

WIP O The Neo-New Adventures



REGION: China

GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME:

Drama | Digital Format | Mandarin, Sichuan Dialect | 220mins

DIRECTOR:

QIU Jiongjiong

PRODUCER:

QIU Jiongjiong

DING Ningyuan

HAF GOALS:

Funds, Sales agents, Pre-sales, Festival Screening

BUDGET: US\$ 537,490

SECURED BUDGET: US\$ 310,648

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2015 *Mr. Zhang Believes*

2011 *My Mother's Rhapsody*

2010 *Madame*

2006 *The Moon Palace*

ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS

The top clown actor of 20th century Southern China is welcomed into the underworld following his death. Through him, in turn, the vivid history of the living is conjured up.

SYNOPSIS

On an evening in the 1980s, the foremost clown-actor of 20th century Sichuan opera, Qiu Fu, passed away in an accident and half-unwillingly sets off for the Ghost City under the escort of two underworld officials. Along the way, he met old friends. As they recalled the past, the earthly began to creep into the under.

Qiu Fu's life in opera unrolls against the backdrop of a centurial upheaval. The Neo-New Troupe, where he grew up and trained, was affiliated with the military. As power shifted, the troupe had to migrate onto a landscape so broken that only drifting fog could mend it. Despite having shared this unsettled destiny, which inescapably bore the stamp of war, famine and political turmoil, Qiu Fu became one of the best clown-actors in Sichuan. Yet, one day, he found himself clapped in a pigsty as a political revolution rages outside.

And outside the Ghost City, sitting among many familiar faces, Qiu Fu had a mandatory bowl of lethe soup to erase his memory. In love or hate, a heart that had ached so bitterly from the muffled and the inextricable can also be forgetful.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The story derives from the life of my grandfather, the Sichuan opera actor Qiu Fuxin. Having grown up in the enchanted atmosphere surrounding the troupe, I only see the opera from inside, with an anatomically dismembering, estranging view. Gait, faces, intonations... colors, odors, sounds... temperatures, humidity and alcohol. Actors and actresses become acts of the opera: bitter, mad and authentic. However, with every dirge played, a seat becomes empty.

In a fragmented history, memory dies as people pass away. With the scale and intricacy of history in mind, this film aims for revival instead of restoration. It opens crevices in time-spaces and brings together the earthly and the underworld with one mirroring the other. Through these cinematic crevices, people traverse history to continue their tottering, migrating lives.

Recalling the vitality of early cinema, with nourishment from silent films, the film has been artisanally produced: we built a tent-like studio on a deserted basketball court with painted flats, props, and costumes that speak of the art and the artful — shapeshifters, a plastic river, a hemp horse tail, and cotton clouds. The film offers neither prosaic speculations nor pompous abstinence, but a clown-actor's spirit and Dionysian temperament, reveling to exhaustion.

DIRECTOR

QIU Jiongjiong

Qiu Jiongjiong, contemporary artist and director, was born in Sichuan, China in 1977. Since 2006, he has experimented in documentary filmmaking while exploring cinematic language. His first three documentary features, *The Moon Palace* (2006), *Madame* (2010) and *My Mother's Rhapsody* (2011) were among the Best Ten Documentaries of the Year at the China Independent Film Festival. Supported by Sundance's Grant for Post-Production, his latest experimental documentary feature, *Mr. Zhang Believes* (2015) premiered at the Locarno International Film Festival and screened internationally at the Singapore IFF and MoMA's Doc Fortnight. *The Neo-New Adventures* is his first fiction feature.

PRODUCER

QIU Jiongjiong

(same as director)

DING Ningyuan

She has worked in the film industry and served for festivals for the past decade. *The Neo-new Adventures* is the feature film she has produced.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Heaven Pictures Hong Kong Culture & Media Co., Ltd.

Heaven Pictures Hong Kong Culture & Media Co., Ltd. was established in 2012. Focusing on cooperating with new filmmakers from China mainland, Hong Kong and Tai Wan. The principle of Heaven Pictures is to respect the film, respect the director for the purpose of supporting their free expression and the spirit of exploration of the film.

Uluka Productions

Qiu Jiongjiong's own production studio. *The Neo-New Adventures* will be the first film that the studio produces.