

HAF 13 Naive Melody



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Taiwan

GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME: Comedy, Romance | Digital Format | Mandarin | 90 mins

DIRECTOR:

Arvin CHEN

PRODUCER:

Aileen LI

HAF GOALS:

Funds, Co-producers, Sales agents, Pre-sales

BUDGET:

US\$ 800,000

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2013 *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?*

2010 *Au Revoir Taipei*

ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS

An introverted young man decides to visit a brothel and finally lose his virginity, but instead falls into a strange and complicated relationship with the brothel's much older Mama-san.

SYNOPSIS

Xiao-Hong is an introverted young man who has always lacked confidence with women, having grown up with an extremely controlling mother. On the eve of his 28th birthday, the desperate Xiao-Hong decides to finally lose his virginity at a brothel. Unable to do anything with the young woman arranged for him, Xiao-Hong flees in shame, but is stopped by the friendly Mama-san of the brothel, Mama Lan. As she tries to console him, they make an unexpected connection with each other. Xiao-Hong returns to the brothel again, but now to spend time with Mama Lan, to whom he is surprisingly drawn and completely comfortable around. Mama Lan takes pity on the sweet but naive Xiao-Hong, teaching him about women and life, as well as about the complications of the world. Mama Lan finds in Xiao-Hong a surrogate for her own disturbed, drug-dealing son from previous marriage, while also being reminded of happier times in her own youth. But as they grow closer and their relationship becomes stranger and more intimate (blurring maternal, romantic, and eventually sexual lines), Xiao-Hong and Mama Lan must decide if they can remain a part of each other's lives.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

It always has been interesting to me that Taiwanese culture (and perhaps Asian culture in general) is so mother-dominated, with many young men recently being referred to as "Mama's Boys" — the implication being that they are totally reliant on their mothers and unable to function in society independently. Having known several of these "Mama's Boys," I was inspired to think of a story that could address this phenomenon from a different angle. What if a young man has been so controlled and dominated by his mother his entire life that he lacked the confidence and social skills to connect with any woman other than someone who was his mother's age? Through their unique relationship, I want to blur the boundaries of platonic, romantic, and maternal love, while telling a latent coming-of-age and mid-life crisis story at the same time. The young man gets the life experience he needs, while the older woman gets a pure affection that has long since passed her by. Like one of my favorite films, *Harold and Maude*, this film will also use an unconventional relationship between two unlikely lovers to create a mixture of comedy, romance, and melancholy.

DIRECTOR

Arvin CHEN

Arvin Chen has a MFA from USC's film production program. His graduate short film *Mei* (2007) won the Silver Bear at the Berlin Film Festival. In 2010, Arvin made his first feature, *Au Revoir Taipei*. It won the NETPAC Award at the Berlin Film Festival and was one of the highest grossing Taiwanese films that year. In 2013, Arvin made his second feature *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?* again premiered in Berlin and was in competition at the Tribeca Film Festival. He is currently developing his next two projects, *Stride* and *Women on the Run*.

PRODUCER

Aileen LI

Aileen Li has a Master's Degree in Law and Telecommunication Policy from Northwestern University. The first feature film she produced, *Formula 17* (2004), was the highest grossing Taiwanese film that year. She also produced *The Heirloom* (2005), *The Shoe Fairy* (2005) and *Catch* (2006). In recent years, she has produced acclaimed local films such as *Young Dudes* (2012), *When a Wolf Falls in Love with a Sheep* (2012), *Forêt Debussy* (2016), and *Ode to Time* (2016). She also coordinated shooting for several high-profile international productions, including Luc Besson's *Lucy* (2014), John Woo's *The Crossing* (2015) and Jackie Chan's *Bleeding Steel* (2017).

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Filmagic Pictures

Filmagic Pictures is a Taipei-based production company specializing in local films and international co-productions services. In 2008, they produced the first German/ Taiwan co-production, *Ghosted*, and in 2009 produced *Dream Walker* with PTS, which won Best International Short Film at Festival International de Films de Femmes Creteil. Filmagic has produced acclaimed local films such as *Young Dudes* (2012), *When a Wolf Falls in Love with a Sheep* (2012), *Forêt Debussy* (2016) and *Ode to Time* (2016). They coordinated shooting on several high-profile international productions, including Luc Besson's *Lucy* (2014), John Woo's *The Crossing* (2014), and Jackie Chan's *Bleeding Steel* (2017).