

THE VANISHING SPRING LIGHT

蔣婆婆的最後時光



DIRECTOR XUN YU

PRODUCER DANIEL CROSS AND TAO GU

PRODUCTION FINANCING ZHI GE YU AND FEI CHEN EDITOR TAO GU

STORY EDITOR DANIEL CROSS CINEMATOGRAPHY & SOUND XUN YU



西街故事之 - 蔣婆婆的最後時光

TALES OF WEST STREET - THE VANISHING SPRING LIGHT

SYNOPSIS

On a street set to vanish with redevelopment, a grandmother suffers a stroke and loses what little freedom she had. Conflict between her Children deepens at her bedside, prompting reflection on her past in a startling portrait of honesty in the face of death.

The first of a four-part series documenting the “ancient urban community” of West Street, **“The Vanishing Spring Light”** follows *Grandma Jiang* in her final days. The matriarch of an ordinary Chinese family, she has suffered a stroke after an accidental fall. As her health deteriorates, conflicts within the family begin to emerge. While Grandma Jiang is consumed by her illness, the family struggles to avoid collapse. **“The Vanishing Spring Light”** is a film about a family’s love and loss, obligation and attachment, guilt, transformation and destiny.



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TREATMENT

"Through the lens of a video camera, I attempt to document the simple lives on an ancient yet ordinary Chinese street, while undertaking an internal quest to comprehend life through documentary."

Xun Yu

Up until Xun Yu's first visit in 2008, the Street still preserved the residential and social structure of an ancient Chinese community. However it has been challenged by new values, mainly materialism, strongly in contrast with the residents' traditional understandings of life. Such struggles were experienced daily by the residents. While desperately trying to adapt to the new Chinese way of living, they and their families have been constantly placed with new challenges. Such transformation reflected the struggle of this ancient civilization in the modern era, which also became the grand backdrop of the film.



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TREATMENT

This documentary project is intended as a four-part series, each one focuses on an individual character and his/her family on the street. While blending tightly into each other's lives on the street as neighbors, they are facing their very own struggles in life. These four characters represent four generations of the residents on the street, as well as the four different phases of life according to the ancient Chinese metaphor: Birth, Adulthood, Aging and Dying.

“The Vanishing Spring Light” is the first of the series, a film about dying. During his two years stay on the street, Xun Yu became a very close friend with *Grandma Jiang* and her family. They kindly accepted him as a family member and allowed the same access of his camera into the very core of their lives, even at those most intimate and difficult moments. This supportive gesture from the family allows the film to obtain a privileged perspective, and the sincere interaction between the filmmaker and the protagonist has eventually transcended the boundary of a documentary.



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DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Xun Yu was born and raised in mainland China. He studied Film Production at the Arts University College in Bournemouth, U.K and recently earned a Master's Degree from Concordia University in Montreal. He initially worked as a cinematographer in both countries. During which time, he has gained valuable experience and credibility working on numerous critically acclaimed productions. **“The Vanishing Spring Light”** is his director debut.

His cinematography credits include award-winning films like “On the Way to the Sea” (2010, Top Ten Canadian Shorts by Toronto IFF; 2011 Prix Special Du Jury at Clermont-Ferrand, France, Official Selection at 2011 Sundance Film Festival & Yamagata Documentary IFF); “For Wendy” (2008, Best Cinematography at Student Showcase in Toronto IFF); “Singularity” (2008, Best Cinematography – Kodak Educational Award, North America)



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CREDITS

Characters in Order of Appearance

Grandma Jiang – Jiang Su-Hua
 Xiao Da – Da Wan-Bi
 “The Fifth” – Xiang Qian-Hong
 The Grand Daughter – Xiang Chen-Chen
 3rd Daughter – Xiang Jia-Rong
 2nd Daughter – Xiang Jia-Li
 4th Daughter – Xiang Shao-Jun
 Mr. Kou – Kou Shao-Xi
 Shao Su-Hua – Li Ke-Hua

Director
 Xun Yu “Fish”

Producer
 Daniel Cross
 Tao Gu

Production Financing
 Zhi Ge Yu
 Fei Chen

Editor
 Tao Gu

Story Editor
 Daniel Cross

Cinematography & Sound
 Xun Yu “Fish”

Production Coordinator
 Victor Arroyo

Post-Production Supervision
 Phil Hawes
 Emmet Henchey

Sound Re-recorder
 Tim Horlor

Color Correction
 Olivier Gossot

Subtitling
 Miriam Rose Waterman

Graphic Design
 Clauco Bermudez

Gratitude to

Yan Feng
 Ya Zhu Chen
 Feng Pan
 Aonan Yang
 Jian Zhou
 Li Jin
 Xiao Hua Zhong

Huai Yun Kou
 Jie Tian Chen
 Hua Yang
 Maureen Kennedy
 Marcus Von Holtzendorff
 Martin Duckworth
 Jacquelyn Mills

Geroge Bogardi
 Peter Rist
 Ian Roberton
 Roy Cross
 Bob Moore
 Halima Ouardiri
 Xi Feng

Marlene Millar
 Rene Daigle
 Olivia Ward
 Cheryl Williams
 Nathan Oliver
 Amely Jurgenliemk
 Amy Schwartz
 Marco N. L. Barahona

Eyesteel Films
 Concordia University – Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema
 Shanghai Tongji Urban Planning & Design Institute

Special thanks to all the West Street residents.
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EYESTEELFFILM

EyeSteelFilm is a film and interactive media company dedicated to using cinematic expression as a catalyst for social and political change. It was created to develop and create cinema that empowers people who are ignored by mainstream media, a mandate which has taken the company to explore projects, people and ideas around the world. EyeSteelFilm was founded through making films with the homeless community. Daniel Cross' gritty street trilogy (Danny Boy, 1993; The Street: a film with the homeless, 1996; SPIT: Squeegee Punks in Traffic, 2002) chronicled a generation of Canadians lost to social funding cuts, political apathy, alcoholism and drug use. These films provided a template for using engaged cinéma-vérité and interactivity for empowerment and change. Eyesteelfilm has since branched out internationally in a major way. A series of films chronicling modern life in China (Bone, 2005; Chairman George, 2006; Up the Yangtze, 2007) led to international acclaim and box office success, in particular for "Up the Yangtze", which grossed over 2 million USD in box office and won dozens of international awards. Building on this, Lixin Fan's Last Train Home (2009), won the Joris Ivens Award at IDFA 2009 and continues to receive international acclaim and awards almost 2 years after its initial release. Up the Yangtze director Yung Chang's next China project, China Heavyweight (projected 2012), is an official Canada-China co-production. Omar Majeed's Taqwacore: The Birth of Punk Islam introduced viewers to a young and vibrant muslim community in the United States and Pakistan. Halima Ouardiri's searing debut short film Mokhtar, recipient of awards in Dubai, Europe and North America, challenges preconceptions and the boundaries between custom and Islam.

Eyesteelfilm is currently in production on, among other projects, a feature documentary co-production (Canada-Sweden) set deep in the congolese Rainforest(Inkulal, projected 2012), and a series exploring humankind's co-evolution with fruit, shot

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