

## WIP A Another Brick on the Wall



**REGION:** China

**GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME:**

Documentary | Digital Format | Mandarin, Hebei Dialect | 120mins

**DIRECTOR:**

ZHANG Nan

**PRODUCER:**

CHUNG Wai-kit

QI Yu

**HAF GOALS:**

Sales agents, Pre-sales, Festival Screening

**BUDGET:** US\$ 295,730

**SECURED BUDGET:** US\$ 183,700

**DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY**

2018 *Stammering Ballad*

**ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS**

China is restoring the ruined Great Wall. As this historical project takes place, common people from different generations — young, middle-aged, and elderly — contend with higher powers and face old ghosts.

## SYNOPSIS

The film chronicles stories of common people's sacrifices for the restoration of a national landmark. The main story takes place in Panjiakou, a partially submerged section of the eastern part of the Great Wall of China. Zhichao was a rebellious young man inheriting the family homestead in Panjiakou. Social media dubbed the previously neglected wall into "The Underwater Dragon", attracting tourists and providing income for his impoverished family. Yet, Zhichao just wants to depart from the family obligation and start a new life. Jia is an old man deeply worried about his remaining years. His family business was destroyed by a mysteriously incident. Decades ago, his former village was submerged to construct the water reservoir. Jia stubbornly has moved back to live atop the waters, and fights to regain legal residential status. Zhu is a diligent engineer sent by the authorities to rescue Panjiakou from collapsing while dealing with a broken relationship with his daughter at home. He is fiercely opposed by Jia as the project will inevitably demolish his house, but is warmly hosted by Zhichao, who seizes business opportunity and change. As the underwater section is restored, the fate of these three people is altered irreversibly.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The film is a multi-arc story with the restoration of the ruined Great Wall as its backdrop. Surreal and enigmatic, our filming approach is observational cinéma vérité, providing an intimate look into the intertwining stories of three characters — Zhichao, Jia, and Zhu — along with other workers and inhabitants related to the two-year restoration project of the Panjiakou-Great Wall. As the restoration project moves from the slopes to the submerged section below, the livelihoods of our characters will increasingly be affected by powers beyond their control. Their conversations and interactions gradually reveal the price they have to pay for the Wall's restoration. Unable to change their fate, Zhichao and Jia have no choice but to relocate, just as the previous generation had done. Metaphorically, the characters are like individual bricks in the Great Wall: collectively belonging to a larger entity, but each with their own story to tell. Through them, we explore conflicts of China's traditional and modern values, conformity versus individuality, and the changing guard of generations. Poetically, there is a deeper meaning behind restoring a functionally obsolete, yet culturally important wall. Its derelict bricks rally the hearts of millions, while still requiring the sacrifice of a few.

## DIRECTOR

### ZHANG Nan

Majoring in TV Directing from Communication University of China, Zhang worked for China Central Newsreel & Film Group as director during 2011-2013. In 2014, he started his career as an independent filmmaker, launching a feature-length documentary project, *Stammering Ballad*, as his debut work. The film was officially selected for the 2018 International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) for world premiere, and was nominated for the NETPAC Award.

## **PRODUCER**

### **CHUNG Wai-kit**

As VICE China documentary producer during 2013-2016, Chung directed and produced over 30 short documentaries. He is the co-producer of Fairy Tales, which won Best Short Documentary Award of the 55th MIFF, Silver Prize of the 2016 Student Academy Award. In 2016-2019, he was the founder and executive producer of Arrow Factory, he has produced over 150 short documentary videos.

### **QI Yu**

Qi graduated from Sichuan Fine Art School (B.A.) and Architecture and Environment School of Sichuan University (M.A. Eng). Since 2014, she has been working with director Zhang Nan as producer for his feature-length documentary Stammering Ballad, My Dear Lines and many other documentary projects.

## **PRODUCTION COMPANY**

### **Arrow Factory**

Arrow Factory is an original non-fiction video brand, subordinated to jiemian.com. It aims at observing contemporary Chinese social phenomenon from a special stance, devoted to exploring China's stories with young and vivid perspectives.

### **Tencent Pictures**

This is wholly-owned by the leading internet enterprise Tencent, focusing on producing movies and television series.

### **Pango Pictures**

A cutting-edge documentary film making studio, it aims at producing indigenous Chinese images of reality and accelerating international co-producing activities between different cultures.