Shanghai's urban renewal are subjects for his lens and our motion picture camera. Shot in Super-16mm film, *Manufactured Landscapes* extends the narrative streams of Burtynsky's photographs, allowing us to meditate on our profound impact on the planet and witness both the epicenters of industrial endeavor and the dumping grounds of its waste. What makes the photographs so powerful is his refusal in them to be didactic. We are all implicated here, they tell us: there are no easy answers. The film continues this approach of presenting complexity, without trying to reach simplistic judgments or reductive resolutions. In the process, it tries to shift our consciousness about the world and the way we live in it.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8nxsENV7BA>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/manufactured-landscapes>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/4934295>

MEISHI STREET — 2006 (85 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLB8D08EC589900224>

Meishi Street shows ordinary citizens taking a stand against the planned destruction of their homes for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. In order to widen traffic routes for the Olympic Games, the Beijing Municipal Government orders the demolition of entire neighborhoods. Several evictees of *Meishi Street*, located next to Tiananmen Square, fight through endless red tape and the indifference of fellow citizens for the right to keep their homes. Given video cameras by the filmmakers, they shoot exclusive footage of the eviction process, adding vivid intimacy to their story. Acclaimed at over two dozen museums and galleries around the world, *Meishi Street*, by renowned visual artist Ou Ning, works as both art and activism, calling worldwide attention to lives being demolished in the name of progress. (includes 3 film clips.)

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/meishi-street>

NFB.ca is a website where you can watch films produced by the National Film Board of Canada.
<http://www.onf-nfb.gc.ca/>

*** THE CHINESE VIOLIN – 2002 (8 MINUTES)**

http://www.nfb.ca/film/chinese_violin

In this animated short from the Talespinners Collection, a young girl and her father move from China to Canada, bringing only their Chinese violin along for the journey. As they face the challenge of starting fresh in a new place, the music of the violin connects them to the life they left behind and guides the girl towards a musical future. Stream 8-minute animation at this site.

*** IN THE SHADOW OF GOLD MOUNTAIN – 2004 (43 MINUTES)**

http://www.nfb.ca/film/in_the_shadow_of_gold_mountain/

Filmmaker Karen Cho travels from Montreal to Vancouver to uncover stories from the last survivors of the Chinese Head Tax and Exclusion Act, a set of laws imposed to single out the Chinese as unwanted immigrants to Canada from 1885 to 1947. Through a combination of history, poetry and raw emotion, this documentary sheds light on an era that shaped the identity of generations. Stream 43-minute animation at this site.

Other titles related to China and the Chinese immigrants' experiences include:

* **EARTH TO MOUTH – 2002 (41 MINUTES)**

* **SUNRISE OVER TIANANMEN SQUARE – 1998 (29 MINUTES)**

* **NORTH CHINA FACTORY – 1980 (53 MINUTES)**

* **GATEWAY TO ASIA – 1945 (10 MINUTES)**

DONG — 2006 (70 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0855784/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

China's greatest living filmmaker Jia Zhangke (*Platform, The World*) travels with acclaimed painter Liu Xiaodong from China to Thailand as they meet everyday workers in the throes of social turmoil. Liu Xiaodong is well-known for his monumental canvases, particularly those inspired by China's Three Gorges Dam project. In *Dong*, Jia Zhangke visits Liu on the banks of Fengjie, a city about to be swallowed up by the Yangtze River. The area is in the process of being "de-constructed" by armies of shirtless male workers who form the subject of Liu's paintings. Liu and Jia next travel to Bangkok, where Liu paints Thai sex workers languishing in brothels. The two sets of paintings are united in their subjects' shared sense of malaise in the face of the dehumanizing labor afforded them.

NOTE: The fictional film *Still Life* also directed by Jia Zhangke has two parallel storylines of a coal worker and a nurse who came to Fengjie from Shanxi (where Jia was born) to find their spouses who left them years ago. It creates Jia's connection as an outsider with Fengjie, since he relates himself into the place and local people through this film.

Filmed at the same time as Jia's fiction film, *Still Life*, *Dong* also shares the same setting (the Three Gorges area of central China) and in certain instances, the same shots. This causes them to make a closely linked relationship with each other. Jia mentions once in his interview that he has always been trying to "knock down the barrier between documentary and fiction". He portrays the documentary with a more subjective view and reflects the realistic perspective in the fictional film *Still Life*, overstepping the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction films.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvNhEhwKhgY>

Stream entire documentary here: <https://vimeo.com/433545872>

Dong as a hybrid genre documentary emphasizes Jia's conception of fusion cinema. People would look at his characters subjectively through each different view of the world rather than only accepting truth from it. The appearance of fictional scenes within *Dong* shows how Jia departs from audiences' expectation of traditional documentaries, questioning film genres as a form of label.

TO TELL THE TRUTH: THE LIU BANYAN STORY — 2006 (59 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/publications/filmreviews/Liu_Binyan.html

To Tell the Truth: The Liu Binyan Story traces the life and career of the foremost practitioner and perhaps even the founder of the so-called "reportage" school of modern Chinese literature. As far back as the Hundred Flowers Movement of 1956, Liu challenged the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) from within for not living up to its stated ideals. For his troubles, along with hundreds of thousands of other students and intellectuals, he was imprisoned for many years at the start of the CCP's Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1957. Released from jail and rehabilitated at the start of the reform era in China in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Liu wasted no time getting back to his self-assigned task of investigating the abuses of power and grievances of urban and rural dwellers throughout China as a reporter for the CCP newspaper, *People's Daily*. Liu published collections of his articles and essays in the West and signed petitions and wrote articles in support of student demonstrations in the 1980s which culminated in the Tiananmen protests of 1989. As a result, China sent Liu into exile in the United States, where he finished his days editing a dissident newsletter at Princeton University, trying in effect to lead a loyal social democratic opposition from abroad, until he died of colon cancer on December 5, 2005.

THE TRASH TRADE: SELLING TRASH TO CHINA — 2006 (49 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/publications/filmreviews/trash_trade.html

Trash Trade chronicles the emergence of the trash trade by following Japanese city officials, Japanese and Chinese businessmen, and Chinese workers as trash is transformed into new products. These interweaving narratives enable the filmmakers to address a number of interconnected processes. First and foremost, *Trash Trade* illuminates the way in which economic globalization is transforming business practices around the world. Once considered an unfortunate byproduct of ever-growing consumption and a burden for municipalities, trash has become a valuable source of raw materials for new products. The global demand for raw materials has become even more acute as the Chinese landscape does not possess the natural resources necessary to fuel its booming factories. Chinese businessmen thus began buying Japanese waste and shipping it back to China. Chinese workers receive far less money than their Japanese counterparts, thus making it economically viable to buy trash and ship it thousands of miles. For a Chinese couple shown in the film, however, the daily wage they can earn sorting through trash is much more than they could make as rice farmers, thus enabling them to send their children to school...

PBS: THE TANK MAN — 2006 (84 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tankman/>

On June 5, 1989, one day after the Chinese army's deadly crushing of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests in Beijing, a single, unarmed young man stood his ground before a column of tanks on the Avenue of Eternal Peace. Captured on film and video by Western journalists, this extraordinary confrontation became an icon of the struggle for freedom around the world. Seventeen years later, veteran filmmaker Antony Thomas goes to China in search of "The Tank Man." Who was he? What was his fate? And what does he mean for a China that today has become a global economic powerhouse? Timeline, interviews, podcasts, teacher's guide.

Teacher Guide: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/teach/tankman/>

Stream entire film here: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/tankman/>



CHINA RISES — 2006 (EACH EPISODE 43 MINUTES)

http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/specials/chinarises/gettingrich/CREDITS_FEATURE/alt_00.html

<https://curio.ca/en/collection/china-rises-1087/>

A four-part Discovery Channel series that covers politics, economy, environment and society.

Teacher Review: <https://www.asianstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/china-rises.pdf>

PBS CHINA FROM THE INSIDE — 2006 (EACH EPISODE IS 60 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/kqed/chinainside/about.html>

China is rapidly becoming a world power, but much of the country and its people remain hidden to those outside its borders. *China from the Inside* provides a rare insider's view of China, her institutions, and people. This is a four-part series; PDF transcripts available for each program.

Episode 1: Power and the People

How does the Communist Party exert control over a population of 1.3 billion? Are village elections a chance for people to take a share in power? Can the Party end the

rampant corruption and keep the people's trust? Chinese people, from farmer to Minister, speak frankly about the problems the country faces and the ways forward.

Episode 2: Women of the Country

China's women are argued over at their weddings and have one of the highest suicide rates in the world. Now many are beginning to fight for their rights and their futures. This hour shows discrimination against Xinjiang's Muslim women, various hardships faced by Tibetan women, and the status of some of those who have left the countryside for factory work in the cities.

Episode 3: Shifting Nature

China's environment is in trouble, but solutions often seem as harsh as the problems. A third of the world uses water from China's rivers, but rapid industrialization and climate change have led to bad air, polluted rivers and dire water shortages. One "solution" that has received considerable media attention in the West is the channelling of water in the biggest hydraulic project in world history. While it has benefited nearly half a million people, relocation from dam areas is causing mammoth social upheaval.

Episode 4: Freedom and Justice

Religious worship in China is problematic for Tibetan Buddhists, Catholics separated from Vatican influence, the 40 million adherents of China's unofficial churches, and the Falun Gong. Civic problems include forced evictions, government cover-up of AIDS, corruption and land grabbing. Filmed in Tibetan temples, newspaper offices and a labor camp, this final episode asks: what are the limits of freedom -- and the threats to stability?



Teacher Guide: <http://www.pbs.org/kqed/chinainside/educators.html>

TIMBER GANG (LAST LUMBERJACKS) — 2006 (94 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1510811/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

Yu Guangyi's stunning debut explores a grueling winter amongst loggers in Northeast China as they employ traditional practices through one last, fateful expedition. For generations, the lumberjacks of Heilongjiang, China have made their living harvesting timber amidst a barren, wintry landscape. These woodcutters confront the elements, living in makeshift cabins surrounded by snow and ice. Hand tools, sleds and horses are the only technology they employ to drag massive trees down the perilous slopes of Black Bear Valley. At constant risk of injury and death, they attempt to appease the mountain gods with ancient rituals and sacrifices. Despite their heroic efforts to subsist, the deforestation caused by their decades-long customs may lead to their ultimate demise.

Yu Guangyi's *Timber Gang* is part of his *White Mountain Trilogy* (Changbaishan Sanbuqu), which includes *Bachelor Mountains* and *Survival Song*.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/mubang>

THOUGH I AM GONE — 2006 (68 MINUTES)

<http://icarusfilms.com/df-gone>

Pioneering filmmaker Hu Jie uncovers the tragic story of a teacher beaten to death by her students during the Cultural Revolution.

In 1966, the Cultural Revolution exploded throughout China, as Mao's Red Guards persecuted suspected Rightists. Bian Zhongyun, the vice principal of a prestigious school in Beijing, was beaten to death by her own students, becoming one of the first victims of the revolutionary violence that would engulf the entire nation.

In *Though I Am Gone*, Hu draws upon photographs taken by Bian's husband, Wang Jingyao, whose impulse to document his wife's death makes him a spiritual forebear to Hu's fearless work. Hu also incorporates vivid accounts from surviving witnesses and archival footage to depict the deadly madness of the era.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xto0n4YQh4c>

ON A TIGHTROPE — 2006 (60 MINUTES)

<https://www.idfa.nl/en/film/e4b6a8eb-7ec6-4ab7-b847-5f373f97b066/on-a-tightrope>



In an orphanage in the Chinese province of Xinjiang, children study tightrope walking. The children are Uyghurs, the largest Muslim minority in China. Fearing the Uyghurs' separatist movement, China rules with an iron fist in

Xinjiang. Youngsters are forbidden from professing their religion, and the regime jumps at every opportunity to glorify the unity of China.

Walking the tightrope is an age-old Uyghur tradition, and their feats are spectacular. The children look up to their coach, but his intentions are

dubious. After nine months of intense training, most children are told they have failed and will not be able to continue the course. Petr Lom follows four children in the orphanage in their struggle to build a better life for themselves. They talk about the frustration of having to practice so hard, only to find out that it was all for nothing. But they also discuss their life in the orphanage and the required loyalty to Communism, and their dreams for the future come up on a regular basis. Though not all of them really want a career in tightrope walking, they still feel that they have failed. Then, an elderly retired tightrope walker shows up and becomes their new coach. Lovingly and patiently, he teaches the children to walk the tightrope, this time with success.

Trailer: <https://www.idfa.nl/en/film/e4b6a8eb-7ec6-4ab7-b847-5f373f97b066/on-a-tightrope>

Stream on vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/onatightrope>

AMONGST WHITE CLOUDS — 2005 (86 MINUTES)

<https://www.onemindproductions.com/clouds>

American director Edward A. Burger takes us on his unforgettable journey into the hidden lives of China's forgotten Buddhist hermit tradition. *Amongst White Clouds* is a look at the lives of zealot students, gaunt ascetics and wise masters living in isolated hermitages dotting the peaks and valleys of China's Zhongnan Mountain range." With both humor and compassion, these inspiring and warm-hearted characters challenge us to join them in an exploration of our own suffering and enlightenment in this modern world.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6miAPuNYj8>

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pH2ozq65yHQ>

GARDEN IN HEAVEN — 2005 (179 MINUTES)

<https://spl.kanopy.com/video/garden-heaven>

"Garden in Heaven" is the name of a memorial website for the date-rape and murder victim Huang Jing. When Huang was found dead, she was naked and had wounds on her body, but the coroner declared illness as the cause of her death. Huang's mother had her body undergo five autopsies and six inquests. The results of each were



different. This film documents a mother's mourning, as well as her anger toward and resistance against sexual violence in a society that denies legal recourse for such crimes. Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://spl.kanopy.com/video/garden-heaven>



BEFORE THE FLOOD — 2005 (147 MINUTES)

<https://icarusfilms.com/df-befor>

A landmark documentary following the residents of the historic city of Fengjie as they clash with the officials forcing them to evacuate their homes to make way for the world's largest dam.

China's Three Gorges Dam, the largest dam built on earth, has displaced millions of local residents whose towns and villages have been flooded. Fengjie, a city that has thrived along the Yangtze River for a thousand years, has only a few months left before it is completely submerged in water. Its citizens contend with

administrators and each other over the residences in "New Fengjie," which are allocated via lottery and are far smaller than the homes they've worked a lifetime to build.

Communist collectivism gives way to individual ruthlessness while the community battles furiously against bureaucratic mismanagement.

Shot over the course of two years, *Before the Flood* is a breathtaking achievement in verite-style documentary filmmaking. Directors Yan Yu and Li Yifan observe the death of a city, from streets teeming with life to a ghost town echoing with the sound of sledgehammers. A disaster movie rooted in reality, *Before the Flood* has won awards around the world and inspired Jia Zhangke's *Still Life*, also shot in Fengjie. This profound film shows the human effects of one of history's grandest social engineering projects that reflecting the loss of both home and heritage.

Review: <https://emro.libraries.psu.edu/record/index.php?id=5182>

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/44473976>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/before-the-flood-2016>

FUCK CINEMA — 2005 (173 MINUTES)

<https://www.filmaffinity.com/us/film649507.html>

This documentary shows how different young people try to realize their dreams or become famous through the film industry. One of the main characters of this documentary is named Wang, a young man from the countryside, aged 28. He comes to Beijing out of a love for cinema; however, all he can do every day is line up outside the gate of a film studio in hope of landing a job as an extra, getting 30RMB for one day! During his stay in Beijing, he writes a film script based on his own experience in Beijing as an extra. He thinks his play presents the darkness and desperation of survival in China. Then he wants to find an investor or a director who can produce his play as an "underground film", because in his opinion many Chinese directors are successful on the international stage through this way. In the process of searching, he meets some directors and producers (including some underground film people), some famous some not, and also some businessmen, people from the film censorship authority as well as some students from the cinema institute. In fact, in Beijing his life is very hard - with no money, or a stable place to sleep. In the summer he has to sleep on the roof of a school dormitory. Finally, Wang fails to realize his dream, and he will never see his film made..."Throughout this process not only am I the maker of this documentary, but also a person who is puzzled about why we make films. Of course, I also appear in this documentary, and never hide my bewilderment, or the conflicts between my characters

and me. For example, Wang assails me that I use his miserable story for my own reputation."

Stream entire film here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYCW25_b1XE



MARDI GRAS: MADE IN CHINA — 2005 (72 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=6847

The film confronts both cultural and economic globalism by humanizing the commodity chain from China to the United States. Redmon follows the stories of four teenage women workers in the largest Mardi Gras bead factory in the world, providing insights into their economic realities, self-sacrifice, and dreams of a better life, and the severe discipline imposed by living and working in a factory compound. Interweaving factory life with Mardi Gras festivities, the film opens the blind eye of consumerism by visually introducing workers and festival-goers to each other. A dialogue results when bead-wearing partiers are shown images of the teenage Chinese workers and asked if they know the origin of their beads, while the factory girls view pictures of Americans exchanging beads, soliciting more beads, and decadently celebrating. The conversation reveals the glaring truth about the real benefactors of the Chinese workers' hard labor and exposes the extreme contrast between women's lives and liberty in both cultures. - Meredith Lavitt, Sundance Film Festival Please note: A 48-minute PG version of this title is available, which omits the nudity and curse words.



Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/85613954>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/mardi-gras-made-in-china>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/268087>

THE WOMEN'S KINGDOM — 2005 (20 OR 10 MINUTES)

http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2005/07/introduction_to.html

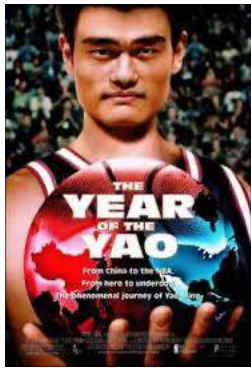
Xiaoli Zhou's *The Women's Kingdom* is a short production of the FRONTLINE/World Fellows program, our ongoing effort to identify and mentor the next generation of video and print journalists to report international news. This documentary from China introduces La Mu and several extraordinary Mosuo women as we travel to "The Women's Kingdom" in southwest China, not far from the Tibetan Buddhist city the Chinese have renamed Shangri-La. "I enjoy being a girl," beams 16-year-old La Mu. "Girls can do anything. Isn't that great?" It's an unusual sentiment to hear in China, a country whose traditional preference for boys combined with its stringent population control policy limiting urban couples to one child has resulted in an inconvenient shortage of women and wives. Male babies in China now outnumber girls by a ratio of 112 to 100; some researchers say it's 117 to 100. But La Mu lives beyond the strictures of mainstream Chinese society. She is part of the Mosuo, an ethnic minority that has a matriarchal society, one of the last in the world.



THE YEAR OF THE YAO — 2005 (84 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=6738

A documentary about the NBA basketball star Yao Ming. Directed by James D. Stern and Adam Del Deo, *The Year of the Yao* shows you how this new Chinese NBA star Yao Ming tries to adjust to American life. The directors give a multi-faceted portrait of this charismatic basketball player, who is now rising to unprecedented popularity! Yao



Ming's friendship with his translator Colin Pine forms one of the most interesting parts of this documentary. Pine has accompanied Yao Ming going through countless difficult moments in his career.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/71032672>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-year-of-the-yao>

SENIOR YEAR — 2005 (90 MINUTES)

<https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2008/04/documentary-senior-year/>

Study Hard! Move Ahead! Be Patriotic! These slogans are drilled into

the minds of Chinese boarding school students as they prepare for their college entrance exams. Since most of these teens come from impoverished rural areas, their tuition is paid for by the blood, sweat and tears of their peasant parents, most of whom never made it past junior high, so the pressure to succeed is stifling. To keep up their marks the students must study from dawn until dusk, waking up before the sun to memorize everything from math formulas to propagandist passages. Their desks are piled high with books from every subject and teachers roam between rows to keep these exhausted and diligent kids on task. We glimpse this hectic world through the eyes of a select group of senior students who try to assert their personalities and live out a few teenaged whims like shopping and dating in a strictly controlled environment that doesn't bolster personal space and freedom. As the battle for success rages on, this intense film provides a harrowing portrait of the new direction of Chinese education, one that aims to mass produce focused, result-oriented over-achievers.

Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KbDvHg1-ns>



DREAM WALKING — 2005 (86 MINUTES)

<https://www.sfmoma.org/event/dream-walking/>

This film follows four artists living on the margins of society whose passionate discussions belie their stark and impoverished living conditions. The subjects are performance artist Li Wake, painters Wang Yongping and Ding Defu, and poet Motou Beibei, who is hailed online as a genius but in reality works as a security guard. Overcome by ennui, lost in the uncertainties of their everyday lives and their artistic identities, the artists express certain hopelessness.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SaGByCxB74&feature=youtu.be>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/product/5452334?vp=spl>

RETURN TO THE BORDER — 2005 (80 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Return_to_the_Border

Return to the Border is a 2005 documentary film directed by Zhao Liang about his return to his hometown in China that borders the Yalu river and North Korea. The short film presents deep insight into both the Chinese and North Korean societies and changes that have taken place over the last several decades.

Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IRWeoFTDIQ>



CHINA BLUE — 2005 (86 MINUTES)

<https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/documentaries/chinablue/>

They live crowded together in cement factory dormitories where water has to be carried upstairs in buckets. Their meals and rent are deducted from their wages, which amount to less than a



dollar a day. Most of the jeans they make in the factory are purchased by retailers in the U.S. and other countries. *China Blue* takes viewers inside a blue jeans factory in southern China, where teenage workers struggle to survive harsh working conditions. Providing perspectives from both the top and bottom levels of the factory's hierarchy, the film looks at complex issues of globalization from the human level.

Teacher Guide: <http://www.bullfrogfilms.com/guides/chinaguide.pdf>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=roy7CUk26uo>



PBS: WORLD IN BALANCE CHINA REVS UP — 2004 (57 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/worldbalance/about.html>

The second hour of this Nova documentary (*China Revs Up*) takes the pulse of China's hyperactive economy, which is the fastest growing in the history of the world...As the sprawling country develops from a poor nation and aspires to a more middle-class lifestyle, China's air, land, and water are beginning to suffer. Already, a massive dust cloud of eroded soil from Mongolia has darkened the skies over North America, and air pollution from Beijing and Shanghai regularly wafts as far as California. The prospect that all Chinese will strive to live like middle-class Americans is daunting, since it has been calculated that if all of the world's people had an American standard of living, two more planets the size of Earth would be needed to support them.

Teacher Guide:

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/teachers/programs/3108_worldbal.html

Watch for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/181208>



SEARCHING FOR LIN ZHAO'S SOUL — 2004 (115 MINUTES)

<http://icarusfilms.com/df-linzha>

This landmark documentary reveals the tragic life of a gifted young woman who was executed for speaking out during the height of Chairman Mao's rule. Lin Zhao, a top student from Peking University, was imprisoned for defending students and leaders persecuted during Mao Zedong's Anti-Rightist Movement in the late 1950s.

"Though none of his works have been publicly shown in China, Hu Jie is one of his country's most noteworthy filmmakers." Ian Johnson, The New York Review of Books

A gifted writer, Lin composed endless articles and poems from her cell. Forbidden to use pens, she wrote with a hairpin dipped in her own blood. In 1968 she was executed, her tragic life lost to the margins of history. Four decades later, filmmaker Hu Jie brings Lin's story to light and uncovers the details of this forgotten woman's fight for civil rights. . Searching for Lin Zhao's Soul stands as a landmark in the Chinese independent documentary movement, an unprecedented work of investigation and recovery of modern China's suppressed memories. Director Hu Jie digs through artifacts and interviews first-hand witnesses to Lin's persecution, illuminating an era of political terror that sent millions to their deaths. The result is a lasting testament to a young woman's legacy of courage and conviction. In the words of Chinese writer Ran Yunfei: "Lin Zhao is the spiritual resource for all Chinese people and the legacy for the whole world.

Clip: <http://icarusfilms.com/df-linzha>

Director's Statement: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQIGjzj1-vc>

RIVERDANCE IN CHINA — 2004 (115 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0913427/plotsummary?ref_=tt_ov_pl

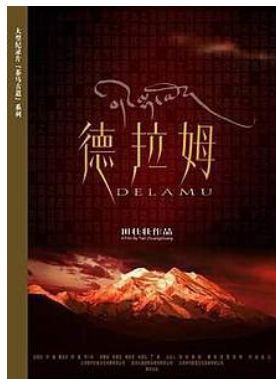
This is a documentary that focuses on Riverdance as an extraordinary cultural phenomenon. Starting with the enormous success that the show has achieved to date throughout the world we will follow the production to Beijing, seeing it as an important cultural engagement between Ireland and China while also documenting what it takes to bring a show of this scale to a foreign location. Through the documentary we get to know the principle players behind the scenes while also following the dancers and musicians getting a sense of their impressions of China and their experience of traveling so far from home. The documentary follows every detail of putting the show together in Beijing from the first truck arriving at the People's Hall right through to the curtain call of the Gala night and in the process, brings viewers a real sense of the enormous undertaking involved in this major international show. Pursuing the idea of seeing the Riverdance phenomenon from all angles the documentary follows the show at the People's Hall and the preparations that take place before the cast set foot in the theatre. It follows rehearsals and intercut with amazing footage of the dancers on the Great Wall of China and out and about in experiencing everyday life in Beijing and their engagement with the people and the city. The documentary features interviews with all the key creatives that make up the backbone of the show. Riverdance is a modern manifestation of Ireland's ancient culture so it's timely that Ireland brings Riverdance to China, the oldest surviving culture in the world but a culture that is embarking on the most radical cultural and social evolution ever undertaken by a nation in one generation.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DG0ZI9KXDdE>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/riverdance-in-china>

Riverdance returns. This new recording of Riverdance, the live show, the first since 2001, was filmed on HD. Live from the Beijing Exhibition Centre to celebrate Riverdance's 15th Anniversary as part of its 12-city tour of China in 2010.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seTRwy_g9IM



DELAMU — 2004 (114 MINUTES)

<https://tribecafilm.com/films/512d00621c7d76e0460023f6-delamu>

With this ravishing new film, Tian Zhuangzhuang returns to the pastoral cinematic territory of the documentary-based ethnographic explorations of his earlier masterpieces, *On the Hunting Ground* and *The Horse Thief*. Shot along an ancient trading route that is etched on the mountainside from the high plateau in Western Yunnan to the trading outposts of Tibet, above the roar of the Nujiang Rive, *Delamu* is animated by a series of portraits of people along the way. An old Protestant pastor has returned to his church and his fellow Lisu tribesmen in his parish after years of exile and imprisonment during the Cultural Revolution; a young Tibetan describes his life with his older brother and the wife they share; an old woman from the Nu minority recalls the days when soldiers of the Kuomintang sought out her hand in marriage; and a young wrangler speaks tenderly of the sure-footed mules and ponies who help him make his living. The range and utterly compelling humanity of these and other intimate sketches are as awe-inspiring as the plunging gorges and the soaring mountains that form the backdrop of this work of measured beauty.

SAN YUAN LI — 2003 (45 MINUTES)

<http://icarusfilms.com/df-sanyu>

Armed with video cameras, twelve artists present a highly stylized portrait of *San Yuan Li*, a traditional village besieged by China's urban sprawl.

China's rapid modernization literally traps the village of San Yuan Li within the surrounding skyscrapers of Guangzhou, a city of 12 million people. The villagers move to a different rhythm, thriving on subsistence farming and traditional crafts. They resourcefully reinvent their traditional lifestyle by tending rice paddies on empty city lots and raising chickens on makeshift rooftop coops.

Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzHXDQ7ddeA>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/san-yuan-li>

MY CAMERA DOESN'T LIE — 2003 (92 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2003/film/reviews/my-camera-doesn-t-lie-1200540907/>

A film about Chinese underground filmmakers who were the first to express their truthful and realistic views on China from 1989 until today. It is also the first film speaking about the Chinese homosexual film-scene. The documentary features Chinese intellectuals and directors such as: Cui Zi'en, Jia Zhangke, Ju An Qi, Li Yu, Liu Bingjian, Liu Hao, Wang Xiaoshuai, Zhang Yuan.

RAILROAD OF HOPE — 2003 (56 MINUTES)

<https://letterboxd.com/film/railroad-of-hope/details/>

Railroad of Hope consists of interviews and footage collected over three days with Ning Ying of migrant agricultural workers traveling from Sichuan in China's interior, to the Xinjiang Autonomous Region, China's northwest frontier. Through informal interviews aboard the cramped rail cars, Ning Ying explores the hopes and dreams of the workers, many of whom have never left their homes before.

TO LIVE IS BETTER THAN TO DIE — 2003 (88 MINUTES)

<https://emro.libraries.psu.edu/record/index.php?id=1755>

According to Ma Shengyi, a farmer from Wenlou village in central China, there are too many of the following in his village:

Too many people still selling blood

Too many people who have contracted HIV/AIDS from selling blood

Too many widows and widowers who can't afford to send their children to school

Too many people whose children are dead

Too many lonely old people whose children are dead

In the 1990s HIV / AIDS came to Wenlou through a blood purchasing program. To supplement their income many poor villagers sold their blood and 60% of those who sold blood contracted HIV / AIDS from unsanitary equipment. Many have died from the disease. In his documentary film, *To Live is Better than to Die*, Weijun Chen tells of the impact AIDS has had in parts of rural China by showing how it has affected the Ma family. It is spring when the film takes up the family's story. Ma Shengyi's wife, Leimei, is suffering from full-blown AIDS. Ma Shengyi and the younger two of their three children are HIV positive. Through periodic interviews Chen is able to document the family's ability to maintain a loving and supportive home environment while struggling with their distressing situation. By the following spring, Ma Shengyi's wife had died, his son had learned to walk, and his eldest daughter had come to know AIDS, death, and separation.

Film Clip and Peabody Award to Director Chen Weijun:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-OoIPs9cDg>

PBS: CHINA IN THE RED — 2003 (120 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/red/>

China in the Red chronicles three pivotal years of evolution from Communist society to market economy. For half a century, millions of Chinese labored in state factories with cradle-to-grave job security. But reforms bringing prosperity and world-power status now threaten the livelihood of many Chinese. *Frontline* follows ten Chinese citizens caught up in social and economic transformation, struggling to survive in a world they never imagined.



Teacher Guide: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/teach/red/>

This site has a wide assortment of lesson plans and viewing guide for grades 9-12.

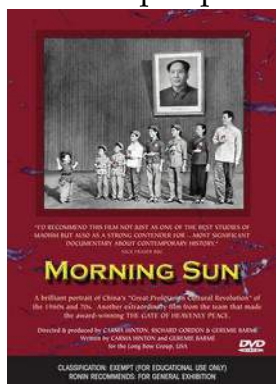
“Teaching activities have been designed for social studies and language arts teachers of students in grades 9 to 12. Social studies activities use the documentary to examine the impact of economic growth, globalization, and changing family structures in China. Literature-based activities help students explore Chinese culture. Since the documentary follows many people over a four-year period, there is also an activity that provides a way for each student to learn about and track each person. Choose the activities that work best for you and your students.”

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggc0W5EfUkc>

MORNING SUN — 2003 (117 MINUTES)

<http://morningsun.org/film/index.html>

The film *Morning Sun* attempts in the space of a two-hour documentary film to create an inner history of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (c.1964-1976). It provides a multi-perspective view of a tumultuous period as seen through the eyes—and reflected



in the hearts and minds—of members of the high-school generation that was born around the time of the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, and that came of age in the 1960s. Others join them in creating in the film's conversation about the period and the psycho-emotional topography of high-Maoist China, as well as the enduring legacy of that period. *Morning Sun* is not a comprehensive or chronological history of the Cultural Revolution as such; nor is it a study of elite politics or of student factionalism. The film essays rather a psychological history. It attempts a cinematic account of experiences and emotions as reflected on by historical actors who themselves were enacting a history that they had learned and wished to recreate in their

own lives. It is also a film about the cultures and convictions, as well as the historical events, that created the impetus, language, style and content of the period—the films and plays, the music and ideas, the rhetoric and ideologies, the education and the aspirations, the frustrations and fantasies, as well as the realities and ardor, that a new revolution that attempted to remake revolution itself entailed.

Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/10/22/movies/film-review-the-loss-of-relationships-under-mao-s-rough-revolutionary-hand.html>



Teacher Guide: <http://morningsun.org/about/index.html>

Beginning clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyYWOyRngL8>

Stream for free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanapy.com/en/spl/video/146283>

TIE XI QU: WEST OF TRACKS — 2002 (554 MINUTES)

<http://store.der.org/west-of-the-tracks-p250.aspx>

Tie Xi is a massive industrial complex in northeastern China's Shenyang province. Built during the Japanese occupation of China and restructured with Soviet support after World War II, it is the country's oldest and largest manufacturing center. From the postwar period to the 1980s, the thriving factories employed more than a million workers, but like other state-run industries they began their collapse in the early 1990s. In *West of the Tracks*, filmmaker Wang Bing documents the slow, inevitable death of an obsolete manufacturing system. Between 1999 and 2001 he meticulously filmed the lives of the last factory workers, a class of people once promised glory during the Chinese revolution. Now trapped by economic change, the workers become deeply moving film heroes in this modern epic. The film is an engrossing portrait of Chinese society in transition. Cahiers du Cinema compares Wang Bing to the great Russian writers and calls his film "a masterful production, an open file on realism." *West of the Tracks* "opens up a new and radical era in cinematography."

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_z4BTaTRko

PBS WIDE ANGLE: TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT — 2002

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/to-have-and-have-not/introduction/886/>

Every year this nation's economy struggles to absorb 20 million *new* unemployed, while the newly rich move to gated communities with private schools and tennis courts. If this sounds like Daddy Warbuck's America, it isn't. It's the new China. Once the home of the "iron rice bowl" and social equality for all, today China has joined the ranks of the World Trade Organization. The country's new commitment to private enterprise and free markets may change China more in a single year than most countries change in a decade. This extraordinarily candid film introduces viewers to the unemployed, the working poor and the *nouveaux* riches alike.

Introduction clip: <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/to-have-and-have-not/introduction/886/>



HERDSMEN — 2001 (89 MINUTES)

<https://store.der.org/herdsmen-p782.aspx>

A small film crew tracks a Kazak family in Xinjiang, China's western-most province, from spring to winter. Unlike the people of Kazakhstan, who grew into a nation of farmers and workers, the Kazaks retained their nomadic life and a close bond with nature.

The Kazaks are a small minority among many more tenacious peoples of Xinjiang. To exist they went their way among the mountains and plateaus of the most remote region in the most desolate part of China. The crew follows a typical nomadic family with eleven children as the family travel wherever there is grass for their animals. They endure incredible hardships, sometimes going several days without food. In spite of this they have moments of joy and beauty, believing that nature will support them and that they will survive.

The filmmakers' four-year-long effort shooting the film is part of a recent rise in Chinese filmmakers' documenting their country's ethnic diversity. Although it takes a classic ethnographic, observational approach, the film is stunning in its cinematic, epic style. Richly informative for teaching anthropology, Asian Studies, nomadic cultures and kinship.

22-minute clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BG0A6k8sRw4>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/109597>

THE TURANDOT PROJECT — 2000 (87 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0262076/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

In May of 1997, Zubin Mehta conducts and Zhang Yimou directs Puccini's "Turandot" in Florence. A year later, they stage nine performances in Beijing*. This documentary focuses on the China production: a huge and elaborate set, hundreds of extras, three sets of principles, props and costumes matching the Ming Dynasty. Mehta, with his Indian roots and European training, revels in bringing disparate cultures together. Zhang wants the music to come through and anticipates the demands (and habits) of the Chinese audience. Rehearsals; production work; rain; talks with singers, crew, and local officials -- can it all come together? When the chorus is in full volume, no one sleeps.

NYT film review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/08/10/movies/film-review-an-italian-china-meets-a-chinese-china.html>

*Stream original Turandot 2-hour performance in the Forbidden City here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyZHi-yVESQ>

NIXON'S CHINA GAME — 1999 (59 MINUTES)

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/china/filmmore/index.html>

In February 1972, after a quarter-century of mutual antagonism between the United States and China, President Richard Nixon traveled to Beijing for an historic encounter with Chairman Mao Tse-tung. The climax of a secret White House initiative headed by Henry Kissinger, the diplomatic breakthrough shocked both America's allies and its enemies.

Drawing on recently declassified records and key eyewitnesses, the program recreates, step by dangerous step, the events leading up to what Nixon called "the week that changed the world."

Teacher Guide: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/china/tguide/index.html>

NIXON IN CHINA (46 MINUTES)

A compilation of audiovisual materials from the collections of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library.

Stream:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cfsI4ZjTbU>



CHINA: A CENTURY OF REVOLUTION — 1997 (120 MINUTES EACH)

<http://www.aems.illinois.edu/publications/k12resources/china/docs.html>

This series includes:

1. *China in Revolution 1911-1949* (1989) This 2-hour video describes the rivalry between the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalist Party and highlights the two figures who came to shape events,

Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong. Stream for free on Kanopy:

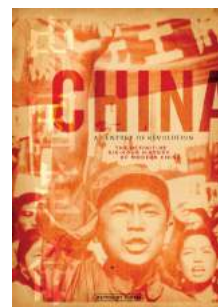
<https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5636616>

2. *The Mao Years 1949-1976* (1994) tells the story of how Mao Zedong and his colleagues tried to build a "new China." Includes images of the Great Leap Forward and ensuing famine, the Cultural Revolution, and the historic visit of President Nixon.

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5636618>

3. *Born Under the Red Flag 1976-1996* (1997) examines China's transformation to a world economic and military power and its pursuit of two seemingly contradictory goals economic strength and prosperity and absolute Communist Party control as it approaches the 21st century.

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5636620>





CONFUCIUS: WORDS OF WISDOM — 1996 (44 MINUTES)

<https://www.studenthandouts.com/world-history/ancient-east-asia/books-films/1996-confucius-words-of-wisdom.htm>

Produced by A&E Biography, *Confucius: Words of Wisdom* discusses the childhood, development, philosophy, and influence of this great man, featuring reenactments of scenes from his life and historical artwork of his image.

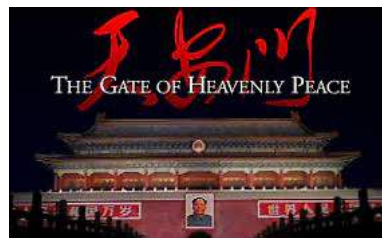
Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/11688381>



GATE OF HEAVENLY PEACE — 1995 (180 MINUTES)

<http://www.tsquare.tv/>

The Gate of Heavenly Peace is a feature-length documentary about the 1989 protest movement, reflecting the drama, tension, humor, absurdity, heroism, and many tragedies of the six weeks from April to June in 1989. The film reveals how the hard-liners within the government marginalized moderates among the protesters (including students, workers and intellectuals), while the actions of radical protesters undermined moderates in the government. Moderate voices were gradually cowed and then silenced by extremism and emotionalism on both sides. It is a sobering tale, for faced with the binary opposition between Communists and anti-Communists, there has been little middle ground left for the rational and thoughtful proponents of positive reform in China. By giving these ignored voices their proper place in history, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* reveals an ongoing debate in China concerning the importance of personal responsibility and moral integrity, the need, as Vaclav Havel has put it, to "live in the truth."



View excerpts from *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* featuring Nobel Prize winner Liu Xiaobo.
<http://www.tsquare.tv/film/xiaobo.php>



Teacher Guide: <http://www.tsquare.tv/>

This website explores the origins and history of the protests, the intense international media coverage and underlying themes such as democracy, human rights, reform and revolution, and nationalism. The site contains transcripts, articles, essays, and book excerpts, a tour of Tiananmen Square, and a Media Library with posters, photographs, music, and videos.

Stream Part 1 (112 minutes) here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Gtt2JxmQtg>

Stream Part 2 (77 minutes) here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0lgc4fWkWI>

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSH1cG-rCnI>

BUMMING IN BEIJING — 1990 (70 MINUTES)

<https://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/bumming-in-beijing-the-last-dreamers/Film?oid=1052540>

Shot before and shortly after the Tiananmen Square massacre, Wu Wenguang's 1990 video ushered in a new documentary style in China, focusing on urban issues and operating outside the cultural bureaucracy. The five young artists he profiles—a writer, a photographer, two painters, and a director of avant-garde theater—reject a life tethered to the government yet still hope to modernize the urban cultural scene; their frank ruminations about life, art, and the future are punctuated by groundbreaking verite shots of people doing their chores in squalid back alleys and studio apartments. Wu funded the film himself, using a camcorder to capture his subjects at work and at play, and unlike government propagandists he eschews music and voice-over narration for an intimate naturalism akin to Frederick Wiseman's. Most revealing is Wu's

portrayal of Zhang Xia Ping, a feisty feminist painter who suffers a mental breakdown; her delirious outburst is the first such episode to be documented in Mainland China for a Western audience (Wu especially angered the censors by subtitling his documentary in English). The last third of the video takes place after Tiananmen, when two of the artists have gone abroad and two more are about to leave. The massacre is never mentioned, but Wu documents the artists' disillusionment and cynicism as unflinchingly as he did their earlier idealism.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/336168896>

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ES1LnLCRtQ>

CHUNG KUO, CINA — 1972 (220 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/28/movies/chung-kuo-cina-antonioni-moma-forgotten-masterpiece-a-china-travelogue.html>

...Invited by Mao Tse-tung's government to make a film, Antonioni arrived in China in the spring of 1972 (shortly after Richard Nixon's historic visit) and filmed there for approximately five weeks. His movie, which has three parts — the first set in Beijing, the second in various towns and cities along the Yangtze River and the third in Shanghai — is leisurely and largely observational as it follows an itinerary established by official minders. Antonioni conducts no interviews, and ambient Chinese is

untranslated. Long passages in which his camera simply watches groups of people engaged in various activities provide something like a tranquil flood of information. ...Although *Chung Kuo* seems to have been initially praised by the Chinese diplomats who previewed it in Italy, Antonioni was soon after accused of perpetrating a malicious slander. Perhaps caught in a political struggle between the relatively liberal Zhou Enlai, the first premier of the People's Republic of China, and that country's hard-line Gang of Four, the director became the target of an orchestrated campaign. Wall posters in Beijing showed his face covered with swastikas; he was denounced as a lackey of both Benito Mussolini and the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. The film, of course, went unseen — it was not publicly shown in China until 2004 when it was screened to 800 people at the Beijing Film Academy.

How did an Italian film director wind up rubbing shoulders with Marx, Lenin and the Chinese Communist Party in the lyrics of a children's ditty? Even more peculiarly, why were Chinese children being mobilised en masse to — frankly speaking — piss him off? How did Antonioni become such a high-priority target of national criticism? See:

<https://www.sensesofcinema.com/2013/feature-articles/when-ordinary-seeing-fails-reclaiming-the-art-of-documentary-in-michelangelo-antonionis-1972-china-film-chung-kuo/>

Stream Part One (69 minutes) here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IuxseEtIRXI>

Stream entire film (Italian with Chinese subtitles)

<https://www.bilibili.com/s/video/BV1GC4y1p796>

CHANGING MASK: A LETTER TO ANTONIONI — 2004 (58 MINUTES)

<https://homemcr.org/event/chinese-film-forum-presents-china-close-up/>

This film re-visits the original places and people featured in Michelangelo Antonioni's acclaimed documentary, *Chung Kuo* (1972). First commissioned and subsequently banned by the Chinese government, Antonioni's film was one of the few western documentaries about China's Cultural Revolution. Echoing the themes portrayed in Antonioni's original film, *Changing Mask: A Letter to Antonioni* portrays the opinions of Chinese people as they discuss changes, they have experienced during the last 40 years.

FEATURE FILMS

(Listed in chronological year order of film release)

SNIPERS — 2022 (96 MINUTES)

<https://www.screendaily.com/reviews/snipers-review/5167256.article>

An addition to the swelling ranks of China's recent war pictures, *Snipers* finds renowned Fifth Generation filmmaker Zhang Yimou sharing directorial duties with his daughter Zhang Mo to pay tribute to the 'Cold Gun Movement' which saw Chinese sharpshooters helping North Korea resist US aggression during the Korean War (1950-1953). Zhang senior has been especially productive of late with an impressively varied run of films – *Shadow* (2018), *One Second* (2020), *Cliff Walkers* (2021) – that have catered to the tastes of both domestic and international audiences, but *Snipers* has the local market fixed in its crosshairs. Relatively contained and short on visual flourishes, it wears its patriotic heart on its blood-splattered sleeve while delivering bursts of action with brisk proficiency.

Surprisingly, given his status, this is the first Zhang film to be released during the Lunar New Year period. Within a typically crowded frame, *Snipers* is at once a direct competitor and alternative to *The Battle at Lake Changjin II*; both depict the Korean war, but while Tsui Hark's much-vaunted sequel is a 149-minute pyrotechnic extravaganza, the Zhangs' collaboration clocks in at a trim 96-minutes and takes a largely grounded approach to combat recreation. This differentiation should enable *Snipers* to stealthily gain traction once the box office fireworks of its ostensible rival begin to fade.

Internationally, *Snipers* probably won't receive the prestige treatment that is usually bestowed on Zhang's productions, but will have no trouble getting picked up for streaming release.

Review: <https://supchina.com/2022/04/01/snipers-zhang-yimous-korean-war-film-misses-its-mark/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fFGuzssj2Y>

LISTEN BEFORE YOU SING — 2021 (113 MINUTES)

<https://www.siff.net/festival/listen-before-you-sing>

In the cloudy mountains of Taiwan, the elementary school of a small Bunun (a Taiwanese Indigenous people) village is on the brink of closing. Optimistic, a little goofy, and undeniably passionate, P.E. teacher and volleyball coach Bukut (Umin Boya) volunteers to lead the school's choir to victory at a competition in the big city as a last-ditch effort to show that their school deserves to remain open. With the help of new music teacher Miss Huang (Ella Chen), they embark on a journey to build the students' musical ability and confidence. But the kids, though hopeful and endearing, face unique challenges that their competitors don't: Helping with the harvest, caring for their parents, and other responsibilities to keep the village afloat conflict with the choir, even though the students have the talent and drive. Based on the true story of the Vox Nativae Taiwanese Foundation Choir, *Listen Before You Sing* is an earnest ode to the power of one's heritage and community to build hope and confidence in one's ability to succeed.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q54SnGkWbQA>

ANITA — 2021 (140 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2021/film/reviews/anita-review-1235088785/>

The short life and brilliant career of Hong Kong singer, actress and social activist Anita Mui is celebrated in the middling biopic *Anita*, starring 31-year-old model Louise Wong in her film debut. This handsomely decorated and lushly filmed portrait nails the look and electric atmosphere in Hong Kong's entertainment industry during its 1980s and '90s heyday but only fitfully captures the sassy energy and fearless spirit that made Mui an adored figure who became known as the "Madonna of the East" and the "Daughter of Hong Kong." Archival footage of Mui sprinkled throughout the film highlights the difference.

Anita joins a long list of productions about Mui (Miu Yim-fong), who died from cervical cancer in Dec. 2003 at the age of 40. Among these are the lengthy Chinese TV series *Anita Mui Fei* (2007) and *Dearest Anita* (2019), a fact-based drama inspired by members of the Mui Nation online fan club. This big-budget production is certain to become the most widely distributed of all Anita Mui-inspired screen projects. Despite its shortcomings, the first feature directed solo by action movie hitmaker Longman Leung (the *Cold War* franchise) has the gloss and nostalgic appeal to become a hit wherever Mui's life and legacy are held dear...Never in question is the film's love for a time when everything seemed possible in Hong Kong and artists such as Mui and Cheung inspired fans by speaking up and standing proudly for what they believed in. The film cannot help but match the sadness of Mui's passing with a deep sense of loss for the heart and soul of the place this Daughter of Hong Kong called home.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ig_QU-YDpcw



LET'S EAT — 2021 (8 MINUTES)

Let's Eat is an 8-minute animated short film that centers on the relationship between a mother and daughter in a Chinese-American immigrant family. *Let's Eat* strives to be a universal story told through a distinctly Asian-American voice. As a single parent in an unfamiliar country, Ma's entire life centers around raising Luan, her rambunctious young daughter. Likewise, Luan spends her childhood indulging in endless quality time with her playful, loving mother. However, as Luan grows up, it isn't long before daily life interferes and causes mother and daughter to grow apart. By channeling their feelings into cooking, the two strive to find their way back to each other, one homemade meal at a time. Ma and Luan's tale touches upon mother-daughter relationships, the American immigrant experience, and the unspoken translation of love into food - familiar themes reflected through a fresh perspective often overlooked in mainstream media.

Stream entire film here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MX_fJAhmEE

HI, MOM — 2021 (128 MINUTES)

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/feb/26/hi-mom-comedy-about-death-and-parenthood-becomes-one-of-chinas-biggest-film-hits>

A Chinese comedian's directorial debut about a woman who travels back in time to see her dead mother has become the fourth highest grossing film in the country's history and the highest ever for a female director.

Jia wrote, directed and starred in the film, described as a tearjerker comedy, as a tribute to her own mother, who died when Jia was 19. The film has sparked a conversation in China about women, motherhood, and parenting.

Hi Mom follows the story of young woman, Jia Xiaoling, whose mother dies in a car accident in 2001. The character, who feels she hadn't been a good enough daughter,

travels back in time to 1981, determined to meet her mother and help give her a better life, including by attempting to set her up with a different man.

Review: <https://variety.com/2021/film/reviews/hi-mom-review-ni-hao-li-huan-ying-1234943023/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-e-I55AY3Nw>



A NEW OLD PLAY — 2021 (179 MINUTES)

<https://supchina.com/2022/02/25/a-new-old-play-20th-century-china-depicted-through-film-and-theater/>

...The film follows a Sichuan opera troupe through more than 50 years in 20th-century China, through many of the cultural milestones that makes China what it is today. We are introduced to our protagonist Qiu, once head clown of his theater troupe, after his death. He travels through the murky lands of purgatory, encountering wayward souls of his past in one final rehashing of life. Afterwards, he'll drink a memory-losing soup and reach the depths of a banal and beautiful hell...Director Qiu: "The story is inspired by the life of my grandfather, the Sichuan

opera clown-role actor Qiu Fu-xin. Growing up in the daily reality of an opera troupe, I suppose I had an odd, piecemeal view of this world, seen only from the inside as a moving collage of faces, expressions, voices, gestures, sounds, smells and colors, warm or cold, damp or dry, drunk or sober..." This haziness, the sweeping feeling that makes large swaths of time pass in an instant, is replicated through dioramic sets that only mingle with realism, and an ensemble of eccentric characters that come and go from Qiu's life in a flash...The film says, "A new play always tells old stories," which feels so right. *A New Old Play* is as much a modern myth as it is a historical portrait of a community.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ee2z-WjLUyg>

MONEYBOYS — 2021 (120 MINUTES)

<https://www.screendaily.com/reviews/moneyboys-cannes-review/5160954.article>

Writer-director CB Yi makes an auspicious debut with *Moneyboys*, a profoundly melancholic tale of a gay hustler who is unable to let go of the past. Although set in South China, it was actually shot in Taiwan with support from the Taipei Film Commission after securing mainland production approval ran aground on the ostensible subject matter. Yet, Yi is less focused on depicting sex work than exploring the impact of migration on China's rural youth. In addition to establishing Yi as a talent to watch, the film also cements the comeback of star Kai Ko, who found fame in Giddens Ko's romance *You Are the Apple of My Eye* (2011) only to be blacklisted in 2014 after being arrested in Beijing for drug possession. The actor's immensely empathic performance as a considerate young man who denies himself happiness will surely put him on the casting lists of independently minded Chinese filmmakers, even if roles in mainland-oriented commercial fare remain off limits.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCn9_356Z5U

WHITE SNAKE 2: GREEN SNAKE — 2021 (132 MINUTES)

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Animation/GreenSnake2021>

Directed by Amp Wong, this animation serves as a sequel to *White Snake*. Some time after the events of the first movie, Blanca marries Xu Xian, the reincarnation of Ah Xuan, and has a child with him. When Xian leaves her to join a Buddhist temple led by

the great sage Fahai, Blanca assails it with Verta's help in order to get her husband back. In retribution, Fahai seals Blanca inside Leifang Pagoda, and when Verta vengefully attacks him, she is cast down a mountain and awakens in the seemingly modern-day metropolis of Asuraville. Confused and angry, Verta sets out to rescue her sister no matter the cost, aided by a mysterious mask-wearing grey-haired young man.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l265kPOsDXM>

Stream on Netflix: <https://www.netflix.com/watch/81504698?source=35>

1921 — 2021 (138 MINUTES)

<https://china-underground.com/wp/movies/1921/>

1921 tells the story of a Communist Party's early history during the turbulent era, examining the remarkable Chinese revolutionary leaders' zeal and contrition for the ascension of the Chinese people. The film is about the establishment and creation of the Communist Party of China (CPC), which is now commonly known as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), 100 years ago.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEmZl4yfWO4>

20 + Propaganda Movies (1921, Cliff Walkers, Battle at Lake Changjin, etc)

See: <https://china-underground.com/wp/2021/10/30/chinese-propaganda-movies/>

CLIFF WALKERS — 2021 (120 MINUTES)

<https://china-underground.com/wp/movies/cliff-walkers/>

Set in the puppet state of Manchukuo in the 1930s, the film follows four Communist party special agents who return to China after receiving training in the Soviet Union. Together, they embark on a secret mission code-named "Utrennya". After being sold out by a traitor, the team find themselves surrounded by threats on all sides from the moment they parachute into the mission. Will the agents break the impasse and complete their mission? On the snowy grounds of Manchukuo, the team will be tested to their limit.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DqFy0dAnJnI&t=2s>



THE BATTLE AT LAKE CHANGJIN — 2021 (185 MINUTES)

<https://china-underground.com/wp/movies/the-battle-at-lake-changjin/>

In the winter of 1950, in the icy and snowy area of Changjin Lake, a bloody battle between the United States and China was about to begin. China and the United States respectively

sent the most elite troop troops to fight-the 9th Corps of the Chinese People's Volunteers, the 1st US Marine Division, and the 7th Infantry Division.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aHDj84CcsY&t=1s>

UPCOMING SUMMER — 2021 (115 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt13575838/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl
Chen Chen, a high school student, finds the love affair of her mother just before the college entrance exam and gets depressed. After the unsuccessful exam, Chen gets acquainted with Zheng Yu Xing, a handsome campus cyber celebrity, because of a lie. The two join hands to face growing pains, and witness growth and metamorphoses of each other, in the summer of their unsettled youth.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRnjMgBvi64>

Moviegoers Divided over "Invisible" Gay Cast in Upcoming Summer

<https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1008238/moviegoers-divided-over-invisible-gay-cast-in-upcoming-summer>

THE WINGS OF SONGS — 2021 (98 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/05/world/asia/china-uyghurs-propaganda-musical.html>

Welcome to *The Wings of Songs*, a state-backed musical that is the latest addition to China's propaganda campaign to defend its policies in Xinjiang. The campaign has intensified in recent weeks as Western politicians and rights groups have accused Beijing of subjecting Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang to forced labor and genocide.



The film offers a glimpse of the alternate vision of Xinjiang that China's ruling Communist Party is pushing to audiences at home and abroad. Far from being oppressed, the musical seems to say, the Uyghurs and other minorities are singing and dancing happily in colorful dress, a flashy take on a tired Chinese stereotype about the region's minorities that Uyghur rights activists quickly denounced.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I934hfjEEwg>

Stream entire movie here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4IXAZRdW5PI>

THE REBEL PRINCESS — 2021 (68 episodes on PBS, popular TV series in China)

<https://www.viki.com/tv/36360c-the-rebel-princess>

Wang Xuan is a 15-year-old noblewoman whose life is turned on its head when she is forced into an arranged marriage with Xiao Qi a powerful but low-born general. Despite these less-than-promising beginnings, the two form a tight bond as they attempt to navigate a series of bitter power struggles and plots that threaten to bring the Imperial court (and the realm) to its knees.

Their exceptionally effective partnership helps them thwart damaging attempts to spark uncontrollable civil unrest, but also brings them to the pinnacle of political power:

Wang Xuan and Xiao Qi have effectively become the joint emperors of the realm.

But the rest of the Imperial family has no intention of relinquishing power to this young couple so easily – with its most devious members planning a deadly scheme that could do away with the benevolent Wang Xuan and Xiao Qi for good...

This drama series was adapted from a popular novel by Mei Yu Zhe.

Trailer: <https://proxy.pbs.org/video/rebel-princess-trailer-4u3un3/>

CONFETTI — 2021 (86 MINUTES)

<https://www.confettifilm.com/film>

How far would a mother go to reverse her child's fate? Based on writer/director Ann Hu's story, that's the question facing Lan (Zhu Zhu), who travels with her 9-year-old daughter Meimei (Harmonie He) from their small town in China to New York City. Inflicted with a learning disability, Meimei is considered a strange and dumb girl, an outcast in her school and community. What no one recognizes, however, is that she possesses a gift waiting to be unlocked. The world seen through her eyes is unique and filled with magic. When her mother learns that Meimei suffers from dyslexia, as do 1 in 10 people worldwide, she will stop at nothing to help her, including leaving her life in China behind and venturing alone with Meimei to New York City, braving a place she knows nothing about and speaking not a word of English.

Their pursuit of the impossible is a rollercoaster, impacted by the numerous people who come into their lives and affect their journey along the way, including Helen (Amy Irving), a wheelchair user, outspoken writer who reluctantly takes them in. Navigating schools for a recent immigrant requiring learning accommodations presents unique

challenges, and ultimately Lan's low-wage factory job and visiting immigrant status endanger Meimei's acceptance at a special school. What Lan and Meimei discover, is that in a world where people are judged and often not seen, their courage to believe in themselves against all odds will eventually lead them to people who do see them for who they truly are.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/confetti-movie-review-2021>

Trailer: <https://www.confettifilm.com/trailer>

THE GREAT DISTANCE DELIVERS CRANE — 2021

<https://www.1905.com/mdb/film/2254818/>

Teenagers Dorje and Gesang, who lived with their grandma, rescued a young, black-necked crane who had lost its parents. The injured young, black-necked crane was unable to complete the winter migration alone, and the young Dorje and Gesang embarked on the journey of sending the crane thousands of miles away.

Tibetan Filmmaker Lhapal Gya: *"The Great Distance Delivers Crane" is mainly about a family coming together, how the father and the child clear up misunderstandings. I didn't come up with the story. It was pitched to me. Since the scriptwriter is Han Chinese, I also got involved in the scriptwriting, because otherwise there would be many details about our religion that they wouldn't understand. For example, we included some elements of the Epic of King Gesar (a venerated ancient hero in Tibetan folklore) because the crane is a vital presence in the stories of King Gesar, which explains why our protagonists want to protect the crane.*

SISTER — 2021 (127 MINUTES)

<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1007190/Hit%20Film%20Tackles%20Male%20Gender%20Preference%20in%20Chinese%20Families/>

A new Chinese movie is casting a spotlight on a long-debated question: Should personal values be prioritized over traditional family values?

The family drama *Sister*, which topped the domestic box office during the recent Qingming Festival holiday, tells the story of An Ran, a young woman who is suddenly faced with having to take care of her 6-year-old brother after their parents die in an accident. The movie follows An's trajectory as she struggles to balance her own life choices while becoming her brother's caretaker.

Review: <https://supchina.com/2021/04/05/homegrown-movie-sister-dominates-box-office-by-shining-rare-light-on-male-preference-in-chinese-families/>

Trailer:

https://www.imdb.com/video/vi1669513241?playlistId=tt12788426&ref=tt_ov_vi

JOURNEY TO THE WEST — 2021 (111 MINUTES)

<https://iffr.com/en/expanded/2022/films/journey-to-the-west>

One UFO sighting after another proves false. He has to beg for money to keep his space-exploration magazine afloat. There are no messages in the TV static. Nevertheless, Tang Zhijun continues to believe in alien life forms and heads to the mountainous southwest of China, to investigate after watching a mysterious online video. He is accompanied by a drunk, a girl with insomnia, and a cynical staffer. For Tang, the moment of truth comes when they meet a young poet in a village, who says he is in contact with aliens. Filmmaker Kong Dashan's feature debut, which shares the same title as Wu Cheng'en's Chinese 16th century classic *Journey to the West*, is a modern Odyssey for a generation of idealists. Just like the Chinese novel, this is an adventure story with comic side plots,

emotional depth, and spiritual enlightenment as its goal. Tang needs this long search, to discover that while he seeks contact with aliens he forgets the world around him.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Sn9haBN7zU>



WINDUP — 2020 (10 MINUTES)

Written and directed by Yibing Jiang, a female filmmaker from Wuhan, China, *Windup* portrays the connections between a father, his ailing daughter, and the healing power of music. Created using regular home-office desktop computers and Unity, this award-winning animated short film showcases what it is possible to create with real-time animation in a touching story about the fragile nature of life, love, and what it means to never give up.

Stream entire short film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efGqe1j3RNk>

THE EIGHT HUNDRED — 2020 (149 MINUTES)

https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the_eight_hundred

In 1937 a group of Chinese soldiers and draft dodgers puts up a four-day defense of a Shanghai warehouse complex just as Japanese forces are overwhelming China.

Review: <https://variety.com/2020/film/asia/eight-hundred-film-finally-given-china-release-date-1234723185/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbikn8Q148c>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-eight-hundred>

DETECTIVE CHINATOWN 3 — 2020 (136 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt10370822/>

A major crime occurs in Tokyo when detectives Tang Ren and Qin Fend are invited to investigate the crime. A battle between the strongest detectives in Asia is about to break out with bursts of laughter.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-97WZL4uSwI>



LEAP — 2020 (134 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leap_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leap_(film))



Leap is a 2020 Chinese biographical sports film directed by Peter Chan and starring Gong Li and Huang Bo. The film is based on the China women's national volleyball team's stories spread over more than 40 years. It had been slated for release in China on January 25, 2020, the first day of the Chinese New Year, but was withdrawn due to COVID-19 pandemic. The film was released in Mainland China and the United States on September 25, 2020. The cast consists of ten out of the 12 Olympic Gold medalists from the 2016 Rio Olympics squad appearing as themselves. Many other professional volleyball players acted in the movie. (2021 Oscar feature film submission from China)

Review: <https://watching-asia.blogspot.com/2021/02/leap-2020-film-review.html>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ejQWvtjbQ8>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/leap-2020>

THE EIGHT HUNDRED — 2020 (150 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Eight_Hundred

Chinese historical war drama film directed by and co-written by Guan Hu. During the early days of the Second Sino-Japanese War, and on a greater scale World War II, the Imperial Japanese

Army invaded Shanghai, which became known as The Battle of Shanghai. After holding back the Japanese for over 3 months, and suffering heavy losses, the Chinese army was forced to retreat due to the danger of being encircled. Lieutenant Colonel Xie Jinyuan of the 524th Regiment of the under-equipped 88th Division of the National Revolutionary Army, leads 452 young officers and soldiers to defend Sihang Warehouse against the 3rd Imperial Japanese Division consisting of around 20,000 troops on a heroic suicidal last stand against the Japanese under an order by Generalissimo of Nationalist China, Chiang Kai-shek. The decision was made to provide a morale boost to the Chinese people after the losses of Beijing and Shanghai, and help spur support from the Allies, who were in full view of the battle from the International Settlement in Shanghai just across from the Suzhou Creek.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbikn8Q148c>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/search?q=THE%20EIGHT%20HUNDRED%20>

The Guardian: The Eight Hundred: How China's Blockbusters Became a New Political Battleground

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/sep/18/the-eight-hundred-how-chinas-blockbusters-became-a-new-political-battleground>

It was pulled from a film festival, censored by the state and now it's the year's second biggest film. Is *The Eight Hundred* an exhilarating war movie – or slick propaganda?

“The biggest thing is not the censorship itself; it's the unpredictability of it,” says Mudge.

“The things to avoid are pretty much the same” – chiefly politically sensitive issues such as Mao, Tibet, the Tiananmen Square massacre, and Hong Kong democracy – “but if you're a film-maker or an investor or a producer, and you know that your film could get yanked the day before it's supposed to be released, even after you've spent all your marketing money, it's a problem.”

THE SACRIFICE — 2020 (122 MINUTES)

<http://en.people.cn/n3/2020/1025/c90000-9772706.html>

Set during the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea (1950-53), the movie joins a host of films and TV shows recently released to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Chinese People's Volunteers entering the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fight in the war. The film depicts the war from three perspectives and segments, each directed by a different director.

Stream for free: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jrj2YxG6VE>

OVER THE MOON — 2020 (100 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/over-the-moon-review-1234798509/>

Produced in partnership with Shanghai-based Pearl Studio (the DreamWorks venture responsible for *Abominable*), *Over the Moon* celebrates Chinese culture as no mainstream American toon — not even *Mulan* — has before. But it does so in a way that's so formulaically Western that it feels like the creative team took *Coco* and dressed it up in another country's colors, customs and costumes. The plot plays off the myth of Chang'e goddess of the moon, who sacrificed earthly romance with handsome Houyi for immortality among the stars — a legend that Keane himself hand-renders in an impressive early sequence, when the sketch decorating a silk scarf comes to life. Chinese kids know the story of moon

2021 Oscar nomination for Best Animated Feature Film

goddess Chang'e, which sparks the movie's main character, 13-year-old Fei Fei to prove it's true ... by building a rocket to the moon...

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_zuK_pergw

Stream on Netflix: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/over-the-moon-2019>

ONE SECOND — 2020 (104 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2020/film/news/zhang-yimou-one-second-china-release-date-1234805038/>

The film tells the story of a strong bond that forms between three characters played by Zhang Yi, Liu Haocun, and Fan Wei because of a movie. A new trailer depicts a gritty rural town during the Cultural Revolution period where residents have gathered to watch a projected film, only to find that the print has been unwound, dragged through the dirt and nearly destroyed. They work together to repair it even as a young street urchin fights to steal it. The tone is feel-good and upbeat, comedic but not satirical, despite dark elements like a knife fight in which a man knocks said young urchin unconscious.

New promotional posters for the film consist merely of a handwritten note from Zhang Yimou, who writes, "I'll never be able to forget the feeling I had when watching a film when I was young. That indescribable excitement and joy was like a dream. Film accompanies us as we grow older. Dreams follow us are whole lives. There will always be a film that you remember your whole life. What you remember perhaps isn't the film itself, but the kind of longing and expectation you get from looking up at the stars." He has previously called *One Second* his "love letter to cinema."

Update/Review: <https://www.indiewire.com/2021/09/one-second-review-zhang-yimou-1234665559/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ej7FSmzijNE>

MULAN — 2020 (115 MINUTES)

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/mulan-movie-review-2020>

SupChina: Why Chinese Viewers Hate Disney's 'Mulan' (9/11/20)

<https://supchina.com/2020/09/11/why-chinese-viewers-hate-disneys-mulan/>

As Hong Kong activists solicit worldwide solidarity for the #BoycottMulan movement and Disney faces growing criticism for shooting much of the movie in Xinjiang, Chinese moviegoers have found different reasons to tear the movie apart.

Its origins date back centuries, and its animated predecessor is beloved within the '90s Disney canon, but the latest version of *Mulan* couldn't be more relevant, vital, and alive.

Director Niki Caro's live-action take on the classic story of a young Chinese woman who disguises herself as a man to become a warrior is thrilling from start to finish. It's steeped in traditional cultural locales and details yet feels bracingly modern with the help of dazzling special effects and innovative action sequences. You want gravity-defying, wuxia-inspired aerial work, *and* elaborately choreographed martial arts battles and horse stunts? You got 'em all. And a truly impressive array of veteran actors helps keep the emotions grounded, including Tzi

Ma, Donnie Yen, Jet Li and the goddess Gong Li.

Review: <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/the-new-mulanandnbsps-uncomfortable-relationship-with-chinas-past-and-present>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KK8FHdFluOQ>

STRIDING INTO THE WIND — 2020 (156 MINUTES)

<https://www.chicagofilmfestival.com/digifilm/striding-into-the-wind/>

Fed up with his final year at film school, skilled sound recordist Kun is searching for something more. He coasts through class, works dead-end jobs, and is constantly at odds with his girlfriend. With a newly minted drivers' license, an old second-hand Jeep, and his best friend in tow, Kun takes up with a student production and embarks on a journey of self-discovery across China's lush, varied landscape. Featuring winning performances and directed with a wry emotional clarity, *Striding into the Wind* is a keenly observed meditation on movies, modern China, and the meandering restlessness of youth.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2NFplc5JfU>

BEING MORTAL — 2020 (96 MINUTES)

<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202010/14/WS5f86af4aa31024ad0ba7ea84.html>



Liu Ze's film is based on a Chinese novel *Deng Dai*. Xia Tian transfers her job back to her hometown in order to take care of her dad who gets Alzheimer's for over ten years. She thought it will be a comfort for her parents, but as the disease gets worse, the stress of life she gets to learn, and the only thing she can do is just wait... "With China's aging population expanding fast, the country has seen growth in patients diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease," Liu said during the premiere. "Despite *Being Mortal* telling a story about how to best take care of such a patient, the film also wants to explore the conflict and contradiction between China's traditional value to respect filial piety and a family's struggle over high medical fees," Liu added.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXnwBLoieZM&feature=emb_logo

JIANG ZIYA: LEGEND OF DEIFICATION — 2020 (110 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jiang_Ziya_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jiang_Ziya_(film))

The film tells the story of the mythological and fictional literary version of Jiang Ziya from the *Investiture of the Gods*, a gargantuan Ming-dynasty (1368–1644) *shenmo* novel that is traditionally attributed to Xu Zhonglin, and incorporates various existing myths into a wider narrative. Jiang Ziya is traditionally depicted in Chinese fiction as a Taoist adept in Chinese folk religion and Taoism. In the original novel, Jiang is a 72-year-old man. In this film, Jiang Ziya is portrayed as a middle-aged man who insists on following his heart despite having a complex past.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMT6sNCsrs>

SUMMER BLUR — 2020 (88 MINUTES)

<https://www.berlinale.de/en/programme/202106075.html>

"Mum really misses you. I bought you lots of presents. When you're next here, I'll take you to Disneyland..."

Like a seismograph, 13-year-old Guo moves through Han Shuai's feature debut: locked in a series of close-ups, more of an observer than a participant, quietly registering all of the tremors causing the fabric of her working-class social environment to crumble. Guo becomes witness to her friend accidentally drowning in the river, which results in her inability to deal with her feelings of grief, guilt, and longing. The summer heat is as oppressive as the overbearing advances of one of her classmates, the shrill chirping of cicadas permeating the desolation of her loveless home on the outskirts of Wuhan – far

away from a mother whose presence in her life is limited only to voice messages. A tender portrait of a young girl defying the confines of her circumstances and coming of age in the process.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eyy34PmIpHE>

ONE SECOND CHAMPION — 2020 (98 MINUTES)

<https://www.siff.net/festival/one-second-champion>

This heartwarming family film from Chiu Sin-Hang (*Vampire Cleanup Department*, SIFF 2017) wonders what would you do if you could see one second into the future. It's not the greatest amount of time—at least Nicolas Cage's magician character in 2007's *Next* had a whole two minutes of precognition—but nothing would ever be the same, right? It doesn't seem so to Tin-Yan (Cantopop star Endy Chow), who's lived his whole life with this "gift" but has done nothing with it. Now he's a single father who can barely enjoy living at the present moment, let alone a second from now; who works at a bar, lives paycheck to paycheck, and has run into debt to pay for his young deaf son's medical treatment. That's life. But when a luckless boxing instructor witnesses Tin-Yan defend himself from a group of violent debt collectors, able to dodge every single swing, he hires him to be his training partner. You can see where this is going: It's not long before he's suddenly put in the ring, where he becomes undefeatable and nicknamed the "One-Second Boxing King." But some things are more important than winning.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8YzbTM68hMI>



KITE — 2020 (17 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZGfj9RmaOSaYW6PmCC-vIA>

An animation of a fantasy story based on a real plane crash, Hand drawing on paper and computer animation. Created and completed by animator Hongwei Wang at home after his graduation in 2019. Synopsis: One day a little white man met an uninvited visitor, what will happen between him and this uninvited visitor? A series of mysterious and surprising events begins.

Stream: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZGfj9RmaOSaYW6PmCC-vIA>

WHITE SNAKE — 2019 (99 MINUTES)

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Animation/WhiteSnake2019>

Set in the late Tang Dynasty, this animation takes place 500 years before the famous Chinese fable *Legend of the White Snake*, serving as a prequel to the original tale. The story follows the titular white snake, Xiao Bai/Blanca, a snake demon and a member of a snake clan that loses her memory after she failed to assassinate the Daoist leader targeting snakes for his dark rituals. She wakes up in a snake-catcher village, under the care of the human snake catcher Ah Xuan.

The two end up assuming that she's a human and embark on a journey to recover her memories, falling in love in the process. During their journey, they're pursued by the Daoist forces and her previous snake clan members, such as her younger sister, the green snake-demon Xiao Qing/Verta who is strongly displeased by her sister's newfound fondness for humans.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCY7E0oHW6Y>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/white-snake-2019>

BETTER DAYS — 2019 (135 MINUTES)

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-news/inside-the-censorship-battle-over-oscar-nominee-better-days-it-was-a-tug-of-war-4165587/>

...Based on the Chinese internet novel *In His Youth, In Her Beauty* by writer Jiu Yuexi, *Better Days* tells the story of a high school girl (Zhou Dongyu) struggling with severe bullying and the mounting pressures of China's all-important college entrance exams. Through a chance encounter, her life becomes intertwined with that of Xiao Bei, a young street thug (played by Jackson Yee, a pop star turned actor). But as the duo form a surprising bond born of necessity, a series of tragic circumstances plunges them toward an accidental killing and a moral reckoning...

See entire article regarding the censor battles over *Better Days*.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVclwWxFENs>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/better-days>

Stream for free on Kanopy:

<https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/12201073>

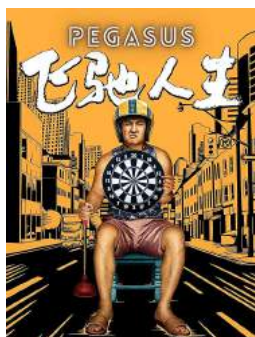
Better Days was a nominee for the Best International Feature film at the 93rd Academy Awards (2021) The nomination marks the first time a Hong Kong-born director, Derek Tsang, has received the honor and the third time a Hong Kong film was ever considered for the Oscars since 1993's *Farewell My Concubine* starring the late Leslie Cheung, and 1992's *Raise the Red Lantern* with Gong Li.

SATURDAY FICTION — 2019 (116 MINUTES)

<https://www.siff.net/siff-cinema/in-theaters/saturday-fiction>

1941. Since the Japanese occupation, China has become a wartime intelligence battlefield for the Allies and the Axis Powers. Iconic actress Jean Yu returns to Shanghai, ostensibly to appear in the play "Saturday Fiction" directed by her former lover. But what is her true aim? To free her ex-husband? To gather intelligence for the Allied Forces? To work for her adoptive father? Or to escape from war with her lover? As she embarks on her mission, with friends ever more difficult to distinguish from undercover agents, as everything spirals out of control, Jean Yu starts to question whether to reveal what she has learned about the imminent Pearl Harbor attack.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tn_XyiUEJFw



PEGASUS — 2019 (98 MINUTES)

<https://letterboxd.com/film/pegasus-2019/>

Comedy written and directed by Han Han. Zhang Chi, a hubris six-time racing champion, falls from grace following a crisis. After a five-year suspension from the motorsport, the now single father to a six-year-old boy throws down the gauntlet once again.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IbJlSTIWRKk>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/pegasus-2019>

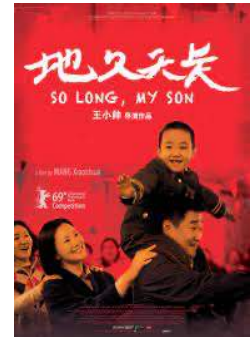
SO LONG MY SON — 2019 (185 MINUTES)

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/dec/08/so-long-my-son-review-wang-xiaoshuai-masterpiece>

So measured is the pacing, so sinuous the timeline, so understated the subtle ache of the performances that you don't immediately realize that Wang Xiaoshuai's exquisite three-hour drama has been performing the emotional equivalent of open-heart surgery on the audience since pretty much the first scene.

A member of China's so-called "sixth generation" of directors, a group that has its roots in a naturalistic, neorealist tradition, Wang sprang to international prominence with *Beijing Bicycle* (2001), which paid homage to De Sica's *Bicycle Thieves*. For *So Long, My Son*, which the director co-wrote with Ah Mei, and which unfolds over the course of three decades, the inspiration is drawn from closer to home. China's recent history – the unforgiving one-child policy; the stinging tail end of the cultural revolution; the seismic shifts in worker status and security as the country lurched from communism to a market economy – is explored through an intimate focus on two couples, linked first by friendship and later by tragedy.

It's the tragedy that is revealed first. Two boys watch as older children cavort at the edge of a reservoir. One longs to join in; the other, fearful, remains behind. A short time later, the camera lingers at a respectful distance as we see parents Yaojun (Wang Jingchun) and Liyun (Yong Mei) rush to the water's edge to haul the lifeless body of their son on to the bank. Likewise, their desperation and desolation in the hospital is captured with a wide shot, placing the grieving couple at the end of an oppressive corridor.



Threading back and forward, weaving together buoyant celebration and needle pricks of sadness, both before and after the tragedy, the film elegantly pieces together a portrait of a couple, their adopted child and the family whose fate is tied to theirs. The repeated motif of an instrumental version of Auld Lang Syne should be hokey but somehow steeps the picture in a kind of luxuriant sadness and resignation. It's a gorgeous, melancholy masterpiece.

Interview with director (20 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-uZPfWBNqU>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gbj3YstBzE&feature=emb_logo



NEZHA — 2019 (110 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2019/film/reviews/nezha-review-1203384829/>

...Based on a popular character out of Chinese mythology, Ne Zha was born to Lord Li (Chen Hao) and Lady Yin (Lü Qi), who lied by telling him that he was the reincarnation of the Spirit Pearl. In truth, his Demon Pearl foundation means that he's fated to be killed by a lightning bolt when he reaches the age of three. His parents, without success, have tried to keep him locked away inside their sprawling domestic compound, so he's really a victim — of destiny, and of the higher powers, who spend more than their share of screen time in *Nezha* pulling metaphysical puppet strings. The poignance of the movie is that Ne Zha has a Pinocchio side. Part of him would like to be an ordinary boy, even though he can scarcely play a round of Chinese Hackey Sack without smashing the footbag through a wall.

Can he wriggle out of his fate? That's the question on which the rather busy plot is hung, as Ne Zha gets tugged in different directions by an ambiguous host of spirit mentors, from the stammering Shen Gongbao (Yang Wei), who could be an early-'90s virtual-reality Dracula, to Ao Bing (Han Mo), who looks like a blue-haired version of Legolas from *The Lord of the Rings*, even though he's actually the reincarnated son of the Dragon King, who is out to liberate his clan from their underwater prison lair...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=aJolTuhDr9E>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/nezha>

MOSAIC PORTRAIT — 2019 (108 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2019/film/reviews/mosaic-portrait-review-1203259501/>

At first glance, Zhai Yixiang's *Mosaic Portrait* looks like it pursues the same semi-journalistic agenda as so much social-issue cinema: Xu Ying, a 14-year-old girl from a rural Chinese village, is discovered to be pregnant, and names one of her schoolteachers as the father. Ying's father, Xu Guangjun — a frequently absent migrant worker — along with school authorities and visiting reporter Jia, who takes an interest in the case, attempt to piece together the truth of the situation. They are all excessively concerned with Ying's predicament, yet somehow unable to conceive of Ying's place within it, and so the men tussle over the sullen teen like dogs over a bone, vying with each other without ever really looking at her.

...The impressions of Ying from others can never hope to describe the totality of her, making this a psychologically inclined project that in itself sets *Mosaic Portrait* apart from the social realist tradition with which it initially flirts. If realism in cinema means mirroring the world as it is, then Zhai's film, as the title suggests, is that mirror shattered and the pieces reassembled into a picture far more elusive and abstract. And also in its way, more honest, because it refers, in the gaps between those glinting shards, to the mystery of all we can never know about each other, and perhaps can only rarely know about ourselves.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=snLpHPdbmd8>



LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT — 2019 (139 MINUTES)

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/long-days-journey-into-night-2019>

Time moves differently in *Long Day's Journey into Night*, a sensuous, dream-like Chinese drama set in and around the Southeast mainland city of Kaili. The first half of the movie—which only shares a title with Eugene O'Neill's play of the same name—is a disorienting mix of flashbacks and flash-forwards. We follow emotionally withdrawn drifter Hongwu Luo (Jue Huang) as he chases after a woman that he can only vaguely recall. He remembers her in stages: each new place that he revisits—physically and in his memories—brings him closer to her, a woman who may or may not be the enigmatic Kaizhen (*Lust/Caution* star Wei Tang). Or maybe her name is Qiwen Wan, like the movie star. It's hard to tell since time slips through Luo's fingers as easily as the rainwater that darkens Kaili's skies and then seeps into the foundation of almost every building. This is a city—and a mind—that's perpetually on the brink of collapse. How do the locals survive? Why is Luo looking for Kaizhen? What's the point of this story?

The answer to these and many other questions are a matter of faith. Because *Long Day's Journey into Night*, is a slow, fragmented drama that has become somewhat renowned for its inclusion of an hour-long 3-D tracking shot that only occurs about halfway through the movie. And because Luo's quest is, for the most part, about blind devotion...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=0yPt3kQzxa8>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/long-days-journey-into-night-2018>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5995392>

THE WANDERING EARTH — 2019 (125 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt7605074/>

As the sun is dying out, people around the world build giant planet thrusters to move Earth out of its orbit and sail Earth to a new star system. Yet the 2500-year journey

comes with unexpected dangers, and in order to save humanity, a group of young people in this age of a wandering Earth fight hard for the survival of humankind.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-wandering-earth-2019>

Discussion/publication of eight scholars on the film: <https://u.osu.edu/mclc/online-series/the-wandering-earth/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsOwtKNsA>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-wandering-earth>



THE FAREWELL — 2019 (100 MINUTES)

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-farewell-2019>



The Farewell announces at the beginning that it's "based on an actual lie," but the meaningful truths it reveals couldn't be more poignant or powerful. And while writer/director Lulu Wang's film is obviously personal and culturally specific, it achieves a universality and a resonance through its vivid depiction of a family in the midst of crisis.

That crisis was actually Wang's crisis: Her beloved grandmother was dying in China, and the family decided not to tell their matriarch to protect her and prevent her from living in fear throughout her remaining days. Instead, they planned a lavish wedding as an excuse to bring everyone together one last time...

...In sharing her story with us, Wang achieves a masterful tonal balance throughout *The Farewell*. She's made a film about death that's light on its feet and never mawkish. She's told a story about cultural clashes without ever leaning on wacky stereotypes or lazy clichés. She finds a variety of moments for her actors to shine within a large ensemble cast. And she's pulled off one of the most perfect endings you'll ever see. The entire film is pretty perfect, actually, and it's one of the year's best.

Fresh Air Interview with director/writer Lulu Wang:

<https://www.npr.org/2019/07/24/744805282/filmmaker-lulu-wang-based-the-farewell-on-her-family-s-real-life-lie>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RofpAjqwMa8>



SISTER — 2019 (8 MINUTES)

<https://www.thedigitalfix.com/film/news/watch-oscar-nominated-animation-short-film-sister/>



A less acknowledged category of the Oscars indeed, but it is hard not to notice that one of the nominations went to the Chinese writer and director Siqi Song and her stop-motion animation *Sister*. The story follows a man's recount of growing up with his imaginary little sister who could have been born in the 1990s due to the nation's one-child policy. Drawing inspirations from her training in ink painting as a child, Song's black-and-white setting is livened by the puppets made of wool, a unique texture to work with. The result is a poignant film that captures a woeful time in the country's history.

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://spl.kanopy.com/video/sister-2>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dacN7rBHLSw>

2020 Academy Award Nominee for Best Animated Short Film

See: <http://songsiqi.com/>

BALLOON — 2019 (102 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2RSAO1btzs>

At once playful and allusive, *Balloon's* first moments are viewed through the misty curvature of an inflated condom. Shepherd Dargye's two boys have found their parents' stash, delighting in what for them are simply oblong balloons. The



Chinese government has instituted quotas on family size, and Dargye's wife Drolkar, now a mother to three and content to end her childbearing days, has embraced the policy, requesting condoms from a nearby clinic. Meanwhile, Drolkar's sister, Shangchu Drolma, has renounced motherhood altogether by becoming a Buddhist nun. One day, she runs into an old boyfriend, Dakbum Gyal, whose neglect pushed her towards her vocation — and who has recently published an acclaimed novel that fictionalizes their relationship. The sisters, each in their own way, are making steps towards autonomy. But when a

member of the family passes away, urgent new questions arise regarding a woman's duty in this traditional, highly religious community. With its cool colour palette, attentive handheld camerawork, and painterly passages that seem to transpire somewhere between this world and the next, *Balloon* approaches weighty themes with beguiling brio. Its closing sequence, in which each character gazes upward to glimpse some fleeting spectacle, will leave you with a sense of wonder you won't soon shake off.

Review: <https://variety.com/2019/film/reviews/balloon-review-1203319030/>

Interview: <http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1006551/The%20Tibetan%20Filmmaker%20Fighting%20to%20Put%20Minority%20Stories%20on%20Screen/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZ73CSUer6Q>

Stream: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/balloon-2019>

Meet the director Pema Tsenden (5 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUFgqZ37G6A>

Balloon Director Q & A (24 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2RSAO1btzs>

CRAZY ALIEN — 2019 (116 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6660238/>

A monkey trainer whose act goes wrong after an alien crash lands on Earth and injures his monkey. Desperate to perform the act, he attempts to train the alien instead, but is punished after the alien regains his powers.

Review: <https://www.cinemaescapist.com/2019/02/crazy-alien-chinese-movie-review/>

Trailer:

https://www.imdb.com/video/vi1055179033?playlistId=tt6660238&ref=tt_ov_vi

MY PEOPLE, MY COUNTRY — 2019 (154 MINUTES)

<https://china-underground.com/wp/movies/my-people-my-country-4/>

My People, My Country is a 2019 Chinese seven-part anthology drama film, consisting of seven segments directed by seven directors, Chen Kaige, Zhang Yibai, Guan Hu, Xue Xiaolu, Xu Zheng, Ning Hao, and Wen Muye. It stars many of China's top actors, many in supporting roles and cameos. The film was released in China on September 30, 2019, to commemorate the establishment of 70th anniversary of the People's Republic of China.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvrJS1LL_HY



A DOG BARKING AT THE MOON — 2019 (107 MINUTES)

<https://www2.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/reviews-recommendations/dog-barking-at-moon-xiang-zi-family-portrait>

... Barely fictionalized, *A Dog Barking at the Moon* directly addresses Xiang's real, thorny family life, seamlessly moving back and forth between decades to understand where she comes from. The maturity and grace of the self-reflection on display and Xiang's empathy for her imperfect parents is staggering.

Huang Xiaoyu returns home to Beijing from New York with her Western husband in tow, her outsider's perspective shedding new light on deeply-entrenched family foibles. The film's interpersonal conflict was triggered in Xiaoyu's childhood, when her mother walked in on her father compromised with a male lover. The event resonates into the present, with Xiaoyu's parents choosing to remain in a resentful, toxic marriage...

To her daughter's horror, Jiumei finds solace in an exploitative Buddhist cult, and the pair butt heads in standoffs that veer from detached and mundane to fervently antagonistic. With Nan positioned in a passive, observant role, it is left to Naren to cover the emotional spectrum – hers is a spellbindingly funny performance aching with tragedy.

Impressive enough for the story of its inception, *A Dog Barking at the Moon* is an impressive early showcase of Xiang's cinematic craft: from the lived-in, delicately detailed design of its domestic settings to the lush sound design and tempered, patient camerawork, she and Val Ban work in tandem to create a piece as visually rewarding as it is emotionally adept. Moments of painful silence are held with evocative restraint. Creative flourishes abound – memories played out as stripped-backstage plays, or the understated overlapping of scenes past and present within a single shot – but every neat trick serves Xiang's ultimate vision...

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRsCQaXn4_o

Interview with director: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/a-dog-barking-at-the-moon>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/a-dog-barking-at-the-moon>



SUBURBAN BIRDS — 2019 (118 MINUTES)

<http://www.cinemaguild.com/theatrical/suburbanbirds.html>

A striking debut from China's Qiu Sheng, *Suburban Birds* is a tantalizing mystery and a bittersweet coming-of-age comedy rolled into one. Hao (Mason Lee) is part of a team of young engineers called in to investigate a series of craters that have opened up on the edge of the city. As he and his team survey the subsiding area, another story is taking place in the same suburban landscape. A younger boy, also named Hao, spends long afternoons playing with friends and making mischief until one-by-one, his playmates start to disappear. As these parallel stories unfold, the connections between them proliferate and grow stranger.

With virtuosic assurance, Qiu employs distinct styles for each of the two narrative strands and unites them with a wry and wistful sense of humor. *Suburban Birds* is both a reflection on the slippery nature of memory as well as a comment on China's rapid urbanization that heralds the arrival of an exciting new voice.

8-minute interview with film maker: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PxF8KE2KxA>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFnWW-ezmXg>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/suburban-birds>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/11510620>



WISDOM TOOTH — 2019 (104 MINUTES)

<https://www.siff.net/festival/wisdom-tooth>

Liang Ming's *Wisdom Tooth* is a finely woven coming-of-age story rooted in its eclectic cast of characters. Gu Xi is an undocumented worker in northeastern China who's at risk of losing her job as a hotel maid just as temperatures plummet in preparation for the coming winter. Her only close relationship is with her half-brother Guliang, who comes under his own difficulties when an oil spill ruins his fishing job. Desperation leads to risky business, further complicated by the introduction of Guliang's girlfriend Qingchang, who threatens their romantically tinted sibling dynamic. When a local fisherman

turns up dead under suspicious circumstances related to Qingchang's mob boss father, their relationships come under turmoil. Faced with losing her livelihood and the only love she's known, Gu Xi must figure out who she is if she's to make it through this winter on her own two feet. Nominated for Rotterdam International Film Festival's Bright Future Award, this idiosyncratic dramatic thriller has established Liang Ming as a filmmaker to be reckoned with in China's independent film scene.

Trailer:

https://vimeo.com/517487780?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=41985589

BAO — 2018 (8 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypEuSSwB1Rk>

In Disney•Pixar's *Bao*, a Chinese mom who's sad when her grown son leaves home gets another chance at motherhood when one of her dumplings springs to life as a lively, giggly dumpling boy. Mom excitedly welcomes this new bundle of joy into her life, but Dumpling starts growing up fast, and Mom must face the bittersweet truth that nothing stays cute and small forever.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypEuSSwB1Rk>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/bao>



DEAD PIGS — 2018 (130 MINUTES)

<https://www.siff.net/festival-2018/dead-pigs>

Five Shanghai residents - a haggard pig farmer, a stubborn salon owner, a deceptive busboy, a foreign architect, and a brittle rich girl - find their lives converging amidst the backdrop of a mysterious river of dead swine (a real-life event) in Chinese-American director Cathy Yan's effervescent cinematic mosaic.

China's growth in the early 21st century is often regarded as a headlong pursuit of wealth at the expense of tradition, yet this effervescent first feature film by Chinese-American writer and director Cathy Yan argues that the unifying symbol of the world's biggest

economy is pork. Told in five intersecting narratives, often based on true events, *Dead Pigs* takes a deliberately uneven, hyper-kinetic look at the wrenching changes affecting greater Shanghai. The characters in this brightly colored circus include Candy Wang (Vivian Wu), a beauty salon owner who lives defiantly in the last wooden house on her

razed block and refuses to sell to developers, led by opportunistic American architect, Sean (David Rysdahl). Meanwhile, Candy's brother (Yang Haoyu) is a pig farmer struggling with a mysterious disease decimating the local swine population. The farmer's son, Wang Zhen (Mason Lee) pretends to be a successful businessman but is secretly just a waiter. Yo-yoing from serious to screwball—with a few musical numbers thrown in—and bristling with social commentary, *Dead Pigs* is both a dizzying comic delight and a love letter to the intrepid, pragmatic Chinese who are coping with the inexorable vicissitudes of "progress."

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/dead-pigs-movie-review-2021>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPEhArGSfRo>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/dead-pigs>

A FAMILY TOUR — 2018 (109 MINUTES)

<https://www.siff.net/festival/a-family-tour>

Like Ying Liang's previous film, *When Night Falls*, his new one also exposes Chinese authoritarianism—but this time it's personal, loosely based on his experiences after *When Night Falls* outraged the government and forced him into exile.

Ying Liang's debut, *Taking Father Home*, was a movie that already showed his powerful sense and sensibility. But *The Family Tour* confirms his ability to convey disconnection, to show how his own experience as an exiled Chinese dissident director can become both personal—autobiographical, almost—and universal, with a caring sense of despair when it comes to finding yourself in the ones who love you. To quote directors like Jia Zhangke or Ning Hao (whose work can be felt in Liang's cinematic DNA) is to undermine Liang's heartbroken ode to despair. But is also impossible to deny their phantom presence. The movie follows Yang Shu (Gong Zhen), a director who must live in exile—and what better place to feel in exile than that ghost town that is a film festival? Ying uses cinema, both as a setting and as a medium, to create a family drama: He becomes political by making tangible how a daughter/mother relationship and their overdue reunion has been reshaped by exile, making this distance the perfect example of how identity works, of how everyone around us defines our place in the world—even if we don't call this place home. Liang's comedy and love take care of his characters and us, showing how tender his emotional filmmaking style can be.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1TJAuK9sDQ>

ALA CHANGSO — 2018 (109 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt9159816/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

Ala Changso is the transliteration of a Tibetan folk song's title meaning please drink up this cup of good wine. Directed by Sonthar Gyal it tells the story of a woman who conceals her illness and the secret between her and her ex-husband and decides to go on a pilgrimage to Lhasa. The long pilgrimage reveals her inner secrets one by one. These secrets include entanglements and perplexities of love, morality, responsibility and belief between her and her ex-husband and between her and her second husband. When young Tibetan farmer Drolma receives news she's seriously ill, she decides to go on a pilgrimage to Lhasa. For her, this means a grueling, year-long walk over Tibetan mountain roads, during which she must prostrate herself every three steps. Drolma's gruff, loving husband Dorje hesitates but can't say no to her. Before she leaves, she visits the home of her parents, who have been raising her severely uncommunicative, now 10-year-old son Norbu. Drolma sets off with two female friends who, faced with miserable weather (it's cold and raining) and the rigors of carrying her equipment and

sleeping outdoors, end up abandoning her part way. But Dorje brings Norbu to join her on the road, and the family has an opportunity to relearn and build anew their emotional relationships. Secret intimate sadness and unexpected connections emerge, gently infusing this profoundly beautiful, deceptively simple family road movie and transforming it into a delicate psychological and spiritual journey.

Review: <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-reviews/ala-changso-1124123/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cfv5y06Nn2w>

GIRLS ALWAYS HAPPY — 2018 (116 MINUTES)

<https://icarusfilms.com/df-gah>

Rising Chinese director Yang Mingming both directs and stars in *Girls Always Happy* – a mother-daughter story that goes for the jugular.

Wu (Yang Mingming) and her mother (Nai An) live in a Beijing hutong – an old community of cramped alleyways where everyone knows your business and houses are so close together you can smell when neighbors start using a new cooking oil.

It's not just the neighborhood that's claustrophobic. At the heart of *Girls Always Happy* is the relationship between Wu, an aspiring screenwriter in her 20s, and her bitter, superstitious mother, who has recently turned to writing as well. The tension between the pair is raw, honest, mean, and sometimes funny – with no blow too low and no memory too painful to poke at. But their relationship has its moments of intimacy and tenderness too, especially over meals in their leaky, jam-packed home.

As Wu and her mother bicker, they also worry about money and carry on their own misadventures in love. Wu dates and then dumps an older film professor (Zhang Xianmin, playing himself), while her mother cynically cares for Wu's grandfather, hoping the women will be written into his will.

Emotionally intense and sometimes jarring, *Girls Always Happy* is a film about fraught relationships, life in contemporary Beijing, and the challenge of finding your way forward while tied down by the past.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/350769501>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/girls-always-happy>



WANGDRAK'S RAIN BOOTS — 2018 (90 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt7961082/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

After heavy rains, puddles and mud cover the streets of the Tibetan mountain village. It's good for the crops, but bad for young Wangdrak, the only boy in the village without rubber boots. While his father is busy with other worries, Wangdrak's mother fulfills her son's wish. But new shoes bring new problems. For Wangdrak, a battle against the blue sky and for the rain begins, fought alongside his loyal friend Lhamo. Nestled in the inimitable mountain landscape, director Lhapal Gyal uses vivid imagery to show us a culture steeped in ancient traditions, paying special attention to the young protagonist's dreams.

Stream: <https://404movies.com/m/3547-wangdrak-s-rain-boots>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-tzL6gKH3jQ>

THE WIDOWED WITCH — 2018 (118 MINUTES)

<https://www.siff.net/festival-2018/the-widowed-witch>

A third-time widow who falls on especially hard times is declared cursed but turns superstition to her advantage by travelling the wintry landscape of rural China and offering supernatural advice, in this modern tale of mysticism told with mordant humor and starkly beautiful cinematography.

Living in a rural town in China, Erhao finds herself widowed for the third time after a fireworks accident kills her husband and injures her. After her brother-in-law attacks her, she realizes she can no longer stay at the home of her in-laws, and leaves in search of starting a life of her own. Erhao is widely deemed inauspicious and even cursed in the eyes of the villagers, who during these cold winter months, are unwilling to share their home or help her find proper food and shelter. Having no one to depend on but herself, she soon discovers she has magical powers that she can use to her advantage, gaining social power and importance by helping the villagers with their own life problems. Erhao instantly becomes the town's famous shaman and uses her special skills to make a living. Yet as she helps the village people with their issues day after day, she finds it increasingly impossible to satisfy the need and greed of the community. The debut feature of director Chengjie Cai, *The Widowed Witch* explores the painful social issue of the "left-behind child," the injustices centered around women, and superstition in rural China with biting humor.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19ckeCdeVhE>

THE ISLAND — 2018 (134 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Island_\(2018_Chinese_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Island_(2018_Chinese_film))

The Island is a Chinese fantasy comedy film written, directed, and stars Huang Bo.

Passengers of a sea bus, including brothers Ma Jin and Xiao Xing and their colleagues, get stuck in an island and are forced to survive with each other. Meanwhile, Ma Jin and Xiao Xing discover a way to unite the passengers for survival by selling them fishes with playing cards as money, in which Xiao Xing immediately abused his power in and causing brotherly-relationship problems with Ma Jin.

Review: <https://variety.com/2018/film/reviews/the-island-review-chu-haoxi-1202901618/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lltNiDDb5yk>



JINPA — 2018 (87 MINUTES)

<https://www.dgeneratefilms.com/catalog/JINPA>

Jinpa is a 2018 Chinese Tibetan-language film written and directed by Pema Tsenden. The screenplay is based on the novels *The Slayer* by Tsering Norbu and *I Ran Over a Sheep* by Pema. On an isolated road passing through the vast barren plains of Tibet, a truck driver, who has accidentally run over a sheep, chances upon a young man, who is hitching a ride. As they drive and chat, the truck driver notices that his new friend has a silver dagger strapped to his leg. He comes to understand that his man is out to kill someone, who wronged him earlier in life. As he drops the hitchhiker off at a fork in the road, little does the truck driver realize that their short time together has changed everything, and that their destinies are inexorably intertwined.

On the path of life, sometimes we meet someone whose dreams overtake our own to the point that they converge.

Trailer:

https://www.imdb.com/video/vi2101526297?playlistId=tt8836292&ref=vp_rv_0

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/jinpa>



ASH IS PUREST WHITE — 2018 (141 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/13/movies/ash-is-purest-white-review.html>

...Viewed from one angle — from the ground level of its plot — the scale of *Ash Is Purest White* can seem modest. It's the story of two people whose love collapses under the weight of bad luck and betrayal but who can't manage to quit each other. When Bin is attacked by members of a rival gang, Qiao saves his life. Rather than rat him out, she accepts a five-year prison sentence, after which she goes looking for Bin, who has left their home province, Shanxi. Earlier, he had told her about traditional criminal code of "righteousness and loyalty," but she seems to be the only one committed to upholding it.

On her way to find him — it's now 2006 — she takes a ferry down the Yangtze River, through the area soon to be inundated by the construction of the Three Gorges Dam. Later, she will find herself on a train heading west, striking up a friendship with a man bound for the province of Xinjiang. Even without a detailed knowledge of China's geography or its recent history, a viewer feels the dislocation and momentum of accelerating change — and something of the country's sheer vastness and density. There is always something new. By the time *Ash Is Purest White* returns to Datong, in the present day, the city is almost unrecognizable. But Jia Zhangke's perspective is neither nostalgic nor optimistic. His movies don't imagine a stable past to be mourned or longed for. (Since 2000, his non- or semi-documentary features, all essential, are *Platform*, *Unknown Pleasures*, *Still Life*, *The World*, *A Touch of Sin*, *24 City* and *Mountains May Depart*.) Nor do they project a happy future on the horizon. His world is in constant motion, and his refusal to hurry through it — the grace of his camera movements, the sometimes agonizing slowness of his scenes — can be understood as a kind of protest, a reminder of the ethical necessity of paying attention.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=l0fKX6VhovQ>:

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/ash-is-purest-white>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/11719994>

OPERATION RED SEA — 2018 (143 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Red_Sea

Operation Red Sea is a 2018 Chinese-Hong Kong action war film directed by Dante Lam and starring Zhang Yi, Huang Jingyu, Hai Qing, Du Jiang and Prince Mak. The film is loosely based on the evacuation of the 225 foreign nationals and almost 600 Chinese citizens from Yemen's southern port of Aden during late March in 2015 Yemeni Civil War.

It serves as the highlight film presented to audiences as a gift for the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, as well as the party's 19th National Congress. This film is said to be "China's first modern naval film."

Review: <https://thediplomat.com/2018/11/operation-red-sea-the-chinese-publics-introduction-to-beijings-new-navy/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sOD1Qc0O4M>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/operation-red-sea>

DYING TO SURVIVE — 2018 (117 MINUTES)

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/dying-survive-1214786>

Wen Muye's record-breaking social drama, based on a real-life story, lauds a Chinese businessman for circumventing big pharma and illegally importing cheap generic medicine.



Crowning Cannes' China Day events was a screening of *Dying to Survive*, the 2018 dramedy that became a blockbuster both in terms of its \$450 million box office (making it the third-highest-grosser in China last year) and its apparent influence on government policies regarding cheap generic drugs for leukemia patients. Produced by hitmaker Ning Hao and directed by 34-year-old Wen Muye (*Drug Dealer*), who won the Golden Horse award for best new director with this film, it humorously and humanely describes the terrible reality of impoverished CML cancer patients unable to afford \$70,000 a year worth of a life-saving meds.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1_b4kFOFy8

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/dying-to-survive>



AN ELEPHANT SITTING STILL — 2018 (234 MINUTES)

<https://www.indiewire.com/2019/03/an-elephant-sitting-still-review-1202049702/>

...Loosely adapted from one of the two controversial novels Hu wrote before his death, *An Elephant Sitting Still* unfolds like a frozen cross between Paul Thomas Anderson's *Magnolia* and Jia Zhangke's *A Touch of Sin* (complete with the light flourish of magical-realism that marriage would lead you to expect). The cold and colorless film takes place over the course of a single day in the industrial desolation of China's Hebei province — just south of Beijing, though it looks just north of Hell — and collects four wayward souls into such a decrepit mosaic that they can't even tell they're part of the same story. Wei Bu (Peng Yuchang) is the closest thing to a main character. Bullied at home almost as badly as he's bullied at school, Wei Bu is a blank and glowering stand-in for an entire generation of teenagers who are being denied a future; in a movie that's almost entirely composed of painful moments, there's something extra brutal about the scene in which a spiteful administrator at Wei Bu's second-rate high school tells him the whole place is being demolished: "You will go to the worst high school in the city. When you graduate, most of [your class] will become street vendors." Wei Bu has no reason not to believe him; he knows that he was born into a dead-end. "I think it makes sense," he calmly says to a friend, as though double-checking the answer to a math problem. The girl he likes, Huang Ling (a flinty, no-nonsense Wang Yuwen), is having her own troubles at school...

Review: <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-front-row/an-elephant-sitting-still-reviewed-a-young-chinese-filmmakers-masterly-portrait-of-political-and-intimate-despair>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=om6xGJ4S3LY>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/an-elephant-sitting-still>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/6161625>



SHADOW — 2018 (116 MINUTES)

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/shadow-ying-review-1140369>

The latest gorgeously mounted period film from Zhang Yimou (*Hero*, *House of Flying Daggers*) was inspired by the yin-and-yang symbol and Chinese ink-brush painting... The script, based on a previous screenplay by Zhu Sujin and credited to Li Wei and the director, reimagines a small part of the Three Kingdoms epic as the story of the cunning military commander Yu of the Pei Kingdom. After having been so badly hurt in battle that he has to retreat into the shadows so as not to show his physical failings, Commander Yu entrusts his job to Jing a lookalike in perfect health who is indebted to him and who is named after a city lost to a foreign army. By employing a body double,

the Pei Kingdom won't show any outward signs of weakness, though apart from Jing and from Yu's own wife, referred to only as Madam, no one knows about the switch, not even Pei's young king. In a tense early scene that only makes sense a little later on, the ruler risks finding out when he commands "Yu" to play the zither, which is impossible because Jing might look like Yu, but unlike the latter, he can't play the ancient instrument.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=Zw3LjaZISLM>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/shadow-2018-0>

Stream free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/12201123>

DOWN THERE — 2018 (11 MINUTES)

A blissful night is unexpectedly interrupted by the sound from downstairs. Different reactions are triggered as well as the relentless indifference.

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/281101082>



ANGELS WEAR WHITE — 2017 (108 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angels_Wear_White

Mia, a teenager, works as a cleaner in a motel in a small seaside town. One night, while manning the reception for her co-worker Lili, she witnesses the sexual assault of two 12-year-old schoolgirls by a middle-aged man. Through the surveillance TV, she sees the man forcing himself into the girls' room and records the whole incident with her mobile phone. Mia keeps quiet for fear of losing her job. However, for one of the victims, Xiaowen realizes that her troubles have only just begun. As Mia and Xiaowen find themselves in ever harrowing circumstances and nowhere to run, they have to work together to find their own way out.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/angels-wear-white-2018>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYtK7Dxhong&list=PLOG1eYZDB8-Y3th413tYHhvh4qOJR1chn&index=10&t=0s>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/angels-wear-white>

Stream free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5312271>



HAVE A NICE DAY — 2017 (75 MINUTES)

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/have-a-nice-day-2018>

The stylistic quirks that define the bitterly funny Chinese animated neo-noir *Have a Nice Day* are thrillingly original. This is the kind of film that evokes stylistic predecessors like Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*—another criss-crossing narrative about several tangentially related small-time crooks—and the fiction films of Chinese filmmaker Zhangke Jia, whose melodramas all concern hard-luck laborers who turn to crime in order to escape dirt road poverty. Still, *Have a Nice Day* stands apart because of its bitterly funny black humor, and idiosyncratic animation and sound design.

Writer/director Liu Jian has taken familiar stylistic elements, and made them feel fresh, and exciting. ...A good part of the brilliance of Liu's pulpy narrative stems from his consummately light touch, and sparing use of familiar hard-boiled tropes. Events start without a belabored set-up: young Xiao Zhang (Zhu Changlong) steals money from mob boss Uncle Liu (Yang Siming), and everybody wants it back. In this case, "everybody" includes calculating hitman Skinny (Ma Xiaofeng), easily distracted wannabe inventor Li Er (Jian himself), and greedy cousin Ann Ann (Zhu Hong), a relative of Zhang's girlfriend Yan Zi (who never speaks)...

Review: <https://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/media/chinas-animated-underbelly>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qt3rs_MFgI

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/have-a-nice-day>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5823103>

YOUTH — 2017 (146 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Youth_\(2017_film\)#Synopsis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Youth_(2017_film)#Synopsis)

Feng Xiaogong's film chronicles the lives of a group of idealistic adolescents in a military art troupe in the People's Liberation

Army during the Cultural Revolution. They experience love, lust, betrayal, and sufferings in the background of Mao-era songs and dances. Through the narration of Xiao Suizi, the film follows the story of two key characters, Feng Liu and Xiaoping He. Xiaoping He, a naive, and innocent new recruit from Beijing, and Feng Liu a morally impeccable character, whose comrades praise for being a real life Lei Feng. The pair also participate in the Sino-Vietnamese War in 1979 and become heroes for their act of courage. Xiaoping He eventually becomes the target of her roommates bullying for her provincial naive mannerisms. A majority of the acts spearheaded by Hao Shuwen, the

daughter of the regional commander. After the war, they are honorably discharged from the Army but struggle to make ends meet in the Reform-era China while they learn lessons from soul-crushing experiences of love, lust, betrayal, and heartbreak.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/youth-2017>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qq8fCA8vXZc>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/youth-2017>

Feng Xiaogong
(*The Banquet*, 2006), a filmmaker whose popular melodramas have earned him a reputation as "China's Spielberg,"
<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/youth-2017>



OUR TIME WILL COME — 2017 (133 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Time_Will_Come_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Time_Will_Come_(film))

Set in the 1940s, the film tells the story of a legendary woman "Fang Gu" (Zhou Xun), who is one of the key figures during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong. It also portrays the fight and struggle for freedom and independence by youths of the resistance groups. Directed by Ann Hui, a Hong Kong film director, producer, screenwriter and actress who is one of the most critically acclaimed Hong Kong New Wave filmmakers.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/our-time-will-come-2017>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFT9tE3SjsU>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/our-time-will-come>



A GENTLE NIGHT — 2017 (15 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Gentle_Night

A Gentle Night is a 2017 Chinese short film written and directed by Qiu Yang. It won the Short Film Palme d'Or at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival. In a nameless small Chinese city, a distressed mother desperately tries to find her missing teenaged daughter throughout the night. The film is set in Changzhou, Jiangsu, China.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XlaXJBfwwLE>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/2666209>

JOURNEY TO THE WEST: THE DEMONS STRIKE BACK — 2017 (109 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5273624/>

Tang Monk brings three disciples on a journey to the West. On the outside, everything seems harmonious. However, tension is present

JOURNEY TO THE WEST: CONQUERING DEMONS — 2013 (110 MINUTES)

A Buddhist disciple (Zhang Wen) battles demons by using a book of nursery rhymes to appeal to their inherent goodness.

Trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmKrgPr7PA8>

beneath the surface, and their hearts and minds are not in agreement. After a series of demon-capturing events, the monk and his disciples gain mutual understanding of each others' hardships and unease. Finally, they resolve their

inner conflict and work together to become an all-conquering, demon-exorcising team.

This is a sequel to the 2013 film (see box)

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jCtINu-gHU>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/journey-to-the-west-the-demons-strike-back>

THE MONKEY KING: HAVOC IN HEAVEN'S PLACE — 2014 (120 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1717715/>

THE MONKEY KING 2 — 2016 (120 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4591310/>

THE MONKEY KING 3 — 2018 (116 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6466464/>



THE WRATH OF SILENCE — 2017 (120 MINUTES)

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/wrath-silence-bao-lie-wu-sheng-film-review-1046406>

...Having dabbled with noir-ish ruses in his Venice-bowing 2014 debut *Coffin in the Mountain*, Chinese filmmaker Xin Yukun embraces genre cinema wholesale in *Wrath of Silence*, which sets a mute, vengeful miner against a world of corruption. Appropriating visual and narrative tropes from Westerns and film noir with invention and poise, the 32-year-old helmer's latest is a powerful and fatalistic illustration of the Chinese rural underclass and its futile fight against oppressive social forces...

Beyond all this, Xin's masterstroke lies in his clever way of accommodating the Chinese censors' well-documented demand that bad guys must pay onscreen. Justice might be served and the authorities might swoop in to seize the baddies and save the day, but it doesn't necessarily lead to a happy ending for all. Deadly misdeeds can't be undone.

Ending with the sound of a crying woman and the thundering collapse of a coal mine, *Wrath of Silence* is as loud and devastating a *j'accuse* against social injustice in China as, say, Jia Zhangke's *A Touch of Sin*.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtbhIe1ebCY>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/6163561>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/wrath-of-silence>

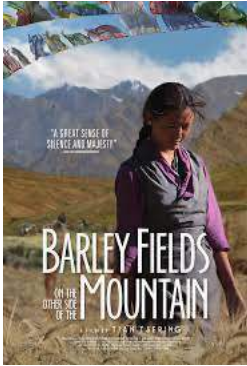


BARLEY FIELDS ON THE OTHER SIDES OF THE MOUNTAIN — 2017 (88 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A0ms2wzxr0>

Breathtaking visuals and a remarkable score instantly jump out as the most alluring qualities in the feature debut from director Tian Tsering. However, it's the thought-provoking plotline of *Barley Fields on the Other Side of the Mountain* that pulls the audience deep into the world of 16-year-old Tibetan girl Pema (Tsering Choekyi).

Despite her inability to fully understand the political disputes between Tibet and China, Pema strives for freedom as she helplessly searches for her father (Samten Dhondup), who has been arrested by the authorities. The characters in *Barley Fields* convey the



difficult realities of China's rule over Tibet, and ongoing unrest in the region. As she decides whether to abandon her life and follow her friend Choeden (Jamyang Choezom) over the Himalayas into the safety of India, Pema attempts to overcome her struggles in a fearless manner that fosters boundless empathy. Shot with a non-professional cast, Tsering's film highlights the complicated histories of Tibet and the experiences of its people in a way that inspires the forging of new paths.

Review: <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-reviews/barley-fields-side-mountain-review-1051055/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A0ms2wzxr0>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5552942>



SOUL MATE — 2016 (110 MINUTES)

<https://asianmoviepulse.com/2018/02/30311/>

...The story is narrated in form of flashbacks, a flood of happy and painful memories that starts when Shanghai worker and family woman Li Ansheng (Zhou Dongyu) is asked by a publisher to track down her friend Lin Qiyue (Ma Sichun) who has penned an unfinished online novel titled *Qiyue and Ansheng*, the story of their friendship starting back when they were 13. The publisher wants to buy the rights for a film and Qiyue is nowhere to be found but Ansheng refuses to help him and denies any involvement. Coincidentally, the same day she bumps into Su Jiaming (Toby Li Chengbin), a young man who played an important role in the past and he too evokes Qiyue and the online novel. Back at home, reading the memoir on a computer screen, she starts to recall the past.

Different in character and family status, Ansheng and Qiyue (respectively Li Haofang and Yao Xinyan, in their younger versions) meet at school at the age of 13. They soon become best friends and Ansheng, who is often left alone by her busy single mum, is welcomed by Qiyue's warm and friendly family. Time goes by and the girls carry on with their studies and friendship but their dreams and their vision of the future are now rather different. Free spirited Ansheng is becoming restless; she wants to see the world and live life to the full. On the other side, pragmatic Qiyue's hopes are for a more traditional life; to finish her studies, find a good job, a husband and indeed she has already set eyes on a good looking boy, Jiaming. The three start to hang out together but Ansheng, feeling dangerously attracted by her best friend's love object, decides to leave. It is the first dramatic turn of their relationship and in the following years they will take very different paths, keeping in touch only through sporadic postcards. They will meet again a few years later, when Qiyue is about to marry her sweetheart and again they will part dramatically. But some unexpected twists are in store to shake up a story that, up to this point, follows the traditional coming of age template...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R56IgBOne80>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/soulmate-2016>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/11163778>



SOUL ON A STRING — 2016 (144 MINUTES)

Soul on a String is a 2016 Chinese Tibetan-language adventure film directed by Zhang Yang and co-written by Zhang Yang and Tashi Dawa, based on Tashi Dawa's short stories *Souls Tied to the Knots on a Leather Cord* and *On the Road to Lhasa*. Tabei is a hunter who had killed countless animals. While hunting a deer, he is killed by lightning. But it

isn't long before that he is saved by the Gautama Buddha, who orders him to escort a treasure to a holy land of Tibetan place named "Zhangwendi."

Review: <https://variety.com/2016/film/reviews/soul-on-a-string-review-1201803695/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzKIZZtERIE>

Stream for free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/2008558>



BIG FISH AND BEGONIA — 2016 (100 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1920885/>

It is a world within our world, yet unseen by any human, and the beings here control time and tide and the changing of the seasons. On the day Chun turns sixteen, she is transformed into a dolphin to explore the human world. She is rescued from a vortex by a human boy at the cost of his own life. Chun is so moved by the boy's kindness and courage that she decides to give him life again. But to do this, she must protect the boy's soul, a tiny fish, and nurture it to grow. Through adventure and sacrifice, love grows, yet now she must release him back to the sea, back to life in the human world.

This animated cartoon could equally fall into the category for best fantasy movies as the otherworldly underwater realm portrayed in the film is depicted in such a beautifully creative and imaginative way.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5eUasNF4AU>

Stream entire movie here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHO0ddkHAVU>

THE SUMMER IS GONE — 2016 (106 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6118258/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

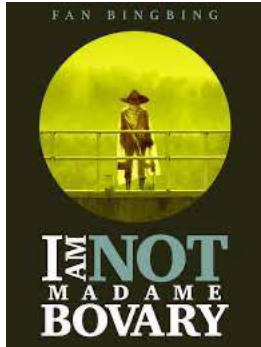
In Inner Mongolia in the early 1990s, 12-year-old Xiaolei enjoys summer with his father, who works at a film studio, and his education-minded mother. But life is rapidly changing, as stable jobs at state-owned companies disappear. Hohhot-born director Zhang Dalei, who was inspired by "the magic of a daydream" he experienced while visiting his grandmother, has created a portrait of his country's past, in beautiful monochrome. Distancing itself from the nostalgic tone of popular teen dramas, the film presents a boy's detached view of the world. Pema Tseden, of *Old Dog* and *Tharlo*, is the executive producer. In a small town in western China in the early 1990s, after finishing primary school, Xiaolei looks forward to his long-awaited summer vacation, free of homework. However, this hot summer is not the usual leisurely summer he imagines, as it coincides with the transformation of state-owned companies and the loss of job security. While Xiaolei and his friends idle away the days, the shock of the reformation of state-owned enterprises sees his parents, seemingly calm in the blazing sunshine, seething with inner anxiety. As time passes, Xiaolei has a feeling that a revolution has quietly taken place. His father has to become a migrant worker to make a living, with the mother and son relying on each other. Xiaolei feels that life has changed completely. One night at the beginning of autumn, the epiphyllum in Xiaolei's yard blooms, as if it were an apocalypse.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9u7uO5JZWN4>

I AM NOT MADAME BOVERY — 2016 (140 MINUTES)

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/may/26/i-am-not-madame-bovary-review-fan-bingbing>

There is a lot to admire about this pointed modern-day political satire, but you'll have



to get over a few hurdles. One of them is the unnecessary length, another is the distracting use of a circular frame – a device that references Chinese art and hints at its heroine’s constrained plight, but often makes the viewer feel as if they’re peering through a keyhole. The heroine is a comically stubborn villager (a spirited, uglified Fan Bingbing) who embarks on a perverse mission to get her sham divorce overturned so that she can re-divorce her cheating husband *properly*. He’s added insult to injury by likening her to Pan Jinlian, a literary character associated with promiscuity (misleadingly translated to Madame Bovary in the English title). These grievances are clumsily

handled by a succession of self-serving, buck-passing officials, in a similar fashion to Zhang Yimou’s *The Story of Qiu Ju*. The satirical bite dissipates a little as the story drags on, though a powerful, emotional coda makes it worth the wait.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0IkThj_4

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/i-am-not-madame-bovary>



FREE AND EASY — 2016 (99 MINUTES)

<https://asianmoviepulse.com/2019/07/film-review-free-and-easy-2016-by-geng-jun/>

The story takes place in a desolate factory town, in a setting that could be easily described as dystopian, although the concept is not futuristic at all. In this strange town, the roads of a number of unlikely individuals meet. A soap salesman pitches his products, although his agenda is not so innocent. A Buddhist monk tries to spread the faith, for a price. A failed martial arts instructor becomes the victim a number of times, including when he is trying to file a report to the two bored and not very smart policemen that comprise the local police department. A young man preaches Christianity while he posts flyers for his mother who is missing. A ranger who is in charge with the area’s reforestation is enraged because someone is stealing the trees. Furthermore, one of the policemen seems to have some ideas regarding a woman in the area, an old lady accompanied by two thugs appear, a murder occurs, and unlikely friendships and relationships are built.

Geng Jun has an approach that manages to present social critique through a unique combination of intelligent, subtle and slapstick humor, mainly deriving from the characters and the way their relationships are formed. Each of the characters seems to represent an archetype of the current Chinese society, particularly regarding the faults of each one.

Review: <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/free-easy-969342>

Trailer:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_PpgPv7qr8&list=PL_nuMIvzFAilbXI0CvT7CU342Xv5FasIC&index=49

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/free-and-easy-2017>

Stream free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/1241089>

THE GREAT WALL — 2016 (120 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Great_Wall_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Great_Wall_(film))

The Great Wall is a 2016 fantasy action monster film directed by Zhang Yimou...An American and Chinese co-production starring Matt Damon, Jing Tian, Pedro Pascal, Willem Dafoe, and Andy Lau, the plot centers a mercenary warrior (Matt Damon) imprisoned within the Great Wall when he discovers the mystery behind one of the greatest wonders of the world. As wave after wave of marauding beasts besiege

the massive structure, his quest for fortune turns into a journey toward heroism as he joins a huge army of elite warriors to confront the unimaginable and seemingly unstoppable force. *The Great Wall* is Zhang's first English-language film... The film received mixed reviews from critics, who said it "sacrifices great story for great action." Although it grossed \$335 million worldwide, the film was still considered a box office bomb due to its high production and marketing costs, with losses as high as \$75 million. Review: <https://www.indiewire.com/2017/02/the-great-wall-review-matt-damon-whitewashing-zhang-yimou-1201783848/>
Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=avF6GHyyk5c>

WOLF WARRIER — 2015 (90 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3540136/>

A Chinese special force soldier with extraordinary marksmanship is confronted by a group of deadly foreign mercenaries who are hired to assassinate him by a vicious drug lord.

Review: <https://variety.com/2015/film/asia/wolf-warriors-review-1201480183/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ec7LY8dLYSc>

Stream entire movie here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0S84Z9W-OE>

WOLF WARRIER 2 (2017)

The sequel tells a story of a loose cannon Chinese soldier named Leng Feng who takes on special missions around the world. In this sequel, he finds himself in an African country protecting medical aid workers from local rebels and vicious arms dealers. It was the highest-grossing Chinese film ever released.

Trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGNAlvAZjY>

Review:

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/wolf-warrior-2-2017>

Rent:

<https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/wolf-warrior-2>



GO AWAY MR. TUMOR — 2015 (128 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Go_Away_Mr._Tumor

Go Away Mr. Tumor is 2015 Chinese comedy-drama film. It is based on the life of comic book artist Xiong Dun who after her cancer diagnosis authored a popular webcomic that became a sensation in China. Xiong died in 2012 at the age of 30. It was selected as the Chinese entry for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 88th Academy Awards, but it was not nominated.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRrFNC3By5U>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/go-away-mr-tumor>

Stream entire movie here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNykNfWggbE>



MOUNTAINS MAY DEPART — 2015 (127 MINUTES)

<https://www.filmcomment.com/blog/interview-jia-zhang-ke-mountains-may-depart/>

With *Mountains May Depart*, Jia Zhangke turns his powers of social observation inward, shifting subjects from the physical migrations in contemporary China to the inner emotional complexities arising from the decades following the nation's great Cultural Reform. With rare intimacy, the filmmaker's first foray into melodrama reveals the yearnings, melancholy, and indignations of China's new secret heart.

Comprised of three vignettes set in 1999, 2015, and 2025, *Mountains May Depart* tracks the lives of childhood friends from Jia's native Shaanxi—singer-dancer Shen Tao (in one of Zhao Tao's most tremendous performances), brash young capitalist Zhang (Zhang Yi), and poor mineworker Liangzi (Liang Jin Dong). Each grapples with unfamiliar feelings of loneliness and isolation brought on by the pressure to survive in the nation's ever forward-thrusting milieu of industrial, technological, and economic progress. In her pursuit of a better life, Tao has to choose between her two loves. But her decision to

marry Zhang ruptures the trio's friendship, and eventually leads to a divorce that forces her to part with her only son Dollar (Dong Zijian) when he moves, first to Shanghai and then to Melbourne with his father...

See more at this site (above) including an interview with Jia Zhangke

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=qc1ZKyhMG6o>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/mountains-may-depart>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/5276484>

RIVER — 2015 (98 MINUTES)

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/river-gtsngbo-shanghai-review-804473>

The complexity of human relations is the subject of Tibetan writer director Sonthar Gyal's marvelously understated second film, *River* (Gtsngbo). A small girl of 3 or 4 struggles with her fear of losing her parents' love when her mother gets pregnant and weans her. At the same time, her stubborn klutz of a dad wages a silent war against his own father for what he considers an unforgivable lapse. Tibet's high, lonely mountains lend the story an aching authenticity, while the comically expressive face of little Yangchen Lhamo (played by Yangchan Lhamu) keeps the mood light and tender.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epq6PsbKFss>



MONSTER HUNT — 2015 (118 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monster_Hunt

Monster Hunt is a 2015 mainland Chinese-Hong Kong 3-D fantasy action comedy adventure film directed by Raman Hui...The film takes place in ancient China, where the Humans existed alongside the Monsters. They once shared the world in peace and harmony until the Humans drove the Monsters out from their home, for they sought total dominion over their lands. Recently, a civil war took place in the Monster Realm which resulted in the usurpation of the Monster King's throne from a treacherous minister, who later sought the Monster Queen and her unborn baby, and the Monster Queen fled to the Human Realm. The story begins with Song Tianyin, an unnerved young village mayor who becomes pregnant with the Monster Queen's baby, and he encounters an aspiring Monster-hunter named Huo Xiaolan, and they both embark on an adventure to protect the baby from villains of the Human and Monster worlds alike.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/monster-hunt-2016>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRXTOW1InAE>

Rent *Monster Hunt*: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/monster-hunt>

Rent *Monster Hunt 2*: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/monster-hunt-2>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/3126881>

THARLO — 2015 (138 MINUTES)

<https://www.watchthefullmovie.com/full-movie/tharlo-2015/>

Tharlo is an orphan. Now grown up, he makes a living as a sheep herder in the village. He has grown a ponytail, so people simply call him "Ponytail", since nobody remembers his real name anyway. Tharlo has a remarkable memory. He remembers so many things, except his own name. He is now in his forties, and he has yet to have his first woman. Now Tharlo goes to town to take a photo for his identity card. He meets a



girl in the barber's shop who changes the course of his life. He embarks on the journey to find his true self. He sells all his sheep and those entrusted by other villagers to him for care, and decides to use the money to go out into the world with the girl, only to find himself being deceived and cheated by her. Ironically, in his journey of self-discovery, Tharlo has lost his sense of self. As he witnesses in the mirror his ponytail being cut off and leaving him bald, he can no longer see himself as a man with a history that he recognizes.

Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/28/movies/review-tharlo.html>

Trailer: <https://letterboxd.com/film/tharlo/trailer/>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/tharlo>



KAILI BLUES — 2015 (110 MINUTES)

<https://www.kviff.com/en/programme/film/4619213-kaili-blues/>

Even a fine sketch of a small episode in an ordinary man's life can embrace the past, present and future of the largest of nations. In 26-year-old poet Gan Bi's debut a provincial doctor sets off on a pilgrimage to find his brother's abandoned son and to reunite bygone lovers through the keepsakes entrusted to him. In one mesmeric, forty-minute take, his journey to his native region is transformed into a mystical experience. The hand-held camera starts to live its own life as it scans a stretch several kilometers long, its unpredictable course resembling the meanders of a river. As the doctor reaches a small Chinese town, the twilight is transformed into a magical temporal plane which slowly takes possession of his drifting memory. *Kaili Blues* is a visionary cinematic poem about the agonizing desire to displace the past but also to come to terms with it. The main character's emotions are intrinsically linked with the lives of the rural inhabitants, who are caught between a troubling history and an auspicious future, between their nostalgia and the turbulent changes affecting their country.

Review: <https://movieretrospect.blogspot.com/2016/10/kaili-blues-2015-jumbled-journey-with.html>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZVFtE10aK4>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/kaili-blues>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/2119576>

LOOKING FOR ROHMER (SEEK MCCARTNEY) — 2015 (88 MINUTES)

<https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1002095/first-gay-ish-film-widely-released-in-china>

...A French-Chinese coproduction, the film tells the story of Zhao Jie, a Chinese dancer, coming to terms with his French friend Rohmer having died in an avalanche in Tibet. Han Geng, an actor known for his boyish good looks, plays the lead role of Zhao, while Rohmer is played by French actor Jérémie Elkaim. The movie's trailer — released over two years ago, in March 2016 — paints a picture of an ambiguous, complex bromance between the two men. Notably, little if any compelling evidence of a sexual relationship can be found in the Chinese novella upon which the film is based.

While the film is not devoid of gay themes, many are subtly incorporated. After witnessing a fatal car accident, for example, Rohmer numbs the pain at a bar populated by men in pairs that viewers identified as "Destination," a popular LGBT bar in Beijing. The film's ending, meanwhile, is a flashback to Zhao and Rohmer performing a traditional Tibetan dance that tells the story of a royal couple parted in death...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFCXFrvmA>



TEN YEARS — 2015 (105 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Years_\(2015_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_Years_(2015_film))

Ten Years is a 2015 Hong Kong dystopian speculative fiction anthology film. It offers a vision of the semi-autonomous territory in the year 2025, with human rights and freedoms gradually diminishing as the Chinese government exerts increasing influence there. Produced on a shoestring budget, the film was a surprise hit...

Due to the film's sensitive political themes, mainland Chinese authorities censored reports mentioning *Ten Years* except in terms of condemnation. State television channels and major internet sites were prohibited from broadcasting the 35th Hong Kong Film Awards live as the film was nominated for Best Film which it eventually won. The film comprises five short stories set in or before the year 2025.

Review: <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2016/07/07/484778210/in-ten-years-a-dystopian-vision-of-hong-kongs-future-under-china>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5miCtwKeAE>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/ten-years>

FANTASIA — 2014 (85 MINUTES)

<https://sino-cinema.com/2018/04/23/review-fantasia-2014/>

Chongqing, central China, the present day. Zhao (Zhang Xu), a lathe worker at Guangming Gear Factory, is diagnosed with advanced leukemia, and his family has to find RMB21,000 for an immediate blood transfusion. His teenage son, Zhao Lin (Hu Ruijie), has been skipping high school. His wife Tang Min (Su Su), a former singer in a song-and-dance troupe, does small jobs like selling newspapers at a stand and doing a milk round. As Zhao repeatedly collapses and has to have hospital treatment, the family's finances are stretched, especially when the gear factory says it has to cut back on helping out with his medical expenses. The mother resorts to selling her blood; the daughter (Jian Renzi) works as a hostess in a KTV club; and the son keeps trying to get jobs to help out. But Zhao's illness is incurable.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XCK15xuJno>

THE NIGHT — 2014 (95 MINUTES)

https://www.berlinale.de/en/archive/jahresarchive/2019/02_programm_2019/02_film_mdatenblatt_2019_201911388.html#tab=filmStills

A young man stands before his mirror. The night belongs to him. Self-love and longing. Every evening he admires himself in a different outfit before leaving his apartment and waiting for clients in a dimly lit alley. This is where he meets a female prostitute of the same age who is new to his district. They flirt, drift together through the streets, toy with the idea of paying each other for sex, and give each other the names of flowers: he is Tuberose and she is Narcissus. The strangers whom they sleep with all remain faceless to them - until one night a young man who calls himself Rose falls in love with Tuberose. With the help of Narcissus, Rose begins to court the young sex worker. Tuberose responds at first with cool reserve, but the yearning love songs of Taiwanese singer Teresa Tung make it difficult for him to remain aloof for long.

In 2014, the then 21-year-old director surprised audiences with this brilliant debut, in which he also plays the leading role. Seducing the viewer with mysteriously

atmospheric images, he succeeds in drawing us completely into the search by these three social misfits for warmth across social and gender divides.

Review: <https://asianmoviepulse.com/2019/03/film-review-the-night-2014-by-zhou-hao/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbNqLiBTvo4&t=59s>

RED AMNESIA — 2014 (116 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3890278/plotsummary?ref=tt_str_y_pl

Deng is a stubborn retired widow who spends her days caring about her two grown up sons and her elderly mother, despite her family efforts to stop her. But her daily routine starts derailing when she keeps receiving anonymous calls. Deng began to be

Director Wang Xiaoshuai views *Red Amnesia* as the last of his Cultural Revolution trilogy, begun with *Shanghai Dreams* and *11 Flowers*.

suspicious. The policemen and her two sons all think she was hallucinating. With the incident escalated, the emergence of the broken windows, mysterious boy, frequent burglary in the community.....until the murder occurred, the unfolded past began to emerge..... What's happening to her? Who could have anything against her? Even her husband's ghost doesn't seem to know...

Review: <https://variety.com/2014/film/festivals/venice-film-review-red-amnesia-1201297599/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDKj4pASa8c>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/red-amnesia>

BLACK COAL THIN ICE — 2014 (110 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2014/film/reviews/berlin-film-review-black-coal-thin-ice-1201099676/>

A dissolute former detective, a trail of dismembered human remains, and a widow with a dark secret set the stage for a bleak but powerful Chinese film noir.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbQ7LXXEUBM>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/black-coal-thin-ice>



COMING HOME — 2014 (111 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coming_Home_\(2014_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coming_Home_(2014_film))

Coming Home is a 2014 Chinese historical drama film directed by Zhang Yimou. Lu Yanshi was a professor before being sent to the labor camp during the Cultural Revolution. He escapes from the labor camp in Xining to meet his long-missed wife



Feng Wanyu and daughter Dandan. However, the police were already waiting outside the house to arrest him.

Dandan, a teenage ballerina, could not play the leading role in *Red Detachment of Women* due to her father's outlaw status. Under the temptation of regaining the leading role, Dandan reveals her parents' secret meeting plan to the police. The meeting ends with the capture of Lu, but Dandan still does not get the leading role.

After the end of the Cultural Revolution, Lu comes home only to find his family broken- his wife suffering from amnesia and his daughter working as a textile worker. Under the shock of a former official's sexual harassment, his wife sometimes mistakes Lu as Officer Fang instead of her husband. To reawaken his wife's memory, Lu disguises himself as a stranger so he can be near his wife. She recognizes him only as a letter reader or a piano tuner, and he

never could live close enough with his chaste wife because of her trauma. During these years, Lu continued to write to his wife as a way of communicating with her and to convince her to forgive their daughter.

Several years later Feng is waiting to receive her husband outside the railway station on a snowy day, and Lu is standing with her, pretending to be a pedicab driver.

Reviews: <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/09/movies/review-in-coming-home-a-family-rocked-by-the-cultural-revolution.html>

<https://variety.com/2014/film/asia/cannes-film-review-zhang-yimou-coming-home-1201188459/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPY52ucN0aM>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/coming-home-2014>

THE COFFIN IN THE MOUNTAIN — 2014 (119 MINUTES)

https://www.cmu.edu/faces/Previous_Festivals/2016conflict/coffin.html

After a charred body is discovered in the woods of a Chinese village, a black comedy of death, deception, cupidity, sex, and guilt ensues. A young man tries to rebel from his father, but after the boy's wrongdoings, their fates will be intricately linked. A woman, who for years has been victim of domestic violence, finds comfort in the arms of her ex-lover. The news of the death of her husband arrives as she was planning his murder. An honest village chief plans to retire but an exceptional event related to his son will pull him into the abyss. *The Coffin in the Mountain* is a striking first feature from Xin Yukun, whose photography background is evidenced by the way cold tones and composition quietly shape the story. Playing with time and sequencing, the drama unfolds as if the viewer is piecing together vague memories from a dream, but as the details crystalize, almost everyone in the small mountain community is shown to be guilty.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Qvg-ak-Few>



THE NIGHTINGALE — 2013 (108 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/06/movies/review-in-the-nightingale-the-beauties-of-rural-china.html>

The virtues of understatement and restraint are vividly apparent in Philippe Muyl's *The Nightingale*, a gentle tale that could easily lapse into mawkish sentiment but largely steers clear of doing so. In glittering Beijing, two affluent, fast-track parents, Chongyi (Qin Hao) and Qianying (Xiaoran Li), have scheduled the days of their daughter, Renxing (Xinyi Yang), down to the minute. When mother and father have concurrent business trips, Renxing is entrusted to Chongyi's father, Zhu Zhigen (Baotian Li), a widower intent on a long-overdue visit to his hometown in southern China. Chongyi is concerned; his father has lost track of Renxing in a public place before.

Off Zhigen and Renxing go, with Zhigen's caged nightingale in hand, on a road-and-rail trip fraught with a bus breakdown, a wrong forest path taken and other modest obstacles. Renxing, a petulant urban child addicted to her iPad, discovers the rural beauty of Guangxi Province, as do we. And Mr. Li (an alumnus of the Zhang Yimou films "Ju Dou" and "Shanghai Triad") proves an appealing guide.

Though the film is a French-Chinese coproduction from Mr. Muyl, a French director, it was China's Academy Award entry in 2014 for best foreign film. A reworking of Mr. Muyl's 2002 film *The Butterfly*, *The Nightingale* demonstrates the ways urbanization has sapped our appreciation of country values and landscape. Mr. Muyl's unforced direction, coupled with the cinematographer Sun Ming's lovely images and Armand Amar's unintrusive musical score, reminds us of what we are missing.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7PANAJ9f31E>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-nightingale>

Stream free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/1899825>

AMERICAN DREAMS IN CHINA — 2013 (100 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pg97bpWsl-U>

Based on the real-life story of a mainland Chinese teacher who rose to become one of China's wealthiest men through his English-language tutorial centers, *American Dreams in China*, sees a trio of idealistic young men charting China's social changes from the 1980s to the 21st century, as they first join forces and then fall out over how to realize their ambitions.

Film Reviews:

<http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2013/05/28/american-dreams-in-china-tops-box-office/>

http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/foreigners/2013/06/american_dreams_in_china_storms_the_box_office_the_chinese_version_of_the.html

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pg97bpWsl-U>



A TOUCH OF SIN — 2013 (143 MINUTES)

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/a-touch-of-sin-2013>

"May you live in interesting times" is the familiar Chinese saying, usually spat out as a curse. You can see why in *A Touch of Sin*, a film by renowned director Jia Zhang-ke. That kind of time is now, in the history of his country. With four vignettes inspired by real-life "ripped from the headline" events, he shows what the great economic expansion of China is doing to the majority of its people. It's not a pretty picture, but it's a compelling one.

The four stories track a furious miner who goes on a rampage against a company head, a migrant worker who returns home for his mom's 70th birthday, a young kid from the provinces who can only find work in an exploitative factory or a brothel, and a massage parlor receptionist (played by Zhao Tao, the director's real-life wife). Jia's view is of a country with corrupt managers and government officials. It also points up the undeniable income disparity topping even that of the U.S. Still, the displaced and marginalized traverse the country, trying to get some piece of the pie. Or some job...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=377D2mDpv5U>

TRAP STREET — 2013 (93 MINUTES)

https://asianwiki.com/Trap_Street

A city in southern China. In the heat of summer.

While out surveying for the digital mapping company he works for, Li Qiuming offers a pretty young woman a lift home. Not long afterwards, he notices a small box with a memory stick under the car seat and realizes that the woman, Guan Lifen, must have left it. He arranges to give the box back to her at a Starbucks but is disappointed to be met instead by a man who introduces himself as the director of the lab where Lifen works. He asks for Qiuming's address and phone number – to thank him, he claims – and Qiuming is left with an uneasy feeling.

So much for romance, he thinks. But when Qiuming tries to enter the mapping data for the street where he met Lifen into his company's system, the system rejects it as invalid.

Revisiting the street for a second survey late at night, he encounters Lifan again, and the two happily resume their conversation in her car.

After this promising start, however, Qiuming suddenly finds his life turned upside-down: his discovery of the memory stick and attempts to get close to Lifan have placed him under suspicion; he is accused of stealing sensitive data.

What can he do to prove his innocence? Can he return to normal life?

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIT60Ej5s4o>

DISTANT — 2013 (88 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3103370/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

Zhengfan Yan's debut feature is set in Zhuhai, his hometown, the coastal city of Zhuhai.

Distant is a film that is made up of 13 sections, each comprised of a single long take.

Each section tells a story about distance between different time and space, focusing on the subtle moments when people are suddenly confronted with modernity and gradually become lost in the transition between this and their present lives. Without any dialogue, simply working with image, sound, and actions of the characters, these 13 dramatic, realistic and mysterious scenes are painted. It tries to describe today's human condition in an abstract way - its alienation, abandonment, and eternal loneliness.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ycoKQr0Gic>

I KILLED MY FATHER — 2012 (20 MINUTES)

<https://mubi.com/films/i-killed-my-father-2012>

This is a story about a fight between a father and a son. The father attempted to strictly set up everything for his son based on his own expectation, whereas the son tried to get away from his father by making films. The film is based on the true story of the director Zhengfen Yang, who has been fighting with his father for almost ten years. The director decided to use a film to examine his ten years' struggle.

THE GRANDMASTER — 2012 (130 MINUTES)

http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the_grandmaster/

Directed by acclaimed filmmaker Wong Kar Wai, *The Grandmaster* is an epic action feature inspired by the life and times of the legendary kung fu master, Ip Man. The story spans the tumultuous Republican era that followed the fall of China's last dynasty, a time of chaos, division and war that was also the golden age of Chinese martial arts.

Filmed in a range of stunning locations that include the snow-swept landscapes of Northeast China and the subtropical South, *The Grandmaster* features virtuoso performances by some of the greatest stars of contemporary Asian cinema, including Tony Leung and Ziyi Zhang.

Film Clips: <http://videos.huffingtonpost.com/entertainment/the-grandmaster-movie-review-517906193>

LOST IN THAILAND — 2012 (105 MINUTES)

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/29/lost-in-thailand-xu-zheng_n_2978185.html

The historical epic, fantasy, action, and thriller genres have long filled China's domestic movie screens. But *Lost in Thailand* was a low-budget and light-hearted road-trip tale about an ambitious executive who goes to Thailand to get his boss's approval for a business deal. Along the way he's pursued by a rival co-worker and encounters a wacky tourist who helps him rethink his priorities.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqZb1bUKJQ0>

THE LAST SUPPER — 2012 (110 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Last_Supper_\(2012_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Last_Supper_(2012_film))

The story is told in flashbacks from the point of view of a 61-year-old Liu Bang, the founding emperor of the Han Dynasty. Liu Bang has been experiencing nightmares and living in fear and apprehension as he constantly suspects that someone is trying to kill him. In his whole life, he has been afraid of only two persons: Xiang Yu, who fought with him for supremacy over China after the fall of the Qin Dynasty; Han Xin, a man who previously served Xiang Yu, but later became a general under him, and helped him defeat Xiang Yu... It is said that he finally found peace in death because he has been living in suspense and uncertainty.

Trailer: https://www.imdb.com/video/vi1931458585?ref=tt_pv_vi_aiv_1

CAUGHT IN THE WEB — 2012 (121 MINUTES)

http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/caught_in_the_web/

This contemporary ensemble drama directed by Chen Kaige centers around the story of a young woman, who after learning of a terminal illness, is caught on video mistreating an elderly bus passenger. She quickly becomes the victim of a massive viral internet campaign, with her life, and the lives of everyone around her, slipping into chaos and media scrutiny. A social commentary about the 'sound bite' society we are becoming, it is a moving tale of the effects media and technology have on the truth, and the damage quick judgments can cause.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OyouKr5OndQ>



WHEN NIGHT FALLS — 2012 (70 MINUTES)

<https://asianmoviepulse.com/2021/09/film-review-when-night-falls-2012-by-ying-liang-2/>

The film is based on the sensational real-life case of Yang Jia, who was arrested in Shanghai in October 2007 for riding an unlicensed bicycle. Beaten and abused by the investigating officers, Yang tried to raise complaints about his mistreatment at the hands of the authorities during his arrest to no avail, his pleas falling to deaf ears and instead receiving further harrassment at the hand of the authorities.

Frustrated, hopeless and angry, Yang attacked a police headquarters in Shanghai in July the following year, armed with petrol bombs, a knife, a hammer, a dust mask and a tear gas spray, killing 6 police officers and injuring 4 others in his wake. He was subsequently arrested, hastily tried under highly dubious circumstances and sentenced to death. All this, while his mother Wang Jingmei was preposterously sent to a mental hospital and detained for 143 days, stopping her from helping her son.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCjBfi2SWQk>

THE SUN BEATEN PATH — 2011 (89 MINUTES)

<https://asianmoviepulse.com/2020/02/film-review-the-sun-beaten-path-2011-by-sonthar-gyal/>

The story unfolds in two timelines, one in the present and one in the past. In the first one, we witness Nima, a young man on a pilgrimage trip to Lhasa, being accompanied, against his will, by an old man who quickly realizes how troubled the youth is and decides to help him any way he can. The second axis takes place in the past, and

explains the reasons why Nima transformed from a happy young man with a bright future to an almost destroyed individual who has lost himself and is not sure where and why he is going. Soon it is revealed that his “driving force” is the regret deriving from an accident that led him to kill his own mother, despite the fact that everyone seems to have forgiven him, if they ever accused him for the deed.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDap6TjBkoc>

OLD DOG — 2011 (88 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/15/movies/old-dog-directed-by-pema-tseden.html>

The beast at the center of *Old Dog* — a Tibetan tale of pride, principle and family priorities — is one of the sorriest-looking creatures ever to grace a movie screen. Scruffy, matted and with a tail that resembles a filthy feather duster, this forlorn specimen, known locally as a nomad mastiff, is nevertheless the catalyst for an astonishing tug of war.

Owned by Akku (Lochey), an aging sheepherder in an impoverished village on the Himalayan plains, the hound is a great deal more valuable than it looks. Prized as pets by Chinese businessmen, mastiffs are regularly stolen for sale on the black market. But when Akku’s drunkard son, Gonpo (Drolma Kyab), secretly sells the dog to a Chinese dealer, he activates a cycle of loss and reclamation that grows increasingly worrisome...

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_dbtvEc13M

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bl8fqNSd3WE>

CELESTIAL KINGDOM — 2011 (115 MINUTES)

https://asianwiki.com/Celestial_Kingdom

In China, there is a practiced superstition that if a man dies unmarried, he has to be buried with a woman who died around that time, otherwise the rest of his family will be unhappy. The ritual is known as a soul wedding. In a village in northern China, where young miners die almost every day, Xian Yangdong, the village soul wedding matchmaker, unwittingly gets involved in a murder to provide a female body for the ritual. This film describes the superstitious rituals of soul weddings in a very realistic way. Despite dark, moody lighting, long takes, and unfriendly editing which sometimes makes the characters' motives difficult to comprehend, the fast pace of the story stimulates the audience's attention. This film is in two parts: In the first part, characters appear against the spectacular backdrop of the Chinese New Year Festival where some examples of soul weddings are seen. The second part focuses on Yangdong's actions in great detail. The last scene of Yangdong smoking, mysteriously filmed from behind, leaves a lasting impression.

THE FLOWERS OF WAR — 2011 (146 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Flowers_of_War

The Flowers of War is a 2011 historical drama war film directed by Zhang Yimou, starring Christian Bale, Ni Ni, Zhang Xinyi, Tong Dawei, Atsuro Watabe, Shigeo Kobayashi and Cao Kefan. The film is based on a novella by Geling Yan, *13 Flowers of Nanjing*, inspired by the diary of Minnie Vautrin. The story is set in Nanking, China, during the 1937 Nanking Massacre in the Second Sino-Japanese War. A group of escapees, finding sanctuary in a church compound, try to survive the Japanese atrocities.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/flowers-of-war-2012>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jS8o4ZVo-Gc>



11 FLOWERS — 2011 (116 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/22/movies/11-flowers-directed-by-wang-xiaoshuai.html>

Poised on the brink of sexual awareness and the waning of the Cultural Revolution, an 11-year-old boy struggles to interpret the signals from his changing body and an increasingly confusing world.

Yet Wang Xiaoshuai's *11 Flowers* never allows politics to overwhelm its fondly intimate portrait of life in a Chinese village in 1975. Seen through the curious eyes of the young Wang Han (Liu Wenqing) and his friends, the film's more mysterious events — including a corpse on the riverbank and the strange sadness of a neighbor's beautiful daughter — are little more than incomprehensible distractions from the daily rituals of rural life.

Delicate and autobiographical (Wang Han was the director's name when he was a child, and the story is constructed from his boyhood memories), *11 Flowers* clings steadfastly to its youthful point of view. And while there is a plot involving a lost shirt and a fateful encounter with a murderer, information leaks through from the adult world mostly in the form of glimpsed interactions and overheard conversations.

This oblique approach allows small moments of direct connection between Wang Han and his parents — in particular lovely scene where his father teaches him about the brush strokes in a Monet — to resonate with luminous simplicity. And when someone remarks that “a change is coming,” he's as likely to be suggesting a shift in the weather as the dawning of a brand-new era.

Review: <https://www.npr.org/2013/02/21/172395278/11-flowers-a-revolutionary-childhood>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WzUt4p8olHI>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/129714>

THE SURROUNDINGS — 2011 (28 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2402215/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

In a society obsessed with economic development, a young man from a rural area is hired to take care of an old man living on a farm. The old man stands firmly on keeping his home, while the young man works hard to make a life for him and his girlfriend. However, the two are met with the harshness of a society that's leaving them behind. In the end, they become victims to a fate they did not choose.

NO. 89 SHIMEN ROAD — 2010 (85 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1802807/>

In the late 1980's Shanghai, a 16-year-old boy, Xiaoli, comes of age surrounded by his neighbors and grandfather. His best friend is a girl named Lanmi, a couple years older than him. But Lanmi slowly drifts away from him, lured by the new opportunities which come as China opens up to foreign goods and businessmen. At the same time, the 1989 events force Xiaoli to grow up and to let go of his teenage dreams.

Review: <https://16mm.pl/2014/11/01/shanghai-onoff-screen-no-89-shimen-road-2010-dir-shu-haolun/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xc-y-JGwFEs>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/shanghai-shimen-road>

BUDDHA MOUNTAIN — 2010 (104 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1745713/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

When they are evicted from their apartment in a provincial city in Northern China, a young bar singer and her two male friends rent rooms from a retired opera singer in Peking. The free-spirited young people chafe against a myriad of rules from their controlling landlady. They retaliate by playing unkind practical jokes on the older woman, who pays them back in kind. Their contest of wills escalates, culminating in a violation of trust by the tenants, but eventually the generations learn from each other and a familial bond is formed between them.

Review: <https://asianmoviepulse.com/2021/09/film-review-buddha-mountain-2010-by-yu-li/>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqL-p_niM5I

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/buddha-mountain>

PIERCING I — 2010 (103 MINUTES)



With his head pressed hard against the ground and a cursing, violent security guard standing above him, the young Zhang has hit rock-bottom. He would like to leave Beijing, and return to the life in the countryside, which he abandoned in search of job opportunities, which no longer exist. But when he helps an accident victim, on his way to the train station, a chain-reaction of fateful events is set in motion, which finally results in both extortion and murder; it is not so easy to leave Beijing. Liu Jian's

animation feature debut is a slice of Chinese megacity realism, which takes as its starting point the global financial crisis and slowly develops into a classic entanglement crime thriller, which would make the Coen brothers proud. Moments of hope are few and far between in the director's take on modern China. Beijing is a place inhabited by a cynical, despondent youth and a frustrated working class, and provides the setting for this melancholy story, brought to life in simple, grey images, simple animation, and a dry sense of humour. *Piercing I* provides sharp insights into modern China, and is a rare example of an animated auteur film, from a director with something to say.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52Il49cB2Oc>

Liu Jian, a Nanjing-based animator and director with a background in painting, has single-handedly launched the genre of black humor adult animation in China, and further catapulted it into the international limelight with two feature-length works, *Piercing I* (2010) and *Have a Nice Day* (2018)

See:

<http://acas.ust.hk/2018/12/14/the-animation-that-deconstructs-itself-liu-jians-piercing-i-and-have-a-nice-day/>

MY MONGOLIAN MOTHER — 2010 (100 MINUTES)

https://asianwiki.com/My_Mongolian_Mother

The film is a touching epic drama based on a true story. In the 1960s, about 3,000 Chinese orphans were sent to Inner Mongolia. In the Xilingol grassland, Qiqigema Erji adopted Chen Chen and Yu Sheng even though her husband disapproved. The children grew up as Mongolian nomads. But 20 years later, upon hearing the news that biological parents were looking for their children, Chen Chen left for Shanghai in the hope of meeting his parents. Yu Sheng finally did meet his parents and faced a choice as to where he wanted to live.

Stream entire movie here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYvAyEy9hNI>



WINTER VACATION — 2010 (91 MINUTES)

<https://icarusfilms.com/df-wv>

In this acclaimed absurdist comedy, bored teenagers and disillusioned adults rage at each other and the emptiness of life in frost-bitten northern China.

It's the last day of winter vacation in Inner Mongolia. Four aimless adolescents enjoy their last hours of freedom drifting between the barren spaces of their small town. They make surreal visits to homes of family and friends, including an unhappy little boy who dreams of

becoming an orphan to escape the tyranny of his family.

A prevailing absurdity casts over their lives as they endure petty instances of bullying while arguing over the purpose of school, teenage love, and life in general. Eventually they return to the routines of school life, only to witness an epic meltdown from their teacher in the midst of a lesson. Winner of the Golden Leopard for Best Film at the Locarno Film Festival, the third film by poet-novelist Li Hongqi announces him as a major figure in China's independent cinema.

Review: <https://reviewfilmreview.wordpress.com/2020/06/26/winter-vacation-2010/> ...Watch closely, and you'll see that the affectlessness is a product of not confusion but fatalism. The long silences between lines of dialogue are filled with internal searching, as if parsing what is heard for hidden meanings, or thinking carefully about the acceptable responses. And then out comes banality. It's a culture of self-censorship.

And that's what makes the film so extraordinary: It's a political critique that critiques by not critiquing, by refraining from criticism to such a degree that it comes back around as scathing criticism. It's deadpan and absurd and hilarious—and true.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4LUR0H7mrI4>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/winter-vacation>



THE PIANO IN A FACTORY — 2010 (107 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Piano_in_a_Factory

Set in the 1990s, laid-off worker Chen Guilin was betrayed by his wife, who remarried a rich businessman who has much more money than him. The condition for the custody of their daughter is to give their daughter a piano. Chen tries all means to borrow money from his friends, even attempting to steal a piano, but all his attempts fail. Despite these challenges, Chen always maintains an optimistic outlook. Finally, he decides to build a piano with his friends.

The group eventually build a piano which is made of steel. He also organizes a band to make a living and uses his wisdom to create a life which is full of sound and color.

Review: <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/piano-factory-film-review-32286>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPqX0JGjvbg>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-piano-in-a-factory>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/132290>

APART TOGETHER — 2010 (97 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1587878/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl



Liu returns to his native city Shanghai after 50 years spent in Taiwan. He has come to find the first love of his life, Qiao, who he left behind pregnant. In the meantime, Qiao has married and formed a family. But Liu is determined to get the family's approval to take her away with him.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zs3MLm7w7Ak>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/apart-together>

LOST ON JOURNEY — 2010 (95 MINUTES)

[https://www.timeoutshanghai.com/features/Film-](https://www.timeoutshanghai.com/features/Film-Film-features/5299/7-classic-Chinese-New-Year-films-to-watch-this-holiday.html)

[Film-features/5299/7-classic-Chinese-New-Year-films-to-watch-](https://www.timeoutshanghai.com/features/Film-Film-features/5299/7-classic-Chinese-New-Year-films-to-watch-this-holiday.html)

[this-holiday.html](https://www.timeoutshanghai.com/features/Film-Film-features/5299/7-classic-Chinese-New-Year-films-to-watch-this-holiday.html)

Another *chunyun* film, but a rarity on this list because, for once, it is not a bleak drama tugging on the social conscience of 'new money' China, but a comedy. Heading back home for Chinese New Year (and to divorce his wife), a wealthy businessman has his journey ruined when he accidentally joins forces with a stranger (think of it as a Chinese version of *Planes, Trains and Automobiles*). Everything that could possibly go wrong does go wrong, and they have to race home on any transportation they can get.

Trailer: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4uoa73>

SACRIFICE — 2010 (132 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJEWZ33guH4>

Sacrifice is a richly designed and wrenchingly emotional historical drama from veteran director Chen Kaige (Palme d'Or winner and Academy Award nominee for *Farewell My Concubine*). Based on the medieval play *Orphan of Zhao*, the first Chinese play known in Europe, the film recounts an epic power struggle between feudal princes, counterpoised with the melancholy tale of one ordinary man caught up in it all, and the steep price paid by his family. Chen —renowned both East and West for lavish sagas like *Temptress Moon* (1996) and *The Emperor and the Assassin* (1998) — imaginatively realizes an ancient Chinese kingdom and expertly constructs an intricate plot filled with clan rivalries, court intrigue and betrayal. A Machiavellian general (Wang Xueqi) plots the overthrow of the reigning Zhao clan. In the violent coup d'état that ensues, a loyal and humble doctor (popular Chinese star Ge You of *Let the Bullets Fly*) fulfills a promise to protect an infant Zhao heir from the bloodshed. When a case of mistaken identity has devastating consequences, he ends up raising the Zhao boy in secret -- and meditating a long, slow revenge. Despite the grandeur of the narrative, the heart of *Sacrifice* is the very human relationship between the doctor and the boy, who is caught between familiar adolescent growing pains and the gnawing intuition of a mysterious and powerful destiny. A stellar cast helps Chen shape an exquisite melodrama with a surprisingly intimate tone. *Sacrifice* is a fable of honor and retribution told with the feeling and insight of a Shakespearean tragedy.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJEWZ33guH4>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/sacrifice-2010>

THE KARATE KID — 2010 (135 MINUTES)

http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/karate_kid_2010/#

When his mother's career results in a move to China, 12-year-old Dre Parker (Jaden Smith) finds that he is a stranger in a strange land. Though he knows a little karate, his fighting skills are no

Rent the original 1984 *The Karate Kid*:
<https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-karate-kid-1984>

match for Cheng, the school bully. Dre finds a friend in Mr. Han (Jackie Chan), a maintenance man who is also a martial-arts master. Mr. Han teaches Dre all about kung fu in the hope that Dre will be able to face down Cheng and perhaps win the heart of a pretty classmate named Mei Ying.

Clips: https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/karate_kid_2010

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-karate-kid>



LET THE BULLETS FLY — 2010 (132 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=641U0JfDMjY>

When legendary bandit Pocky Zhang (Jiang Wen) violently crosses paths with a con man Tang (Ge You), he is offered an intriguing proposition: become the governor of Goose Town and make more money in a month than a year of train robberies. But neither realizes that Goose Town is already under the iron rule of Master Huang (Chow Yun-Fat), a ruthless and wealthy crime lord. Zhang and Huang begin a hyper-violent and hilarious series of escalating mind games in this masterfully vicious, pitch-black action comedy that will have you laughing and cringing at the same time.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=641U0JfDMjY>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/let-the-bullets-fly>

CONFUCIUS — 2010 (125 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confucius_\(2010_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confucius_(2010_film))

The film begins with Confucius as an old man, thinking back. Then we see him in his early 50s, being promoted from Mayor to Minister for Law in his home state of Lu. He is confronted with ethical issues after saving a slave-boy who was due to be buried alive with his former master who has just died. There are a lot of complex politics and war, ending with Confucius being rejected and becoming a wandering scholar. After many hardships and losses, he is invited back as an old man. We see him finally preparing the Spring and Autumn Annals, expecting that this book will determine his future influence. The film was scheduled to screen later in 2009 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, as well as the 2,560th birthday of Confucius himself. However, the release date was later moved to January 2010.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDqDC2VFAS8>

Stream entire movie here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=el3i3TfNg-I>

DOOMAN RIVER — 2010 (90 MINUTES)

<https://variety.com/2010/film/reviews/dooman-river-1117943259/>

...In *Dooman River* (usually written as Tumen River in English), the focus is on the forlorn lives of a family of three — playful pre-adolescent Chang-ho his mute older sister, Soon-hee, and their equally untalkative grandfather— who reside in an impoverished village near the titular border. When Chang-ho meets a Korean escapee his own age, they form an erstwhile bond based on a mutual love of soccer, while the other villagers grow fearful of crimes committed by famine-stricken refugees seeking food and shelter...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VhUPzBhulI>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/dooman-river>

Stream entire movie here: https://tubitv.com/movies/445519/dooman-river?start=true&utm_source=google-feed&tracking=google-feed

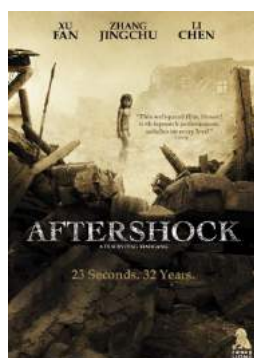
HOT SUMMER DAYS — 2010 (99 MINUTES)

<http://movies.nytimes.com/2010/10/01/movies/01hot.html?adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1293285649-KrMUHeodmx2ZpAQiXsFIgw>

Do they have date movies in China? Probably, and *Hot Summer Days*, an enjoyable concoction of loosely intertwined stories of love and obsession, is just right for that purpose. The film, by Tony Chan and Wing Shya, is intricate without being taxing and does just what you want a date movie to do: generate high hopes about the exhilarating, sometimes painful adventure that is love. (Hong Kong production)

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Equylb6VmLY>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/hot-summer-days>



AFTERSHOCK — 2010 (135 MINUTES)

<https://asianmoviepulse.com/2020/08/film-review-aftershock-2010-by-feng-xiaogang/>

In 1976, an earthquake, whose epicenter was in the city of Tangshan, China, caused the death of 250.00 people and remains one of the most terrible catastrophes in Chinese history. When the construction of the Tangshan Earthquake Memorial Park was underway, Chinese media conglomerate Huayi Brothers also started planning on a feature film based on the events of that fateful day, but also on how Tangshan rose “like a Phoenix from the ashes” after the earthquake. Eventually, popular Chinese director Fang Xiaogang, mostly known for his comedies, took

over directing duties for *Aftershock*, a big-budget movie centered not only on the catastrophe, but how it affected the lives of a family.

Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/01/movies/01after.html>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvBPsiZ8dxk>

CRAZY RACER — 2009 (99 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crazy_Racer

Crazy Racer, also known in some countries as *Silver Medalist*, is a 2009 Chinese black comedy movie directed and written by Ning Hao, filmed mostly in the southern coastal city of Xiamen, China.

The plot follows four seemingly separate stories that intersect and converge at points throughout the movie. It begins with the protagonist, Geng Hao losing first place in a cycling race and subsequently being tricked into sponsoring an energy drink containing illegal performance-enhancing substances by corrupt businessman Li Fala which causes him to forfeit the winnings from his silver medal. Disgraced and outlawed from ever participating again in the sport, Geng Hao's coach suffers from a heart attack, prompting Geng Hao to seek retribution from Li Fala, who he believes is the cause. In the process of obtaining the money for his coach's funeral, Geng Hao crosses the paths of local criminals, perpetually confused policemen and Taiwanese gangsters.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbXPqGC65Cw>



THE SEARCH — 2009 (117 MINUTES)

<http://www.icarusfilms.com/df-sear>

A director, his assistant, and a businessman drive through the Amdo region of Tibet, scouring small villages to find actors for their adaptation of the *namthar* of Drime Kunden, an opera traditionally performed for the Tibetan New Year, that tells the story of a prince—an early incarnation of Buddha—who gives away all his possessions, his wife and children, and even his own eyes.

Driving through the country's stunning landscapes, the crew meets frustration in their search for actors who can live up to the legendary roles. They find that while many of the traditions they would like to film have persisted, others are disappearing.

Directed by Pema Tseden, whose *The Silent Holy Stones* was China's first Tibetan-language film, *The Search* reveals a contemporary Tibet where the ancient and the modern co-exist.

The film is framed by two love stories. In the first village they visit, the team discovers the perfect actress to play Made Zangmo, Drime Kunden's wife, but she will not perform unless her ex-boyfriend, who has left the village for a job in the city, plays the lead. The crew consents and brings her along to find him. Along the way, the businessman tells the story of his first love. This moving account entertains the crew between stops in the villages and captivates the otherwise quiet actress.

A human story that unfolds in the context of religious parable and historical change, *The Search* offers a sensitive, nuanced look at contemporary Tibet.

Review: <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=106089201>

A WOMAN, A GUN, AND A NOODLE SHOP — 2009 (95 MINUTES)

<http://www.sonyclassics.com/awomanagunandanoodleshop/synopsis.html>

Wang is a miserable yet cunning noodle shop owner in a desert town in China. Feeling neglected, Wang's wife secretly goes out with Li, one of his employees. A timid man, Li reluctantly keeps the gun the landlady bought for 'killing her husband later'. However, not a single move they make escapes the boss's notice, and he decides to bribe patrol officer Zhang to kill the illicit couple. It looks like a perfect plan: the affair will come to a cruel but satisfying end... or so he thinks, but the equally wicked Zhang has an agenda of his own that will lead to even more violence.

Review:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/03/movies/03woman.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLJiLp_mMCU

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/a-woman-a-gun-and-a-noodle-shop>



MAO'S LAST DANCER — 2009 (127 MINUTES)

http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/maos_last_dancer/

From Academy Award nominee Bruce Beresford comes *Mao's Last Dancer*, the inspiring true story of Li Cunxin and his extraordinary journey from a poor upbringing in rural China to international stardom as a world-class ballet dancer. Based on the bestselling

autobiography, *Mao's Last Dancer* weaves a moving tale about the quest for freedom and the courage it takes to live your own life. The film compellingly captures the struggles, sacrifices, and triumphs, as well as the intoxicating effects of first love and celebrity amid the pain of exile.

Mao's Last Dancer and wife Mary Li on raising their deaf daughter, Sophie (2021)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUvpTn_aFtc

Teacher Guide: <https://teachwithmovies.org/maos-last-dancer/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPM-tmT9sV8>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/maos-last-dancer>

Stream free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/551744>



A NORTH CHINESE GIRL — 2009 (81 MINUTES)

<https://www.tcm.com/tcmdb/title/774983/a-north-chinese-girl/#synopsis>

Xiao Xue is nineteen and lives in a town in northern China. During the day she works in a fashion store, and at night, she accompanies her boss on his various social engagements and activities. When he goes out with his friends, she makes herself useful as a hostess, joining him in karaoke bars and nightclubs. Xiao Xue sees her after hours involvement in her boss' life as a launching pad to improve her standard of living. But then she discovers she is pregnant and this changes her life in an unexpected way.

QUICK, QUICK, SLOW — 2009 (83 MINUTES)

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1516572/>

A comedy about ordinary people taking part in a dance competition. China hosts the Olympics for the first time. The whole country is excited. The forgotten generation, the same age as Red China—once passionate in their youth, then sent to the countryside in every corner of China for re-education—wants to be a part of it. A group of people: a security guard in his middle age crisis, a desperate housewife, a fame-seeker and her admirer, an odd couple at their fifties, started their own dance team. They practiced; they dreamed; they struggled. Is this for real or it is just a dream?



CITY OF LIFE AND DEATH (NANJING! NANJING) — 2009 (137 MINUTES)

http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/city_of_life_and_death/

City of Life and Death takes place in 1937, during the height of the Second Sino-Japanese War. The Imperial Japanese Army has just captured the then-capital of the Republic of China, Nanjing. What followed was known as the Nanking Massacre, or the Rape of Nanking, a period of several weeks wherein tens of thousands of Chinese soldiers and civilians were killed. The film tells the story of several figures, both historical and fictional, including a Chinese soldier, a schoolteacher, a Japanese soldier, a foreign missionary, and John Rabe, a Nazi businessman who would ultimately save thousands of Chinese civilians.

Trailer: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1TIamXyc_I

Stream for free on Kanapy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/113873>

IF YOU ARE THE ONE — 2008 (127 MINUTES)

http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/if_you_are_the_one/

Inventor Qin Fen (You Ge) is well-off, but lonely and insecure. He wants to meet girls and decides to pursue Internet dating. After a series of unsuccessful blind dates, Qin Fe

meets Smiley (Shu Qi), a beautiful flight attendant. Qin Fen is immediately taken with Smiley, but believes she is out of his league and doesn't pursue her romantically. Nevertheless, the two become friends and form a tight bond after Qin Fen takes Smiley on a trip to Japan.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXBDUj69SM>

**IF YOU ARE
THE ONE 2**
Sequel in 2010
Trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5c7PyRNgvIQ>

RED CLIFF — 2008 (146 MINUTES)

https://asianwiki.com/Red_Cliff

It's A.D. 208 China. Rival states Shu and Wu join hands against their common enemy, the evil and ambitious General Cao Cao of the Wei kingdom but are seriously outnumbered by his million-strong army. But with the charismatic leadership of Gen. Zhou Yu (Tony Leung), the perfect strategy of scholar Zhuge Liang (Takeshi Kaneshiro), and the support of emperor Sun Quan (Chang Chen), they manage to declare a small victory. While Cao Cao scoffs at this as no big deal, it adds fuel to his fury.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVrTlxkXJhI>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/red-cliff-part-1>

Stream entire movie here: https://tubitv.com/movies/437181/red-cliff?utm_source=google-feed&tracking=google-feed

LUST, CAUTION — 2007 (158 MINUTES)

<http://www.amazon.com/Lust-Caution-Widescreen-Tony-Leung/dp/B0010SAGHI>

Lust, Caution, Ang Lee's follow up to *Brokeback Mountain*, for which he won the Academy Award for Best Director, continues his exploration of people with a passion for each other trapped in a world where their passion could be life-threatening, but in a very different context this time. Set in China during the Japanese occupation of early World War II, the underlying plot concerns the story of young Wong Chia Chi (Tang Wei), an actress and member of a small group of student resistors planning to infiltrate the home of Mr. Yee (Tony Leung), a high-ranking collaborationist government official, in order to kill him for his role in the torture and executions of Chinese resistance fighters. Chi ingratiates herself with Yee's wife, the sophisticated and cultured Mrs. Yee (Joan Chen) under the guise of being the wife of a wealthy but unseen tycoon.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CizN-DvGhrc>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/lust-caution>

BLIND MOUNTAIN — 2007 (97 MINUTES)



<http://movies.nytimes.com/2008/03/12/movies/12blin.html>

Every so often in his slow-to-boil, hard-to-shake drama *Blind Mountain*, the Chinese director Li Yang slips in a moment of beauty — a blooming valley wreathed in mist, a shepherd tending his flock — of the sort you find in glossy travel magazines. These pastoral visions initially feel like a reprieve, a respite from the story's increasing heaviness, but there's something about these bucolic images that begins to gnaw at you too. This native, touristic fantasy about the unspoiled China, you realize, comes with a brutal price tag. This true-crime shocker about a woman who suddenly found herself in captivity led to a flurry of reports that recounted the usual rituals of official outrage and condemnation, and then it was back to politics and business as



usual. *Blind Mountain* is a coda to that story, as well as a reminder that art sometimes keeps the truth alive far better than the news.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=biJOrUhBTOI>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/113797>



IN LOVE WE TRUST — 2007 (116 MINUTES)

<https://www.filmmovement.com/educational/film/in-love-we-trust>

A divorced couple learns that the only way to save their little daughter Hehe, who suffers from Leukemia, is to have another child. Now both remarried, Mei Zhu and Xiao Lu are forced to test their love and their commitment to one another by putting their current relationships in danger. Will this passionate affair re-spark their love for one another and destroy their new marriages? Wang Xiaoshuai's *In Love We Trust* is a story of parenthood, love, marriage, betrayal, trust and giving, which touches upon changes in contemporary society and family life, as well as the moral and ethical dilemmas brought on by modernity.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgKtzWFRwOg&feature=emb_logo

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/132222>

THE SUN ALSO RISES — 2007 (116 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0769507/>

Jiang Wen stars in his third directorial work that boasts a stellar cast including Joan Chen, Anthony Wong and Jaycee Chan. A polyptych of interconnected stories in different time-zones, shifting between a Yunnan village, a campus, and the Gobi Desert.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaeZ1D5o9CI>



PRINCE OF THE HIMALAYAS — 2006 (108 MINUTES)

<https://globalshakespeares.mit.edu/prince-of-himalayas-hu-sherwood-2006/#video=trailer>

Prince Lhamoklodan learns of his father's mysterious death and returns home to find his uncle has taken the throne—and the widowed queen. The dead emperor's son wants revenge, but how can he exact it without devastating his mother? In the struggle to face his destiny and fight his demons, a new king is born.

Prince of the Himalayas is an adaptation of William Shakespeare's tragedy *Hamlet*. Set in ancient Tibet under the shadow of the Himalayas, the film is a visually ravishing historical epic with stunning scenery, richly saturated color, and lush costuming. Setting Shakespeare's *Prince of Denmark* in a completely new context is richly suggestive of the play's enduring relevance for the modern world. As the proto-typical tale of oedipal anxiety, or of the terrifying possibilities of taking action in the social world, this film re-invents and refreshes a story we thought we knew.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPKwudubbfc&feature=emb_logo

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/114437>

TUYA'S MARRIAGE — 2006 (93 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0949564/>

Tuya is the persevering wife of Bater, a herdsman who lost his legs exploring water in the Neimenggu (Inner Mongolia) grassland that is fast vanishing as a result of desertification. She takes up the sole responsibility to make a living for the family but develops a dislocated lumbar from her hard labor and risks paralysis herself. Faced with harsh reality, the couple decide to divorce so that Tuya can seek a better life.

Imposing her own conditions of a remarriage — her new husband must take care of Bater, their children and their poor herding land, the strong-minded, stubborn, but also gentle, susceptible Tuya embarks on an arduous search for a new husband, and meets suiters who are rich but disingenuous, likable but shy, and saves a suicidal Bater who still longs for Tuya and their children along the way. *Tuya's Marriage* won the top prize at the 2007 Berlin International Film Festival.

Trailer and numerous clips:

https://www.imdb.com/video/vi3844061209?playlistId=tt0949564&ref=tt_ov_vi

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/tuyas-marriage>

THE ROAD — 2006 (116 MINUTES)

[https://asianwiki.com/The_Road_\(2006-China\)](https://asianwiki.com/The_Road_(2006-China))

Aboard a bus in the rural mountains of China, a naïve young girl name Li Chunfen attends to passengers' needs, all the while speaking of the virtues of the Communist Party. The always loyal Li is happy to serve the driver, Old Cui, a kind of father figure to her who also acts as the consoling voice of the party. When she develops an acute case of puppy love for a frequent passenger — an emotion that leads to a chased kiss and a rape report, she learns all too well that her party and driver might not always have her best interests in mind. But how big of hand will the Cultural Revolution play in Li's life? How much control will she have over her own fate? Spanning five decades of Li's life, *The Road* is a coming-of-age tale of epic proportions. Heartbreakingly beautiful — the countryside cinematography is jaw-dropping -- and tragically timely, the film stands out as a masterful work from a powerful new Chinese voice, director Zhang Jiarui, reminding us of a painful history and warning us never to repeat it.

CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER — 2006 (114 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0473444/>

During China's Tang dynasty the emperor has taken the princess of a neighboring province as wife. She has borne him two sons and raised his eldest. Now his control over his dominion is complete, including the royal family itself.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBFi6LqYswI>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/man-cheng-jin-dai-huang-jin-jia>



STILL LIFE — 2006 (108 MINUTES)

<http://movies.nytimes.com/2008/01/18/movies/18stil.html>

A modern master of postmodern discontent, Jia Zhangke is among the most strikingly gifted filmmakers working today whom you have

probably never heard of. During the past decade he has made some half-dozen documentary-inflected fictions and several documentaries that weigh the human cost of China's often brutal, dehumanizing shift from state-controlled communism to state-sanctioned capitalism, a price paid in the blood and sweat of people who have, paradoxically, inspired him to create works of sublime, soulful art. In *Still Life*, which won the grand prize at

Still Life is a unique hybrid of documentary and fiction.

DONG: Filmed at the same time as Jia's fiction film, *Still Life*, Jia's 70-minute documentary, *Dong* also shares the same setting (the Three Gorges area of central China) and in certain instances, the same shots. This causes them to make a closely linked relationship with each other. Jia mentions once in his interview that he has always been trying to "knock down the barrier between documentary and fiction". He portrays the documentary with a more subjective view and reflects the realistic perspective in the fictional film *Still Life*, overstepping the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction films.

DONG Trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvNhEhwKhgY>

Stream entire documentary here: <https://vimeo.com/433545872>

the 2006 Venice Film Festival, the blood and the sweat run directly into the Yangtze River, where they mingle with more than a few tears. The movie takes place amid the clatter and misery of the Three Gorges Dam, which cuts across the Yangtze in central China. The largest dam in the world, Three Gorges is a site of great cultural and political strife because of both environmental and humanitarian concerns. This may sound like a prescription for social cinema, but Mr. Jia's interest lies in visual ideas and human behavior, not agendas...

Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/18/movies/18stil.html>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FKcupplP8c>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/still-life-2006>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/329016>



TAKING FATHER HOME — 2006 (100 MINUTES)

<http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/346120/Taking-Father-Home/overview>

Taking Father Home, the debut feature of the Chinese director Ying Liang, is a poetic study of resolve and revenge. It is also a stunning introduction to a rare new talent. When 17-year-old Xu Yun learns that his village in Sichuan Province is being replaced by a government industrial zone, he sets out to fetch the wayward father who abandoned him six years earlier. Armed with only a vague address and a pair of placid geese in lieu of cash, Yun heads for the big city of Zigong and a closure he may not even know he needs. Shot with a borrowed video camera and starring Mr. Ying's friends and family, *Taking Father Home* immerses us in the sights and sounds of a city in flux, the constant intrusion of background noise paralleling Yun's volatile emotions with the political and environmental upheavals of his country.

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/507527>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/taking-father-home>

CRAZY STONE — 2006 (96 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crazy_Stone_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crazy_Stone_(film))

Crazy Stone is a 2006 Chinese black comedy film directed by Ning Hao and produced by Andy Lau.

When a precious jade stone is discovered in an old outhouse, the owner of said outhouse and the surrounding buildings suddenly finds himself with the financial clout to withstand the buy-out pressure of an unethical developer who wishes to build a large building on his plot. The owner, intending to display the stone to the public, puts his dedicated chief of security in charge of keeping it safe. But with the stakes running high, this is easier said than done. The developer hires a high-tech cat burglar from Hong Kong to steal the stone, the owner's wayward son sees the jewel as the perfect symbol of wealth and hatches a plan to use it to increase his chances at getting laid, and a gang of three con men who hear about the jewel see it as their ticket to the big time. These three groups find themselves in direct competition and, finding their attempts foiled as often by the security guard as by each other, become more and more desperate as the film progresses.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSkoLUx03tg>

THE BANQUET — 2006 (131 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0465676/plotsummary?ref=tt_str_y_pl

The Banquet is a 2006 Chinese film, also known as *Legend of the Black Scorpion*. It is a loose adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and is set in 10th century China.

In 907 AD, the Tang Dynasty is in tatters; infighting snarls the imperial family. Crown Prince Wu Luan loves Little Wan, but his father takes her as his Empress. Wu Luan goes into exile, studying dance and music. His uncle murders his father, taking throne and Empress; uncle sends assassins to kill Wu Luan. The Crown Prince eludes death and comes to court. The Emperor arranges for Little Wan's coronation and dispatches Wu Luan to a distant land; he then calls for a midnight banquet on the 100th day of his rule. Poison, treachery, Wu Luan's return, and the love of the innocent Qing for Wu Luan set up the final entanglements. No Fortinbras or Horatio lay the dead to rest

The Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YlhgwWYO2IY>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-banquet>



THE SILENT HOLY STONES — 2005 (102 MINUTES)

<https://asiasociety.org/new-york/events/silent-holy-stones>

A 10-year-old Buddhist novice nicknamed "Little Lama" returns home from the remote Guwa

monastery for the New Year celebration. After a long journey on horseback over icy steppes, he finds himself glued to his family's new TV, watching the popular Chinese television series *Journey to the West*. Meanwhile, the villagers are rehearsing their annual staging of a traditional Tibetan opera for the New Year. The juxtaposition shows a young monk who finds himself magnetically drawn to the secular world, which calls to him through the TV. *The Silent Holy Stones* has the immediacy of a documentary, delivering a compelling and intimate insider's look of everyday life in Tseden's hometown, where traditional life rubs up against modernity and globalization.

The character Little Lama in *The Silent Holy Stones* was played by a real monk, Luosang Danpai, who later de-robed, got married, and is now living a layperson's life.

Written and directed by Pema Tseden, the film is entirely in the Tibetan language and with nonprofessional Tibetan actors. The film won the Best Directorial Debut at the 25th Golden Rooster Awards in China and is an official selection of the Pusan International Film Festival, the International Buddhist Film Festival, the International Film Festival Rotterdam, and the San Francisco International Film Festival.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0t_rVTEAXrE

"The place where the story took place is none other than my home village, where the mountains and waters have always haunted my dreams. I long to tell the true stories — in my own way — that have come up in my home village, to disclose the real looks of her, and to reveal the genuine conditions of life of the people there ... a reciprocal infiltration between tradition and modernism." Pema Tseden



SHANGHAI DREAMS — 2005 (121 MINUTES)

<http://www.nytimes.com/movies/movie/326224/Shanghai-Dreams/overview>

The main character Qinghong is a 19-year-old student living with her overly repressive father, mother and younger brother in a typical small apartment. Her 'boyfriend' Honggen, a working local boy who plays only a minor role in the film and develops an obsession with Qihong to her father's contempt. Confiding in her best friend Xiao Zhen, Qinghong strives for love and independence. Qinghong's father Wu Zemin is a stubborn and aggressive man, who has never forgiven his wife for persuading him to move to rural Guiyang. He regularly meets with other 'Third Line' volunteers to discuss

strategies for returning to Shanghai. He becomes increasingly strict with Qinghong, often following her home from school to ensure a restricted social life. He forbids her from seeing her 'boyfriend' Honggen, discourages her from spending time with Xiao Zhen and after discovering that she has sneaked out to an underground dance party confines her to the house. Xiao Zhen has meanwhile fallen for the local boy Lu Jun, the son of another 'Third Line' volunteer couple. Lu gets a local girl pregnant and is forced by his angry father to marry her. Soon after the wedding, though, he runs away with Xiao Zhen, causing panic in the local community. Honggen stalks Qinghong and she promises to meet him secretly one evening. She slips out of the house while her father hosts a meeting with other "Third Line" friends to discuss a plan to flee to Shanghai without official permission. When Qinghong tells Honggen that they cannot be together because her family will soon leave, the nervous Honggen loses control of himself and rapes her. Qinghong totters home, muddled and bleeding. Her father initially tries to retaliate by beating up Honggen at work, but subsequently alerts the police and has Honggen arrested. Traumatized, Qinghong attempts suicide. She is recovering when a sad and chastened Xiao Zhen returns to Guiyang.

Very early one morning, as dawn is breaking, the Wu family boards a van for the drive to Shanghai. They are delayed in the streets of Guiyang by the crowds gathering to watch a round of public executions. Called out on loudspeaker are the names of those to be executed, with the last name called Honggen.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uf5-cSrpQ08>

PERPETUAL MOTION — 2005 (90 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perpetual_Motion_\(film\)#:~:text=Perpetual%20Motion%20is%20an%20independent,2005%20Toronto%20International%20Film%20Festival](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perpetual_Motion_(film)#:~:text=Perpetual%20Motion%20is%20an%20independent,2005%20Toronto%20International%20Film%20Festival).

Perpetual Motion is an independent film directed by Ning Ying. Niuniu, a wealthy middle-aged woman living in Beijing, discovers that her husband is having an affair after coming upon a romantic e-mail. She knows only that it is one of her close friends but not which one. Determined to discover the truth, she invites her friends Qinqin, a ditsy actress, Lala, a successful artist, and Madam Ye, a property developer over to her lavish *siheyuan* home. There the four women share stories of their sexual past over food and mahjong. Niuniu, however, still has her plan to execute...

Review: <https://shaoyis.wordpress.com/2010/01/05/review-of-perpetual-motion-%E6%97%A0%E7%A9%B7%E5%8A%A8-china-2005/>



ELECTRIC SHADOWS — 2004 (96 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0424273/>

Electric Shadows is the debut film of director Xiao Jiang, one of the few active female directors in China. For no apparent reason, a mute young woman assaults a youth who delivers water on his bicycle, injuring him and ruining his bike. Surprisingly, she asks him to feed her fish while she is in custody. Her tiny apartment, he discovers, is a shrine to his favorite escape, the movies. He finds her diary — a screenplay of her life built around scenes from favorite films — and it sets off his imagination. Maybe they have more in common than a love of the movies.

7-minute Clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KID_-UkzAnI

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/electric-shadows>

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/372297>



MOUNTAIN PATROL: KEKEXILI — 2004 (89 MINUTES)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PjCbzM7SJNY>

Kekexili, the largest wildlife reserve in China, is home to many rare species. When photojournalist Ga Yu (Zhang Lei) arrives at the Kekexili Mountain Patrol camp, they are mourning the death of one of their members. Determined to uncover the real story behind the disappearance of patrol volunteers, the slaughtering of Tibetan antelopes and the rumor that the patrol cooperates with the poachers, Ga Yu joins the squad into the wilderness. Led by Ri Tai (Duo Bujie), the patrol risk their lives in the fight against the brutal hunters. At first distanced by the lens of his camera, Ga Yu slowly becomes personally involved in the deadly struggle. Ga Yu returns

to Beijing a different man and writes the story that shocks the nation.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rosOtYVJM4I>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/mountain-patrol>



HERO (YING XIONG) — 2004 (159 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=6578

Long ago, China was divided into seven kingdoms all fighting for supremacy. The King of Qin is determined to unite the kingdoms and become the first emperor of them all. Of the King's many would-be assassins, only three inspire true fear: Sky, Broken Sword, and Flying Snow. Ten years after the king's edict for their elimination, a man called Nameless brings the weapons of the three assassins to the Qin King's palace, and claims he has defeated them. With Jet Li, Tony Leung, Maggie Cheung, Donnie Yen, and Zhang Ziyi.



Curriculum unit (19 pages):

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/publications/lessonplans/chinesefilm_summerinstitute/Hero_document.pdf

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srFhXDZhUZI>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/hero-2002>

HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS — 2004 (119 MINUTES)

http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/house_of_flying_daggers/

Set in the year is 859 AD, as China's once flourishing Tang Dynasty is in decline; unrest is raging throughout the land. The corrupt government is locked in battle with rebel armies that are forming in protest. The largest and most prestigious of these rebel groups is the House of Flying Daggers, which is growing ever more powerful under a mysterious new leader. Two local captains, Leo and Jin are ordered to capture the new leader and the two hatch an elaborate plan. Captain Jin will pretend to be a lone warrior called Wind and rescue the beautiful, blind revolutionary Mei from prison, earning her trust and escorting her to the secret headquarters of the House of Flying Daggers. The plan works, but to their surprise, Jin and Mei fall deeply in love on their long journey to the House. Danger lurks in the forest surrounding them, and the wind is still, as if sensing the tension in the air. What lies ahead for Jin and Mei, these star-crossed lovers? If this is true love, then why are there plots in their heads, and secrets in their hearts?

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLkedDMb8vI>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/house-of-flying-daggers>



THE WORLD — 2004 (139 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_World_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_World_(film))



The World a film written and directed by Jia Zhangke which tells the story about the work and the life of several young people moving from the countryside to a world park. Starring Jia's muse, Zhao Tao as well as Cheng Taishen *The World* was filmed on and around an actual theme park located in Beijing, which recreates world landmarks at reduced scales for Chinese tourists. *The World* introduces new technologies like binoculars, coin-operated telescopes, digital cameras, mobile phones and digital services in the theme park as touristic tools to virtually travel around the world, emphasizing the globalization and convenience. It is a metaphor for Chinese society to experience the sense of mobility, but the

knowledge is still limited domestically, and the environment of simulation is seen as a sense of escaping from the real world. *The World* was Jia's first film to gain official approval from the Chinese government.

Clip and *New Yorker* Overview: <https://www.newyorker.com/video/watch/the-world>

PURPLE BUTTERFLY — 2003 (127 MINUTES)

https://asianwiki.com/Purple_Butterfly

Purple Butterfly takes place in Manchuria in 1928 and Shanghai in 1931 and 1937. The focus is on the conflict between China and Japan. In 1928, Itami Hidehiko, whose father played a role in developing the Manchurian railroad system, is in love with fellow university student Cynthia, but he returns to Tokyo and then comes back to Shanghai in 1937 as an undercover deputy to the Japanese secret service official in charge of the city. Also during 1928, Cynthia's brother is killed by Japanese in reaction to his opposition to their presence in Manchuria. Later, Cynthia moves to Shanghai. In 1931, Japanese troops achieve a military victory over China in Manchuria, which is renamed Manchukuo, and also set up an occupation of Shanghai. Cynthia then joins the Shanghai underground resistance, known as the Purple Butterfly, headed by Xie Ming, who gives Cynthia a new identity as Ding Hui, assigned to work in a hospital; the two evidently cement their friendship with sex, but politics takes priority. Also in 1931, Szeto is having a love affair with telephone operator Yiling Tang. In 1937, by the time Itami returns, Japan is poised to attack China itself, and Itami proposes to take Cynthia as his bride back to Tokyo. However, one day in 1937 Szeto, mistaken for a resistance agent, watches as his girlfriend dies in the crossfire of a gun battle; the Japanese authority arrests and tortures him despite his protest that he is innocent, so he is determined to exact revenge.

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZjUJTio_RpU

CELL PHONE — 2003 (107 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cell_Phone_%28film%29

Yan Shouyi is a TV host who has an affair with Wu Yue (Fan Bingbing), a young and attractive woman working in publishing. Yan diligently erases all text messages and call records between him and Wu on his cellphone before he gets home every day, in order to avoid detection by his wife Yu Wenjuan (Lu Zhang). One night, after telling Yu that he has a work meeting with Fei Mo (Zhang Guoli), a TV producer and Yan's superior, Yan rendezvous with Wu and switches off his cellphone. Not being able to reach Yan a while later, Yu calls Fei, who has been in the know of Yan's affair.



BALZAC AND THE LITTLE CHINESE SEAMSTRESS — 2002 (111 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=6212

This 2003 Golden Globe nominee for Best Foreign Film is based on the experience of director and novelist Dai Si Jie, who spent four years in a re-education program instigated during Mao Zedong's "Cultural Revolution." Two teenage boys, Ma (Ye Liu) and Luo (Kun Chen), are sent to live on the remote mountain known as Phoenix in the Sky. The boys steal the "subversive" novels of Honore de Balzac, Flaubert, Dostoevsky, and Gogol, and read them to the granddaughter of the local tailor (Xun Zhou). While reading, both boys fall in love with the girl, and, through Balzac, discover awakening desire, passion, impulsive action, love—all the subjects that had, until then, been hidden.

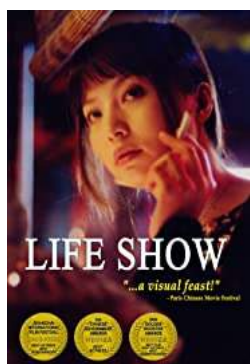
Your students may enjoy comparing the movie with the novel by the same name.



Study Guide for the book: <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/balzac-and-the-little-chinese-seamstress>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuDb03Q_AQg

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/364067>



LIFE SHOW — 2002 (105 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life_Show

Directed by Huo Jianqi *Life Show* follows a woman, Lai Shuangyang who operates a duck neck stall in night market in an unnamed city in central China (the film was shot in Chongqing). Though Shuangyang keeps her cool, her life is filled with complications. Her brother drug-addicted Jiujiu has been committed to a sanitarium Her assistant, Mei, who has fallen in love with Jiujiu, attempts suicide. Her sister-in-law, Xiaojin, always leaves Shuangyang's nephew for Shuangyang to take care of. At the same time, Shuangyang is trying to regain her family's home, which was

given to a neighbor during the Cultural Revolution. Perhaps worst of all, Shuangyang is at risk of losing her restaurant.

Into this morass, Shuangyang starts to notice one of her customers, Zhou Xiongzhou, a middle-aged businessman who has been frequenting her restaurant for a year. Despite concerns, she decides to take the risk with Xiongzhou and the two begin an unassuming romance.

Trailer: <https://www.tvguide.com/videos/life-show/2030123982/life-show/3570684/>

Stream entire film here: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x219006>



TOGETHER — 2002 (119 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=6153

Directed by Chen Kaige, *Together* is a coming-of-age tale woven together with the harmony and intensity of a complex musical orchestration. Xiaochun is a talented 13-year-old violinist who lives with his father in a small, provincial Chinese city. Shy and sensitive, music is his way of expressing his feelings. Xiaochun's sweet-natured father wants the best for him, so they move to immense, metropolitan Beijing so that Xiaochun can audition for a prestigious music school and take lessons that befit his talent. But Xiaochun's new world is unlike any he's known. He meets new and demanding teachers, discovers true friendship, falls in love for the first time, learns how painful love can be, and comes to understand the true meaning of music.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rSyrT6XuSwo>

WHEN RUO MA WAS SEVENTEEN — 2002 (86 MINUTES)

[http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/when ruoma was seventeen/](http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/when_ruoma_was_seventeen/)

When Ruo Ma Was Seventeen illustrates the perspectives and fantasies of youngsters towards love. Ruoma, a girl from Hani tribe, lives with her grandma since childhood. Fantasizing about the world outside, Ruoma wants to visit the city but has no money. In the meantime, she meets Ming, a amateurish photographer, who helps her to earn money by asking Ruoma to take photos with the tourists with her tribe dresses on. At last, their dream come true but Ming has to leave his hometown, however Ruoma's love to him make him so confused...

Without any acting experience, Li Min is nonetheless stunning and natural in her portrayal of Ruoma. Made independently from China's studio system, this film takes a subtle, yet compelling look at Xjani culture. An official Selection of 2004's Philadelphia Film Festival, *When Ruo Ma Was Seventeen* is a fresh coming-of-age story from director Zhang Jiarue that features an interesting subject, and nuanced performances.

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GgBmMFuEiI>

UNKNOWN PLEASURES — 2002 (113 MINUTES)

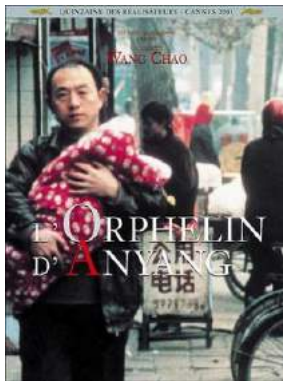
<https://letterboxd.com/film/unknown-pleasures/>

Directed by Jia Zhangke, three disaffected youths live in Datong in 2001, part of the new "Birth Control" generation. Fed on a steady diet of popular culture, both Western and Chinese, the characters of *Unknown Pleasures* represent a new breed in the People's Republic of China, one detached from reality through the screen of media and the internet.

Review: <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2003/jul/11/artsfeatures1>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKj8liAHny4&feature=emb_logo

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/unknown-pleasures>



ORPHAN OF ANYANG — 2001 (84 MINUTES)

<https://www.filmaffinity.com/en/film389059.html>

A prostitute from the Northeast, desperate and unable to make ends meet, abandons her baby. An unemployed factory worker decides to take the child for the 200 yuan (about \$37 Canadian) a month in child support promised by its mother. His early attempts at child-rearing are somewhat painful to watch, but also charming and amusing. Eventually, he and the mother become friendly, and it seems that the child will be raised in a sweetly unorthodox family. However, when the woman's pimp, a local gangster, not only finds out that he may have fathered the child, but also that he

is dying of cancer, he decides that he must adopt the baby - and is willing to resort to violence if necessary.

It is Wang's first feature film as director (he had previously served as an assistant director to Chen Kaige and is based on a novel written by the director.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3S3W2pOcvcl>

SHADOW MAGIC — 2001 (116 MINUTES)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/06/movies/film-review-when-movies-fomented-a-cultural-revolution.html>

Shadow Magic is a 2000 historical fiction film about the introduction of motion pictures to China during the early 20th century. The film was directed and co-written by Ann

Hu. It was a US-China co-production... Ann Hu's *Shadow Magic* imagines an intriguing, culturally fraught moment in the early history of cinema: the arrival in China in 1902 of the latest movie technology (that is, hand-cranked, black and white, soundless cameras and projectors.) Raymond Wallace (Jared Harris), the Englishman who brings movies to Beijing, is hardly a Promethean figure, but rather a down-at-the-heels roustabout seeking to reverse his bad luck in a dusty corner of the city.

But the gizmos he carries with him and the images they produce are harbingers of profound change. The residents of Beijing intuit this; even before they understand what the machines can do, many of them perceive them as a threat not only to their traditional culture but also to the structure of Chinese society. Before long one character remarks, "Men will cut their pigtails and omen will unbind their feet."

Not everyone, however, is alarmed at the prospect of change...

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/shadow-magic-2001>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUsiNJ60zuw>



FISH AND ELEPHANT — 2001 (106 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fish_and_Elephant

Fish and Elephant (or *This Summer*) is documentary filmmaker and former TV hostess Li Yu's feature film directorial debut. The film is also often referred to as the first Chinese mainland film to broach the topic of lesbian relationships in China.

The story follows the elephant keeper in the Beijing Zoo who maintains an aquarium of fish in her home (hence the two-animal title), and her lesbian lover, a fabric saleswoman in an outdoor market. Her relationship is tested, however, when her recently divorced mother returns to town in the hope of setting her daughter

up in marriage. Further complicating matters is one of Xiaoqun's ex-lovers also returning to her life with the law in pursuit.

The film was produced by Cheng Yong Productions and was an "underground" production (in that it was not made with official support). Moreover, the film was cast entirely with non-professional actors and actresses

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wM9bxWpy82o&t=3s>

HAPPY TIMES — 2000 (102 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0303243/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

Zhao is an aging bachelor who hasn't been lucky in love. Thinking he has finally met the woman of his dreams; Zhao leads her to believe he is wealthy and agrees to a wedding far beyond his means. Zhao's best friend Li hatches the idea to raise the money by refurbishing an abandoned bus, which they will rent out by the hour--the Happy Times Hotel--to young couples starved for privacy. Unfortunately, this plan goes awry because Zhao is too old fashioned to allow the couples to leave the bus door closed.

Meanwhile, Zhao's fiancée introduces him to her spoiled son and beautiful blind stepdaughter Wu Ying, whom she sees as a burden. To be rid of the girl, she insists that Zhao take her to the Happy Times Hotel and give her a job. Zhao reluctantly agrees, then creates a series of deceptions to keep the girl occupied, including setting her up as a masseuse and enlisting his friends to pretend to be her customers. Everything that is happening between Zhao and Wu is superficially about trickery, but gradually a very real empathy grows between the young woman and the old man.



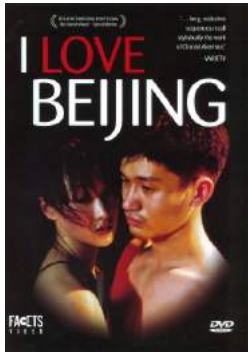
Teacher Guide: <https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/ea/archives/using-zhang-yimous-happy-times-as-a-path-toward-cross-cultural-understanding/>
Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbn08yxNb0Y>

I LOVE BEIJING — 2000 (100 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Love_Beijing

With each entry into Ning Ying's *Beijing Trilogy*, the focus has been on a different generation: the elderly in *For Fun*, the middle-aged in *On the Beat* and now the youth in *I Love Beijing*. The film follows the twenty-something taxi driver Desi and opens on his divorce proceedings. Finding himself alone, Desi becomes something of a Casanova, and is soon dating a waitress, then a librarian, then a radio talk show host. Each woman, however, lacks something he desires. It becomes clear that despite his serial monogamy, Desi is really a romantic, and wonders when he will find the love of his life in the rapidly changing city he lives in.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpozpiKRfi8>



Ning Ying's "Beijing Trilogy" include: *For Fun* (1992), *On the Beat* (1995), and *I Love Beijing*, (2000).

"I first set out to explore Beijing in 1992 with '*For Fun*, a comedy about disappearing traditional ways of life. In 1995, with the black-humored *On the Beat* I focused on the emerging new reality and the difficulty of coping with it. In *I Love Beijing*, the magnitude of changes shaping our lives and the anxieties of the new generation are represented in a rhapsody form, through the eyes of a young, restless taxi driver."

<https://niemanreports.org/articles/woman-with-a-movie-camera/>

CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON — 2000 (120 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=4579

Based on Wo Hu Zang Long by Wang Dulu. Set in 19th-century China, two master warriors are faced with their greatest challenge when the treasured Green Destiny sword is stolen. A young aristocratic woman prepares for an arranged marriage, but soon reveals her superior fighting talents and her romantic past.

As each warrior battles for justice, they come face-to-face with their worst enemy, and the enduring power of love.

Education About Asia article for teachers: <https://www.asianstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/crouching-tiger-hidden-dragon.pdf>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xPC11EJ6Mg>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/crouching-tiger-hidden-dragon>



BEIJING BICYCLE — 2000 (113 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=6981

Beijing: young men in packs, machismo, class divisions, violence, and indifference. Guei arrives from the country: toothbrushes, hotel foyers, and Qin, a rich neighbor in high heels, dazzle him. He gets a job as a messenger. The company issues him a bike, which he must pay for out of his wages. When it is stolen, Guei hunts for it. A student, Jian, has it; for him, it's the key to teen society - with his pals and with Xiao, a girl he fancies. Guei finds the bike and stubbornly tries to reclaim it in the face of great odds. But for Jian to lose the bike would mean humiliation. The two young men - and the people around them - are swept up in the youths' desperation.



Curriculum unit (14 pages):

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/publications/lessonplans/chinesefilm_summerinstitute/Beijing%20Bicycle%20team%20version.pdf

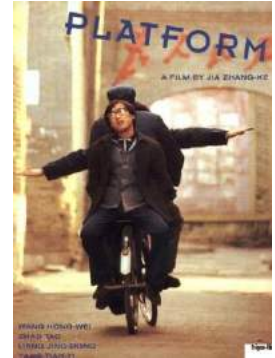
Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ro-pMg35mLM>

PLATFORM — 2000 (154 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platform_\(2000_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platform_(2000_film))

Platform is a 2000 Chinese film written and directed by Jia Zhangke.

The film starts in 1979 in the wake of the Cultural Revolution. A theatre troupe of young adults in Fenyang performs state-approved material. The troupe includes Cui Minliang and his friends, Yin Ruijuan, Zhang Jun, and Zhong Ping. Zhang and Zhong are together. Cui asks Yin if she is his girlfriend, but she replies that she is not. The troupe leaves their hometown and travels throughout the country for several years during the 1980s. Yin stays behind in Fenyang and becomes a tax collector. The authorities find out about the illegal sexual relationship between Zhang and Zhong, and Zhong then leaves the group, never to return. As China undergoes massive social changes, the troupe alters their performances and starts to play rock music. They eventually return to Fenyang. Cui, jaded by his years on the road, reunites with Yin.



Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X92BU-BwQrI>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/platform>



NOT ONE LESS — 1999 (106 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_reviewavailable.html?biblioId=4156

Not One Less is a touching film that calls for some reflection in order to appreciate the nature and plight of a fair number of school children in China's countryside today. For Y50 (\$6 U.S.) thirteen-year-old Wei Minzhi is hired to keep thirty-odd kids in school for a month while the old village teacher takes leave to visit his ailing mother. Wei herself has just finished grade school and has no idea how to teach. All her thoughts are on getting paid, and when she suspects that she might not be, she chases after the village head and old teacher demanding payment. The two promise to pay her after thirty days, and if no more school kids drop out of school, Wei will get an extra ten-yuan bonus. It is this added 'bonus' sum that gives Wei focus. She will make sure that there will be "not one less." ... The cast comes from the towns and villages in Hebei, where the film was shot. Wei, the village head, the old school master, the head of the TV station, the obtuse gate guard in the city, and the village kids all more or less play the roles they have in real life. Zhang Yimou's ability to guide this assemblage in acting out this simple tale gives *Not One Less* an authenticity that is rare in cinema today.

This film will probably work best with a middle school audience. Younger school children may not be able to follow the story via the subtitles, while high school students might be looking for something with more action and romance. Middle school students would likely be fascinated by the differences they see, yet feel a link to Wei.



Curriculum ideas: <http://www.eagle.pitt.edu/node/282>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNsF9YWoeII>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/not-one-less>

THE ROAD HOME — 1999 (89 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=6217

Directed by Zhang Yimou, *The Road Home* was based on the novel *Remembrance* by Bao Shi. As a son helps his mother arrange for the burial of his father in the traditional Chinese custom of his mother's village, the beautiful and touching story of his parent's courtship unfolds. His father was from the city and came to his mother's village to become the schoolmaster. In the days of arranged marriages, the son discovers that his parents' marriage was the first marriage based on love.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48ivIU6Szok>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-road-home-1999>



SHOWER — 1999 (92 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=4540

Shenzhen businessman, Da Ming, goes home to Beijing when he thinks his father has died. He finds his father hard at work at the family's bathhouse (the false message was a ruse of Da's mentally-handicapped, exuberant brother, Er Ming, to get Da home). Da stays a couple days, observing his father being social director, marriage counselor, and dispute mediator for his customers and a boon companion to Er. Da is caught between worlds: the decaying district of his childhood and the booming south where he now lives with a wife who's not met his family. When Da realizes his father's health is failing and the district is slated for razing, he must take stock of family and future.



Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcwZfUMDB0w>

EAST PALACE, WEST PALACE — 1999 (90 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Palace,_West_Palace

East Palace, West Palace is a film directed by Zhang Yuan based on a short story by the cult writer Wand Xiaobo. The film was shot in the spring of 1996 when it was smuggled out of China for post-production in France.

In China, homosexuality isn't illegal, but homosexuals are routinely persecuted by police and arrested for "hooliganism". The film focuses on a young gay writer called A-Lan who, being attracted to a young policeman named Xiao Shi, manages to have himself arrested and interrogated for a whole night. His life-story which he tells during the interrogation reflects the general repression of the Chinese society. Xiao Shi's attitude shifts from the initial revulsion to fascination and, finally, to attraction.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXY3pb8sXnw>

Stream with Ads: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/east-palace-west-palace>



LUNAR ECLIPSE — 1999 (95 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lunar_Eclipse_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lunar_Eclipse_(film))

Lunar Eclipse is the directorial debut from Sixth Generation director Wang Quan'an. It is also the feature film debut of Wang's most frequent collaborator/muse Yu Nan. Unlike his next two films, which focus on rural communities, *Lunar Eclipse* is an urban drama following the wife of a newlywed couple who becomes mesmerized by an amateur photographer who claims to have once been in love with a woman who looked just like her.

Stream film here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MycwIZfGBcc>

SEVENTEEN YEARS — 1999 (90 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventeen_Years_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventeen_Years_(film))

This 1999 film directed by Zhang Yuan takes place in and around the city of Tianjin, in northeastern China. Two divorced singles marry, each bringing a daughter into their new home. Xiaolan short-haired is fiercely independent and wishes to work in a factory after she graduates from high school. Her stepsister, Xiaoqin is more intellectual, and wishes to enter a university. After a dispute over a mere 5 yuan that Xiaoqin accuses Xiaolan of stealing, Xiaolan hits her stepsister over the head. To the surprise of everyone, Xiaoqin succumbs to the injury and dies and Xiaolan is led to jail.

The film then cuts seventeen years into the future. Xiaolan has been selected as one of the lucky inmates allowed a furlough during the New Year holiday. At the same time, a young prison guard, Chen Jie is calling her mother to say that she will soon be returning home for the holiday. While waiting for the inmates to be picked up by their families, Chen Jie notices that soon only Xiaolan remains. In an act of charity, Chen Jie offers to help Xiaolan return home. Upon arriving at her old apartment, however, both women discover that the home has long since been torn down, and Xiaolan's parents moved to another part of the city. Chen Jie, however, is now determined that Xiaolan will spend the holiday with her family and the two set out in search of parents who may not want to see their only daughter...

Review: <http://www.vcinemashow.com/seventeen-years-china-1999/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1jIEGaULY4>

A BEAUTIFUL NEW WORLD — 1999 (97 MINUTES)

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0191002/plotsummary?ref=tt_ov_pl

A satirical comedy about a country bumpkin who goes to the big city and ends up teaching the cynical city folk a few lessons about basic human decency. The hero leaves home for the first time to go to Shanghai, to collect his lottery prize - a brand new apartment. However, when he arrives, he is told by the developers that his apartment block will take a year and a half to complete. He decides to find a job in Shanghai and wait for his apartment to materialize...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npisG-S8TwY>



XIU XIU: THE SENT DOWN GIRL — 1998 (100 MINUTES)

https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/xiu_xiu_the_sent_down_girl

Xiu Xiu: The Sent Down Girl is a 1998 Chinese drama film directed by Joan Chen in her directorial debut, who co-wrote the screenplay with Geling Yan. Based on Yan's 1981 short story *Celestial Bath*, the film is set in the 1970s. During the Cultural Revolution in China, Mao Zedong's regime sends countless adolescents, including a bright young girl named Xiu Xiu (Lu Lu), to rural lands in order to participate in various kinds of physical labor. Xiu Xiu is torn away from her caring relatives and close friends to live and work with

Lao Jin (Lopsang), a rancher. Though he treats Xiu Xiu kindly, she yearns for her old life and eventually turns to a degrading life of prostitution in hopes of earning the means to return home.

Review: <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/film/050799xiu-film-review.html>

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/440812944>

POSTMEN IN THE MOUNTAINS — 1998 (90 MINUTES)

<http://alibi.com/film/7522/Postmen-in-the-Mountains.html>

The story, at its heart, is one of understanding and reconciliation between father and son. The two characters, never mentioned by name, are played with extraordinary subtlety by Teng Rugan (*Red Sorghum*) and Liu Ye (*Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress*). Dad, it seems, has spent most of his adult life away from his family, trudging through steep mountain passes and handing out mail to strangers. Sonny boy, although mindful of his father's sacrifice, can't help but feel a little resentment for the father he never got to know.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-5jtrc3vvo>

MULAN — 1998 (88 MINUTES)

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120762/>

This retelling of the old Chinese folktale is about the story of a young Chinese maiden who learns that her weakened and lame father is to be called up into the army in order to fight the invading Huns. Knowing that he would never survive the rigours of war in his state, she decides to disguise herself and join in his place. Unknown to her, her ancestors are aware of this and to prevent it, they order a tiny, disgraced dragon, Mushu to join her in order to force her to abandon her plan. He agrees, but when he meets Mulan, he learns that she cannot be dissuaded and so decides to help her in the perilous times ahead.

Mulan is a girl, the only child of her honored family. When the Huns invade China, one man from every family is called to arms. Mulan's father, who has an old wound and cannot walk properly, decides to fight for his country and the honor of his family though it is clear that he will not survive an enemy encounter. Mulan, who just got rejected by the matchmaker because she had set her on fire, decides to prove that she is worth something and steals away to fit her father's place in the Chinese army. She prays to her family's ancestors for protection and luck before leaving as a man in her father's armor with her family's horse. The ancestors awake and decide to send Mushu, a little dishonored dragon to aid Mulan in her quest. Weeks later, Mulan and the other troopers have survived the training camp and are on the way north to stop the huns. After being spotted and pursued by the enemies, an impass situation in the mountains forces Mulan to come up with an idea. But then, her real gender will no longer be a secret. She decides to risk everything in order to save China. The Fa family's only child, tomboy Mulan, fails to fulfill a Chinese girl's traditional duty as desirable bride. When the empire mobilizes a man from every family to fight the invading Huns, Mulan fears her father, an honorable veteran, is no longer up to fighting and joins in his place, masquerading as fictitious son Fa Ping. The ancestors designate the mighty stone dragon as her magical protector, but only eager baby-dragon Mushu actually goes. When they reach the front, the Huns have already wiped out the regular army. Now the novice company must save China or perish honorably.

Teacher Guide: <https://teachwithmovies.org/mulan/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsAniqGowKE>



KUNDUN — 1997 (134 MINUTES)

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0119485/>

The Tibetans refer to the Dalai Lama as 'Kundun', which means 'The Presence'. He was forced to escape from his native home, Tibet, when communist China invaded and enforced an oppressive regime upon the peaceful nation of Tibet. The Dalai Lama



escaped to India in 1959 and has been living in exile in Dharamsala ever since. In 1937, in a remote area of Tibet close to the Chinese border, a two-year-old child is identified as the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, the compassionate Buddha. Two years later, the child is brought to Lhasa where he is schooled as a monk and as head of state amidst the color and pageantry of Tibetan culture. The film follows him into adulthood: when he is 14, the Chinese invade Tibet and he is forced into a shaky coalition government; he travels to China to meet with a cynical Mao; and, finally, in 1959, ill and under siege, he flees to India.



Teacher Guide: <https://teachwithmovies.org/kundun/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UePpB9Qatnw>

See *In Search of Kundun* with Martin Scorsese (1998). This 85-minute documentary follows Scorsese as he plans and shoots this film and includes his audience with HHDL.

Rent:

<https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/in-search-of-kundun-with-martin-scorsese>

SEVEN YEARS IN TIBET — 1997 (136 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Years_in_Tibet_\(1997_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Years_in_Tibet_(1997_film))

In the film, Harrer (Pitt) and fellow-Austrian Peter Aufschnaiter (Thewlis) are mountaineering in 1930s British India. When World War II begins in 1939, their German citizenship results in their imprisonment in a prisoner-of-war camp in Dehradun in the Himalayas. In 1944, Harrer and Aufschnaiter escape the prison and cross the border into Tibet, traversing the treacherous high plateau. There, after initially being ordered to return to India, they are welcomed at the holy city of Lhasa and become absorbed into an unfamiliar way of life. Harrer is introduced to the 14th Dalai Lama, who is still a boy, and becomes one of his tutors. During their time together, Heinrich becomes a close friend to the young spiritual leader. Harrer and Aufschnaiter stay in the country until the Battle of Chamdo in 1950.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/seven-years-in-tibet-1997>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m9a_7WFcPII

GOING TO SCHOOL WITH DAD ON MY BACK — 1997 (90 MINUTES)

<http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/going-to-school-with-dad-on-my-back/>

When insufficient funds force a widowed Chinese father to choose between sending either his son or his daughter to school, he sends his son, Shiwa, and keeps his daughter at home to work the fields. But after Shiwa places first in a national chemistry competition, he faces an equally tough choice between his studies and his family. The supporting cast includes Yan Danchen, Jiang Hualin and Qiang Zhao, with English narration by Eddie Eagle.

PICKPOCKET (XIAO WU) — 1997 (108 MINUTES)

<https://www.newyorker.com/goings-on-about-town/movies/pickpocket-xiao-wu>

From the modest yet precise opening sequence of this drama, from 1997, the Chinese director Jia Zhangke—in his first feature film—displays an incisive mastery of political symbolism. As the title character, Xiao Wu (Wang Hongwei), boards a bus and slips his fingers around a stranger's wallet, he observes a portrait of Mao dangling from the rearview mirror; minutes later, he hears a loudspeaker blare an official call for "self-denunciation." Crime, in Jia's view, starts at the top and spreads through Chinese society with a blankly ordinary enormity, at the price of nothing less than its citizens' souls. Xiao Wu's quietly arrogant marginality contrasts with the government-ratified success of his nouveau-riche brother, Xiao Yong, whose wedding makes the local news. In desperate solitude, the pickpocket pursues a relationship with a call girl (Hao

Hongjian), who is practicing her own defiant deceptions. Jia's restrained yet fierce X-ray of the ills of modern China also evokes a calm, intimate compassion for its struggling survivors.

Seeing China Through Film (Jia Zhangke discussing *Pickpocket* 24 years later) 10/21/21 (60 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-b8CIW291s>

Rent: <https://www.criterionchannel.com/xiao-wu>



THE KING OF MASKS — 1996 (101 MINUTES)

...The central narrative of the film is built around the resolution of the King of the Masks' need to find a male heir and his inability to find one. The problem arises because of the old man's strict adherence to tradition. The art of the *King of Masks* has been handed down for generations following two rules: First, that the art be taught to no one outside of the family, and second, that it be passed on to a male. Indeed, it is his strong desire to follow this tradition that leads him to purchase an heir from a slave-trader in the first place. It was his misfortune, we are at first led to believe, that he ended up purchasing a "worthless" girl. Yet, in the end, the girl proves to be not so worthless after all, saving the "King of the Masks" life through a desperate act of filiality. The beauty and devotion of this act allows the old man to see that tradition must yield to filiality...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDwo1XKW0Fs>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-king-of-masks>

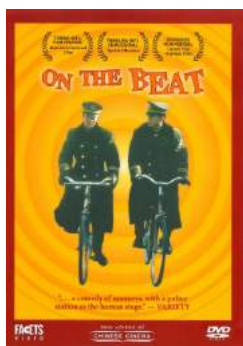
Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/359850>

BLUSH — 1996 (115 MINUTES)

<https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1996/06/07/000051.html?pagenumber=62>

Watching Li Shaohong's film *Blush*, it is easy to imagine how Hollywood might have schmaltzed up this story of a friendship between two women that survives in spite of overwhelming obstacles. A ready-made tear-jerker, with plot elements from *Gone With the Wind* and *Old Acquaintance*, *Blush* has almost everything you could ask for in a sudsy historical epic: a sweeping revolution, an anguished romantic triangle, prostitution, illegitimacy, a stay in a convent and a baby one woman doesn't want and the other adores.

But *Blush*, ... wasn't made in Hollywood. This two-hour Chinese film, based on a novel by Su Tong (who wrote "Raise the Red Lantern") is a sober and surprisingly unsentimental exploration of the way two different women adapt to traumatic social upheaval...



ON THE BEAT — 1995 (105 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_the_Beat_\(1995_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_the_Beat_(1995_film))

On the Beat consists mainly of a series of vignettes involving members of a local precinct in the Beijing Public Security Bureau. Filmed in the slow months of December, January, and February^[1] the members of the PSB find they have little in the way of substantive police work. Instead, they spend time (and manpower) on small incidents like the chasing of a possibly rabid dog, the arrest of a small-time con artist, and the reprimanding of a man who sells posters of a woman in a bathing suit.

Though the incidents seem small, the PSB treats each with deadly seriousness, often to comedic effect. The film culminates in the arrest and intense interrogation of a man who may have insulted a police officer. Realizing that they have no evidence, the officers bluster as they attempt to avoid losing face.

Review: <http://mondo70.blogspot.com/2009/06/on-beat-1995.html>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBKw-Ps2_d8

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhkiDVqE76E>

A MONGOLIAN TALE — 1995 (103 MINUTES)

<https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1997/04/03/416258.html?pageNumber=58>

...With dreamy tranquility, *A Mongolian Tale* tells of two children raised in an idyllic paradise. It progresses from the time when a boy named Beiyingpalica and girl named Someyer are taken in by the kindly, grandmotherly Nai Nai (Miss Dalarsurong) to when these childhood sweethearts are separated by their adult destinies.

The film cares about these characters, but it cares even more about the beauty of their surroundings. As in comparably elemental African films, *A Mongolian Tale* uses refreshingly plain storytelling and an immensely dignified elderly character to convey respect for tradition and wariness of a changing world. The nurturing figure of Nai Nai conjures an evocative past, but the film's open, beautiful setting plays as significant a role as its people do. This haunting and exotic landscape is lovingly presented as a contrast to the modern ways that threaten future generations...

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMLSyVfliHo>



IN THE HEAT OF THE SUN —1994 (140 MINUTES)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_the_Heat_of_the_Sun

In the Heat of the Sun is a 1994 Chinese film directed and written by Jian Wen. This was Jiang Wen's first foray into directing after years as a leading man. The film is based loosely on author Wang Shuo's novel *Wild Beast*.

The film is set in Beijing during the Cultural Revolution. It is told from the perspective of Ma Xiaojun, nicknamed Monkey (played by Xia Yu; some of Monkey's experiences mimic director Jiang's during the Revolution),^[1] who is a teenage boy at the time. Monkey and his friends are free to roam the streets of Beijing day and night because

the Cultural Revolution has caused their parents and most adults to be either busy or away and the school system is extremely nonfunctional.

Most of the story happens during one summer, so the main characters are even more free because there is no school. The events of that summer revolve around Monkey's dalliances with his roguish male friends, and his subsequent angst-filled crush on one of the older female characters, Mi Lan (Ning Jing). Mi Lan falls instead for Monkey's friend, Liu Yiku.

The film reflects Monkey, reminiscing as an older man, and his struggle with remembering his youth. Framed by his adult life in 1990s Beijing, portrayed in black and white, and presented in snippets of memory in color, the viewer is asked to question the accuracy of Monkey's memory and wrestle with the truth of the time.

Review: <https://supchina.com/2018/05/25/film-friday-in-the-heat-of-the-sun/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SeWN-SWLLbE>



ERMO — 1994 (107 MINUTES)

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0109738/>

Women's roles and consumerism in a Chinese village. The independent Ermo supports her son and disabled husband, rising early to make noodles she sells as a street vendor. A snooty neighbor has a TV, so Ermo wants a huge one. The neighbor's husband, Blindman, offers her transport to sell baskets she's made. After he gets her a city job making restaurant noodles and more money, their relationship becomes an affair. She's also selling her blood. When she discovers Blindman is subsidizing her pay, she throws the money at him and quits the job; he covers their affair and her reputation by getting beaten up over a woman in the city. When she has enough for the TV, she's exhausted.



TO LIVE — 1994 (132 MINUTES)

<https://www.asian-studies.org/EAA/EAA-Archives/8/3/501.pdf>

Based on the novel by Yu Hua. In the 40's, in China, Fugui is a gambler. His wife Jiazhen cannot stand it any longer and leaves. He loses everything, and creates puppet

shows to survive. Jiazhen comes back... Historical chronicle of the China from the 40's to the 80's, through the story of the family of Fugui and Jiazhen. Also a study of how the History can randomly affects every day's life. *To Live*, a film directed by Zhang Yimou, provides an overview of key events in twentieth-century China, moving from the 1940s to the 1970s. American high school

students will enjoy contemplating the effect of historical events on the intimate life of a single family. *To Live* opens the study of twentieth-century Chinese history in a creative and personal way. The film and this guide relate to the National Standards for World History in ways that

include: rivalry between the Nationalist Party and the Chinese Communist Party in the context of political fragmentation, economic transformation, and Japanese and European imperialism; Chinese Communist Party, 1936-1949 and civil war, Maoism after 1949 and how it changed China, the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution; population growth in China Analyzing the internal causes of Civil Strife in China; analyzing the goals and policies of the Nationalist and Communists in China; evaluating the effect of the Communist takeover in China in 1949.

Teacher Guides:

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/downloads/To_Live.pdf

<https://teachwithmovies.org/to-live/>

<https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/eaa/archives/to-live/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWYA8Hpm7fI>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/to-live-1994>

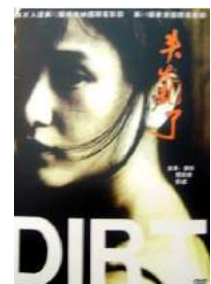
Encourage students to compare novel with film. Study guide:
<https://www.supersummary.com/to-live/summary/>
Interview with Yu Hua, Author of *To Live*
<https://www.asianstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/eaa-interview-with-yu-hua-author-of-to-live-huo-zhe.pdf>



DIRT — 1994 (124 MINUTES)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dirt_\(1994_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dirt_(1994_film))

The film follows a nurse, Ye Tong who also serves as the film's narrator. One day, Ye Tong reunites with some childhood friends, including Peng Wei, a disillusioned and long-haired young man who leads a local rock band. Ye finds herself attracted to Peng Wei's lifestyle, despite the admonitions of her police officer friend, Zheng Weidong. When Zheng is



injured by a mutual friend, Ye finds herself increasingly attracted to the strait-laced Zheng, while also finding herself attracted to Peng.



THE BLUE KITE — 1993 (138 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=1636

Rated as one of the ten best films of 1994, this powerful film made 'without permission' from the government traces the fate of a Beijing family and their neighbors during the 1950's and 60's. The political and social upheavals of the era is told from the perspective of Tietou, a young boy, and shows the adverse effects of party policy on various members of his family. Tietou's kite represents the only image of hope and freedom. It is directed by Tian Zhuangzhuang.

Trailer:

Curriculum unit (19 pages):



http://www.aems.illinois.edu/publications/lessonplans/chinesefilm_summerinstitute/BlueKiteGroup1.pdf

Stream for free on Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/spl/video/114603>



FAREWELL MY CONCUBINE — 1993 (157 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=2603

This complex story of passion and political intrigue won the Best Film Award at Cannes and is an ambitious historical epic of China in the 20th century. It follows the enduring friendship between two opera stars in old Beijing. As they prosper, the political upheavals of war and revolution take their toll. When a young prostitute threatens their professional and personal union, it becomes just one of many trials which test the enduring strength of art and love that bind these two men.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cC-SLiRnJE>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/farewell-my-concubine>



BEIJING BASTARDS — 1993 (95 MINUTES)

<https://www.timeout.com/movies/beijing-bastards>

This is a film without precedent in Chinese cinema: a seemingly free-form portrait of rock-generation kids in the city, its own quest for a structure mirroring their search 'for something to help them live'. One broken relationship provides the overall frame (a young guy named Karzi searches for the pregnant girlfriend who has left him), but half a dozen other characters also clamor for the film's attention, chief among them Cui Jian, China's rock pioneer, who plays himself and contributes several songs. Zhang Yuan has an acute feel for street-

level realities and gets very close to these kids blowing their lives on drink, dope and petty squabbles. Not exactly a blank generation, but they sure do look lost.

SupChina Review: <https://supchina.com/2019/08/02/beijing-bastards-an-unsavory-portrait-of-90s-beijing-with-cui-jian/>

Stream entire movie here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=9&v=X2nYdij2Khc&feature=emb_logo

FOR FUN — 1992 (97 MINUTES)

<https://www.yimovi.com/en/movies/for-fun>

To fill the emptiness that recent retirement has thrust upon him, Old Han, a recently retired caretaker and backstage assistant at the Beijing Opera Academy, conceives of a new role for himself as the manager of a raggle-taggle troupe of elderly operatic amateurs whom he encounters in a Beijing park. Enthused with the possibility of turning them into serious contenders at the New Year competition, he negotiates for a place to rehearse. The rehearsals, however, become a battlefield between Old Han's authoritarian, rule-bound approach to direction and the more relaxed attitude of his fellow retirees, in particular, that of the troupe's lead performer and opera buff, Qiao Wanyou who plays the female roles. The ensuing conflict between Old Han's humourless and dictatorial manner, on the one hand, and the hysterical, affected behaviour of the effeminate drama queen, on the other, heighten the film's dramatic tension, as Old Han's imperious barrage of stage directions reaches apoplectic levels as the troupe compete in the local talent show.

Clips and more: <https://www.yimovi.com/en/movies/for-fun>



THE STORY OF QIUJU — 1992 (100 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=2531

The Story of Qiu Ju is a Chinese film directed by Zhang Yimou (*Ju Dou*, *Raise the Red Lantern*). Gong Li, who starred in the director's two previous movies, plays a stubborn and idealistic peasant woman who wants a wrong righted. She seeks redress from the Chinese bureaucracy after the village chief kicks her husband in the groin in this comedy of justice. As she is frustrated by each level of the hierarchy and travels farther and farther away from the countryside the viewer is also provided with a look at the changing Chinese society through the verite camera used in most scenes.

Education About Asia review:

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_reviewavailable.html?biblioId=2531

Curriculum unit (30 pages):

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/publications/lessonplans/chinesefilm_summerinstitute/Qiu_Ju.pdf

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOS2f3iQ_T4

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/the-story-of-qiu-ju>



RAISE THE RED LANTERN — 1991 (125 MINUTES)

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0101640/plotsummary>

China in the 1920's. After her father's death, nineteen-year-old Songlian is forced to marry Chen Zuoqian, the lord of a powerful family. Fifty-year-old Chen has already three wives, each tough, as their master's attention carries power, status and privilege. Each night Chen must decide with which wife to spend the night and a red lantern is lit in front of the house of his choice. And each wife schemes and plots to make sure it's hers. However, things get out of hand...

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/great-movie-raise-the-red-lantern-1990>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8kwb4qFrT4>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/raise-the-red-lantern>



JU DOU — 1990 (95 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0099902/>

Ju Dou directed by Zhang Yimou and Yang Fengliang takes place in the early 20th century in rural China. A woman married to the brutal and infertile owner of a dye mill in rural China conceives a boy with her husband's nephew but is forced to raise her son as her husband's heir without revealing his parentage in this circular tragedy. This tale of romantic and familial love in the face of unbreakable tradition is more universal than its setting.

Review: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/ju-dou-1991>

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5p_6plTrCM

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/ju-dou>



RED SORGHUM — 1987 (95 MINUTES)

<https://supchina.com/2018/10/05/film-friday-fifth-generation-of-chinese-filmmakers/>

The narrative is related by a nameless man, telling the tragic story of his grandma Jiu'er and how she came to meet his grandpa.

As a young woman, Jiu'er's poor father forces her into an arranged marriage, exchanging his daughter for a donkey. Jiu'er's husband Li Datou is an old leper, but he's also the owner of a wine distillery. In a vivid opening scene, Jiu'er is carried off in a red sedan chair, held by a group of cheerful, singing men. After coming into a sorghum field, the party is ambushed by a masked bandit, and Jiu'er is nearly abducted before one of the chair bearers rescues her. The man who saves her turns into her lover, and when Li Datou inexplicably dies, Jiu'er inherits the distillery and all the problems that come along with it.

The story of *Red Sorghum* is evocative of an old family legend or folktale, with some of the most gorgeous images you'll ever see on a movie screen. It was not only an important work for Zhang Yimou, now the best-known Chinese director in the world, but it also helped launch the careers of its two leads, Gong Li and Jiang Wen.

Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cmuh3Tgcp6U>

Stream entire film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-E31v5HJsCI>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/red-sorghum>



THE LAST EMPEROR — 1987 (163 MINUTES)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0093389/>

Bernardo Bertolucci's sweeping account of the life of Pu Yi (John Lone), the last emperor of China, follows the leader's tumultuous reign. After being captured by the Red Army as a war criminal in 1950, Pu Yi recalls his childhood from prison. He remembers his lavish youth in the Forbidden City, where he was afforded every luxury but unfortunately sheltered from the outside world and complex political situation surrounding him. As revolution sweeps through China, the world Pu Yi knew is dramatically upended.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4cH6g1wD5g>

KING OF THE CHILDREN — 1987 (110 MINUTES)

<https://www.timeout.com/movies/king-of-the-children>

An unschooled young man, one of the countless victims of Mao's Cultural Revolution, is laboring in the countryside when he is suddenly assigned to teach in a near-by village school. Gradually, he finds the confidence to ditch the Maoist textbook and encourage the barely literate kids to write about their own lives and feelings. At the same time, through a series of dream-like meetings with a young cowherd, he begins to sense the

possibilities of a life beyond the parameters of traditional education. There are echoes here of a film like *Padre Padrone*, but Chen Kaige's film is completely free of flabby humanist sentimentality. It takes its tonality from the harsh beauty of the Yunnan landscape of soaring forests and misty valleys: a territory of the mind where hard-edged realism blurs easily into hallucination. By Chinese standards, this is film-making brave to the point of being visionary. By any standards, this follow-up to *Yellow Earth* and *The Big Parade* is also something like a masterpiece.

EMPIRE OF THE SUN — 1987 (154 MINUTES)

Directed by Steven Spielberg, *Empire of the Sun*—based on J. G. Ballard's autobiographical novel—tells the story of a boy, James Graham, whose privileged life is upturned by the Japanese invasion of Shanghai, December 8, 1941. Separated from his parents, he is eventually captured, and taken to Soo Chow confinement camp, next to a captured Chinese airfield. Amidst the sickness and food shortages in the camp, Jim attempts to reconstruct his former life, all the while bringing spirit and dignity to those around him. It was nominated for numerous awards at the 60th Academy Awards in 1988.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NsU11wxFMbY>

Rent: <https://www.justwatch.com/us/movie/empire-of-the-sun>

Why Empire of the Sun Is a Much Better Movie Than You Remember (1/27/21)
<https://hotcom.com/en/movies/news/top-com-why-empire-of-the-sun-is-a-much-better-movie-than-you-remember/>

A GIRL FROM HUNAN — 1986 (110 MINUTES)



<https://www.cinemas-asie.com/en/archives-en/item/3704-a-girl-from-hunan.html>

In 1910, in a village in Hunan, a wedding is being celebrated according to the tradition: twelve-year-old Xiao Xia is being married to two-year-old Chun Guan. The two children grow up as brother and sister. Xiao Xiao, who is now a young woman, falls in love with Hua Gou, a seasonal worker. Her husband is still a boy, she gives in to temptation. The very day she tells Hua Gou that she is pregnant, a young widow is drowned, and her lover beaten as per the burden of traditions. Hua Gou does not feel brave enough and decides to flee, abandoning Xiao Xiao. She is first rejected by her family but finally she is forgiven. She

brings up her son who, according to the tradition, is married as soon as he is weaned. Later, when he is back from the city where he studied, he rebels and refuses his forced marriage.

Directed by Xei Fei and Lan U. *A Girl from Hunan* is an intimist film about a theme considered as taboo. Women have been overwhelmed under the weight of traditions and yet, they keep them alive... In that sense, it is a pessimistic film.

Review: <https://www.nytimes.com/1988/03/04/movies/film-girl-from-hunan.html>

Clip:

https://search.alexanderstreet.com/preview/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cvideo_work%7C2053508

THE HORSE THIEF — 1986 (88 MINUTES)

<https://supchina.com/2018/10/05/film-friday-fifth-generation-of-chinese-filmmakers/>

The Horse Thief is one of the most difficult — and fascinating — movies to come out of the Fifth Generation. Director Tian Zhuangzhuang has made several movies about

China's ethnic minorities, and *The Horse Thief* is an ethnographic study of the old Tibetan way of life, complete with Buddhist rituals and sky burials. There's barely any dialogue, and the cast is made up of non-professional actors, giving the movie a documentary-like feel.

Set in 1923, *The Horse Thief* is centered on Norbu, a Tibetan man who steals and sells horses to provide for his family. Everybody in Norbu's community knows about his stealing, and when he's finally confronted by his clan's elders, Norbu and his wife and son are exiled. Their lives in the harsh Tibetan mountains now get even harder, and Norbu's son soon falls sick and dies. After his wife gives birth again, Norbu is determined to change, but finds it difficult to feed his family living an honorable life.

Clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_dEk4iE_AA&t=18s

Stream the entire movie here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZSjjOQUtHY>

BLACK CANNON INCIDENT —1985 (96 MINUTES)

<https://supchina.com/2018/10/05/film-friday-fifth-generation-of-chinese-filmmakers/>

This was the first satire to come out of China's movie industry since the late 1950s, skewering the absurdities and paranoia of the Chinese bureaucracy. It follows a man named Zhao Shu xin, who works as an engineer and German interpreter at a mining company. Shuxin is a loner obsessed with Chinese chess, carrying a set of pieces wherever he goes. After coming back from a business trip, Shuxin discovers that his black cannon piece is gone. Anxious, Shuxin rushes to the post office and sends a telegram, asking the hotel he stayed at to find it.

The innocent message is completely misinterpreted by the authorities, who believe the black cannon is a weapon. While the police secretly investigate the mysterious "Black Cannon Incident," Shuxin is replaced at his post without even knowing what he's done wrong. For a ridiculous misunderstanding, Shuxin and his company suffer a series of misfortunes that could easily have been avoided. It's a dark and dry comedy, and Huang would later continue the story with *Dislocation*, a sci-fi sequel in which Shuxin creates a robot clone to do his job for him.

Clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5-LQ-i9MRy>



YELLOW EARTH — 1984 (89 MINUTES)

http://www.aems.illinois.edu/searchresults_detail.html?biblioId=4574

Based on Ke Lan's *Echo in the Deep Valley*, Chen Kaige's *Yellow Earth* focuses on the story of a Communist soldier who is sent to the countryside to collect folk songs for the Communist Revolution. There he stays with a peasant family and learns that the happy songs he was sent to collect do not exist; the songs he finds are about hardship and suffering. He returns to the Army, but promises to come back for the young girl, Cuiqiao, who has been spellbound by his talk of the freedom women have under Communist rule and who wants to join the Communist Army. According to Australian scholar Bonnie McDougall, the success of *Yellow Earth* "constituted altogether such an event in Chinese film history that the Chinese film world has never been the same since."

Book Excerpt:

<https://books.google.com/books?id=b5URtH1dWFkC&pg=PA17#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIhuNRtGHtQ>

Interview:
Chen Kaige 40
years after the
release of
Yellow Earth
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CpMICW0V0mM>

ONE AND EIGHT – 1983 (90 MINUTES)

<https://supchina.com/2018/10/05/film-friday-fifth-generation-of-chinese-filmmakers/>

Set during the Second Sino-Japanese War, *One and Eight* is the story of nine men who are kept as prisoners by the Communist Eighth Route Army. One is an innocent soldier accused of being a traitor, and the others are a collection of criminals, including bandits, deserters, and a spy. With a group like this, none of these guys are anybody's idea of a patriot. When a battle erupts with Japanese forces though, the group's courage is challenged, forcing them to fight the enemy and redeem themselves.



THE TRUE STORY OF AH Q — 1981 (125 MINUTES)

<https://www.cinemas-asie.com/en/archives-en/item/3706-the-true-story-of-ah-q.html>

Ah Q is an unsuccessful man who yet tries to find happiness by turning his failure into positive events. He has the capacity to easily adapt himself and always finds a good reason to cheer up. Everyone despises him. The Zhaos, a rich family in the village, forbid him to

wear the same name as theirs, a Chinese man deprives him of revolution, a nun predicts he will die without descendant, and his master Wu Ma Bai dares slap him one day. Ah Q has never been with a woman, and when he tries to seduce the servant of the Zhao family, he painfully fails. When Revolution starts in 1911, the naive man thinks that life will radically change, that everyone will love him and that he will be able to do everything he wants. He rebels and is sent to jail. He is even exhibited. Before dying, he shouts "In twenty years, another hero will come!"

Ah Q is the universal candid man, remarkably incarnated by the actor Yan Shunkai. *The True Story of Ah Q* is the second faithful adaptation from Lu Xun's short story. It was selected in 1982 for the official competition in Cannes Festival.

CHINA FILM RESOURCES

JUSTWATCH (search where to stream/rent a film)

<https://www.justwatch.com/us>

KANOPY (search Chinese film/documentaries for free streaming)

<https://spl.kanopy.com/> for Seattle Public Library card OR for a different home library check www.kanopy.com

THE STREAMABLE (search where to stream/rent a film)

<https://thestreamable.com/sg>

CHINESE INDEPENDENT FILM ARCHIVE (CIFA)

<https://www.chinaindiefilm.org/films/>

DGENERATE FILMS

<https://www.dgeneratefilms.com/>

ASIAN EDUCATIONAL MEDIA SERVICE (AEMS) DATABASE

<http://www.aems.illinois.edu/>

CAMP ASIAN MOVIE PULSE

<https://asianmoviepulse.com/about-us/>

THE INTERNET MOVIE DATABASE (IMDb)

<https://www.imdb.com/>

CHINA-UNDERGROUND MOVIE DATABASE

<https://china-underground.com/>

CHINA FILM INSIDER (CFI)

<http://chinafilminsider.com/category/news/>

DOCUMENTARY EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (DER)

<https://www.der.org/films/overview/>

NETFLIX (search Chinese film/documentaries)

<https://www.netflix.com/>

MODERN CHINESE LITERATURE AND CULTURE (MCLC RESOURCE CENTER)

<https://u.osu.edu/mclc/journal/>

LETTERBOXD: CHINESE INDEPENDENT DOCUMENTARIES ETC

<https://letterboxd.com/godspeed/list/chinese-independent-documentaries/>

<https://letterboxd.com/squirt/list/sinophone-cWOWinema/>

ICARUS FILMS

<http://icarusfilms.com/>

JAVA FILMS

https://javafilms.fr/?s=China&post_type=film&x=0&y=0

RADII

<https://radiichina.com/category/videos/>

ASSOCIATION FOR CHINESE ANIMATION STUDIES

<http://acas.ust.hk/>

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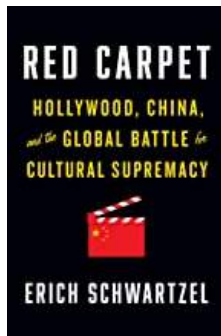
<https://supchina.com/tag/film-friday/>

EDUCATION ABOUT ASIA FILM REVIEWS

<https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/ea/>

BOOKS

Published 2000 - 2022



Red Carpet: Hollywood, China, and the Global Battle for Cultural Supremacy

Erich Schwartzel / 2022

SUMMARY OF RED CARPET: An Eye-Opening Account of the Contest between U.S., China and the Global Battle for Cultural Supremacy

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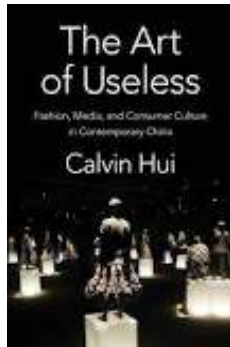
Contemporary Chinese Cinema and Visual Culture: Envisioning the Nation (Global East Asian Screen Cultures)

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Chinese Film Classics, 1922–1949
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Close-ups and Long Shots in Modern Chinese Cinemas
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Locating Taiwan Cinema in the Twenty-First Century
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Hollywood Chinese: The Chinese in American Feature Films
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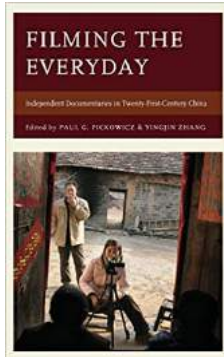
Animation in China: History, Aesthetics, Media by Sean Macdonald
Hollywood Made in China
Aynne Kokas / 2018

Chinese Stardom in Participatory Cyberculture
Dorothy Wai Sim Lau / 2018

Zhang Yimou: Globalization and the Subject of Culture
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China in the Mix: Cinema, Sound, and Popular Culture in the Age of Globalization
Ying Xiao / 2017



Filming the Everyday: Independent Documentaries in Twenty-First-Century China

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Jia Zhangke Speaks Out: The Chinese Director's Texts on Film

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