



Wed–Sat Apr 6–9

Jack H. Skirball Series

\$9 [students \$7, CalArts \$5]

Between Disorder and Unexpected Pleasures: Tales from the New Chinese Cinema

In recent years, independent Chinese cinema has experienced a virtual explosion. Digital media have allowed filmmakers to be bolder, more daring and to explore hybrid forms of documentary and fiction, or mix found and live footage while playing with novel formal strategies. Independent Chinese cinema has also come of age. Reaching beyond nostalgia and social protest, it plumbs surprising corners of Chinese reality with humor that is at times light, dark, saucy, dry, raunchy or conceptual. Expect the unexpected.

Wed Apr 6 | 8:30 pm

Zhu Wen: *Thomas Mao (Xiao Dongxi)*

Los Angeles premiere | 2010, 80 min., DigiBeta



One of the most original voices of post-socialist China, novelist/filmmaker Zhu Wen has crafted, for his third feature, a droll, surreal and ironic tale in which East meets West... or does it? Thomas is a painter trekking through the grasslands of Inner Mongolia, and Mao the scruffy “innkeeper” who lodges him. Gradually, what appears to be “reality” shifts. Who is the butterfly, who is the philosopher?

“An intellectually teasing absurdist comedy with a touch of Zen, *Thomas Mao* ostensibly dramatizes the culture shock between a Chinese hillbilly and an American backpacker but goes beyond that to smudge the boundaries between art and life, dream and reality.” – *Hollywood Reporter*

After working five years as an engineer, **Zhu Wen** (born 1967) became one of the figureheads of the “newly-born generation” (*xinshengdai*) literary movement with his first novella, *I Love Dollars* (*Wo Ai Meiyuan*, 1996). One of his short stories was turned into a feature, *In Expectation* (*Wushan Yunyu* 1995), by Zhang Ming. He collaborated with Zhang Yuan on the screenplay of *Seventeen Years* (*Guo Nian Hui Jia*, 1999). He wrote and directed *Seafood* (*Haixian*, 2001), the first narrative digital feature produced in China (Grand Jury Prize in Venice) His second film, *South of the Clouds* (*Yun de Nanfang*, 2003), won the NETPAC Award in Berlin.

In person: Zhu Wen

Preceded by:

Sun Xun: 21G (21 KE)

Animation | 2010, 27 min., DVD

A disturbing and enchanted voyage through a “world without specific time... in which we live in vanity... There is no law, no rule... lying and being lied to only...” (SX)

The first Chinese animation film premiered at the Venice Film Festival.

After studying printmaking at the Academy of Fine Arts in Hangzhou, **Sun Xun** (born 1980) founded the animation studio Pi in 2006. His meticulous animations have been shown in festivals in China, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Italy, and media art centers in the US. His drawings and installations have been exhibited in galleries and museums in China, Europe and the U.S.

Thur Apr 7 | 8:30 pm

Li Hongqi: *Winter Vacation (Hanjia)*

Los Angeles premiere | 2010, 91 min., HDCAM



Slackers in Inner Mongolia meet the poetry of the absurd. In a dreary little northern town, kids have nothing to do... while the adults are wily or apathetic. For his third feature, poet/filmmaker Li Hongqi effortlessly leads the viewer through a series of

breathhtaking tableaux in which tension accumulates and then releases in unexpected, and often wickedly funny, ways.

Winner, Golden Leopard, Locarno International Film Festival

"This guy is something of a Chinese Jarmusch, who, instead of US punk youth, films Communist teenagehood." *Libération*

"An absurdist sense of humor, that reminds us of Beckett, or, in cinema, of Aki Kaurismaki's icy laughter." *Le Monde*

"The devastating beauty of nihilism in a society whose tendency to control everything is well-known." *L'Humanité*

After graduating from the painting department of Beijing's China Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) **Li Hongqi** (born 1976), became involved with the Nanjing-based group of "Tamen" poets. He published a poetry anthology, *Cure (Lin Chuang Jing Yan)* and a novel, *Lucky Bastard (Xingyun'r, 2004)* before directing *So Much Rice (Hao duo da mi, 2005, NETPAC Award in Locarno)* and *Routine Holiday (Huangjin zhou, 2008)*.

Fri Apr 8 | 8:30 pm

Liu Jiayin: *Oxhide II (Niupi II)*

Los Angeles premiere | 2009, 133 min., DigiBeta



In 2004, at 23, Liu Jiayin stunned the world by shooting *Oxhide ((Niupi)* in Cinemascope in her parents' 50-square-meter apartment. She is back at REDCAT with an even bolder "sequel." More tightly constructed—nine shots that go around a kitchen/workshop/dining table in 45-degree increments,

performing a complete 180-degree match—*Oxhide II* is also dryly humorous, intelligent and insightful, deconstructing the dynamics of a family in crisis. *World premiered at the Cannes Film Festival*

"A masterpiece... inventive, quietly virtuosic."

– David Bordwell, *Observations on Film Art*

"Arguably the most interesting new Chinese director to emerge since Jia Zhangke." - Peter Rist, *Offscreen*

In person: Liu Jiayin

Liu Jiayin (born 1981) studied screenwriting at the Beijing Film Academy from 1999 to 2006, and is now part of the faculty of her alma mater. While getting her MA, she wrote, directed, shot and edited her first film, *Oxhide (Niupi, 2004)* that revealed one of the most original directors of her generation and won a flurry of international awards (FIPRESCI Prize and

Calgari Award in Berlin, Golden DV Award in Hong Kong, Dragons and Tigers Award in Vancouver, among others).

A special screening of *Oxhide I* will be organized at the California Institute of the Arts, Bijou Theater, 24700 McBean Parkway, Valencia, CA, on Friday April 8, at 4:00 pm, followed with a Q & A with Liu Jiayin Directions: (661)255-1050

Sat Apr 9 | 3:00 pm
Hao Jie: *Single Man (Guangyun)*
U.S. premiere | 2010, 95 min., HDCAM



"This is a strange and delightful thing from China: a sex comedy, bawdy and a little raunchy, about four elderly farmers... all non-professional actors playing fictionalized versions of themselves. New director Hao Jie, with a bit of Boccaccio and a dollop of Rabelais, reveals a side of rural China you've probably never seen before... Chinese indie cinema at its most wryly entertaining." – Vancouver International Film Festival *Special Jury Prize (KODAK Vision Award), Tokyo Filmex*

"The deceptively unsophisticated *Single Man* is hilarious and appalling by turns, but it always feels true." – *Variety*

"Visceral, off-color, generous to a fault, Hao Jie's *Single Man* is one of the most exciting filmmaking debuts in years." – *Senses of Cinema*

Born in 1981 in the same village of Gujiagou where he shot *Single Man* with his neighbors and relatives, **Hao Jie** is a graduate from the Directing Department of Beijing Film Academy.

Sat Apr 9 | 7:00 pm

Huang Weikai: *Disorder (Xian Zai Shi Guo Qu De Wei Lai)*

Los Angeles premiere | 2009, 58 min., DVCAM



A splendid, original experiment on how to translate urban texture on the screen. Huang Weikai collected more than 1,000 hours of footage shot by amateurs and journalists in the streets of Guangzhou. He then selected 20-odd incidents, reworked the images into quasi-surreal grainy black-and-white and montaged them to create a kaleidoscopic view of the great southern metropolis, in all her vibrant, loud and mean chaos.

"The film's raw, grainy DV quality and its radical leaps from fragment to fragment are aesthetically mesmerizing. It distills a number of the qualities that Walter Benjamin locates in the practices of the Surrealists, particularly the blurring of waking and dreaming states, and the interpenetration of image and language to yield a system of unstable meanings."

– *The Leap, The International Art Magazine of Contemporary China*

Huang Weikai (born 1972) is a Guangzhou-based filmmaker with a degree from the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts. In 2002, he directed his first short film, *Laden's Body Could Be Nothing But a Copy*. He shot a number of independent documentaries and was one of the artists involved in Ou Ning's and Cao Fei's multi-media *Dazhalan Project* (2005-2006). In 2005, he directed his first feature documentary, *Floating (Piao, 2005*, shown at UCLA in our previous "New Chinese Cinema" film series).

Preceded by:

Ying Liang: *Condolences (Wei Wen)*

2009, 20 min, format TBA

Unfolding through a brilliantly composed one-shot sequence, this award winning film (Rotterdam Tiger Award for Best New Short) reconstructs the cruel aftermath of a highly-mediatized bus accident.

Ying Liang (born 1977), graduated from the Department of Directing of Chongqing Film Academy. His first feature, *Taking Father Home (Bei yazi de nanhai, 2005)* was invited to more than 30 international film festivals and received numerous awards. *The Other Half (Ling Yiban, 2006*, shown at REDCAT in our previous "New Chinese Cinema" film series), won the Special Jury Prize at Tokyo Filmex. He completed *Good Cats (Hao Mao)* in 2008 and is currently working on a feature version of *Condolences*.

Sat Apr 9 | 9:30 pm

Jia Zhangke: *I Wish I Knew (Hai Shang Chuan Qi)*

Los Angeles premiere | 2010, 138 min., HDCAM

China's most significant filmmaker of the decade has done it again, with another alluring hybrid of documentary and fiction. Here Jia weaves a dense texture between amorously shot footage of contemporary Shanghai and the films the city created or inspired. Peeking through the gaps of an architecture menaced by permanent urban renewal, he finds the traces of a romantic or brutal past, and echoes the voices of survivors or those who went into exile.

World premiered at the Cannes Film Festival

"Jia's Shanghai is elusive and mercurial, yet tangible, symbolized by the angst-ridden flâneur character played by Zhao Tao. By opting for the fluidity of remembrance, Jia not only connects present-day Shanghai with its past but also makes the city a much more dynamic trope for aesthetic articulation." – *The China Beat*

Jia Zhangke (born 1970), attended the Beijing Film Academy from 1993 to 1996. In 1996 he founded Hu Tong Communications with Chow Keung and Yu Likwai, and together they produced his first three films, Jia's *Xiao Wu* (1997, NETPAC Award in Berlin), *Platform (Zhantai)*, 2000, Best Film at BAFICI) and *Unknown Pleasures (Ren xiao yao)*, 2002). Becoming Xstream Pictures in 2003, the company co-produced *The World (Shijie)*, 2004) with the Shanghai Film Studio. Shot simultaneously with the documentary *Dong, Still Life (Sanxia Haoren)*, 2006) won the Golden Lion in Venice (both films were shown at UCLA in our previous "New Chinese Cinema" film series). Jia has since continued to explore the relationship between documentary and fiction in a series of shorts and feature films, such as *Useless (Wu Yong)*, 2007) and *24 City (Er Shi Si Cheng Ji)*, 2008).

Curated by Cheng-Sim Lim and Bérénice Reynaud.

Funded in part with generous support from Wendy Keys and Donald Pels.

Additional funding provided by the UCLA Confucius Institute.

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Between Disorder and Unexpected Pleasures: Tales from the New Chinese Cinema is presented in collaboration with the following institutions, that will hold additional screenings throughout the greater Los Angeles area, as well as New York City:

Los Angeles Filmforum – www.lafilmforum.org/
Egyptian Theater in Hollywood
6712 Hollywood Blvd. (at Las Palmas)
Los Angeles CA 90028

Sun Apr 10 | 7:30 pm
Wu Wenguang: *Treating (Zhi Liao)*
US premiere | 2010, 80 min., DVD



“The film was triggered by my desire to explore the emotions caused by my mother’s death in 2007. The focus shifted as was I was sorting through the 12 years of footage I had collected, seeing subtleties I had previously overlooked, or reliving past experiences...” (WW)

As Wu engages in a self-reflexive analysis of old diaries and intimate footage, he also plunges into recollections of the Cultural Revolution – another incisive merging of proletarian history and personal cinema by one of the founders and spiritual leaders of the “New Chinese Documentary Movement.”

“In *Treating*, the ruins of a geriatric hospital guide Wu Wenguang as he picks his way through the scattered rooms, some of which are identified by the light of a flashlight or the portrait of his deceased mother. Period of Chinese history unfold, the Culture Revolution disperses families; the steps of the son’s education follow on between Maoist doxa and ideological and poetical emancipation.” – Jean Perret, Visions du Réel Festival

Wu Wenguang (born 1956) spontaneously recreated the aesthetics of cinema vérité with the epoch-making *Bumming in Beijing – The Last Dreamers (Liulang Beijing – Zuihou De Mengxiangzhe*, 1990). In 2005, with his partner, dancer/choreographer Wen Hui, he founded Coachangdi Workstation, combining a studio/rehearsal space, an independent video archive, training/educational facilities for videomakers and a yearly performance and documentary festival. In 2006, Wu launched the *Villagers Documentary Project*, in which peasants and students were given the tools to produce documents about their own communities (the first installment of which was shown at REDCAT in 2007). After *Fuck Cinema* (2006, shown at REDCAT in our previous “New Chinese Cinema” film series), Wu stopped directing films, until he (re)discovered the concept of “personal cinema” and started working in this vein with *Treating* and *Bare Your Stuff* (2010).

Preceded by: **Sun Xun: *Beyond-ism (Zhuyi zhiwai)***

Animation | 2010, 8.8 min, DVD

"In Sun Xun's magical world, which mixes up references to Mao's poetry, ancient China and tales from Japan, it is the magician who rules the world."
– Rotterdam International Film Festival

Sun Xun conceived *Beyond-ism* while he was an artist-in-residence in Yokohama. The first part of the project consists of 10 huge ink drawings and frames of animation video. The second part is made of the drawings for the animation. The third part is the video. In Xun's recent solo exhibition at ShanghArt Gallery in Beijing (Jan 16-March 6), the whole process was combined with a site-specific drawing.

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Echo Park Film Center – www.echoparkfilmcenter.org/

1200 N Alvarado St. (@ Sunset Blvd.) Los Angeles, CA. 90026
(213) 484 - 8846

Mon Apr 11 | 8:00 pm

Sheng Zhimin: *Night of an Era (Zaijian Wutuobang)*

Los Angeles premiere | 2009, 89 min., DVD

"Cui Jian, Dou Wei, Tang Dynasty. These are some of the names of Chinese music legends that created the independent rock movement of the 80s. Twenty years later, much has changed. Some, like the pioneering artist Ke, died in their early twenties. Others must survive in a different world, subjected to a new reality of unbridled capitalism, piracy and changing popular tastes. Sheng Zhimin's first documentary, after the critical success of his feature *Bliss (Fu Sheng)*, shown at REDCAT in our previous "New Chinese Cinema" film series) is a paean to the music and spirit of that era, as well as a reminder that, despite adversity, Chinese rock lives on!"
– Hong Kong International Film Festival

"Curious about the death of an unknown guitarist, Xiao Ke from the band Dreaming, Sheng decides to take on the role of private investigator. Interviews with some of the most important figures in the early years of Chinese rock & roll and footage from their daily lives shed more light on the off-stage life of a deeply passionate people." – *Global Times*

Sheng Zhimin (born 1969) studied architecture at the Beijing Radio and Television University. He became involved in film in the early 1990s, and worked as a line producer, screenwriter and assistant director for Zhang

Yang's *Spicy Love Soup* (*Aiqing Ma La Tang*, 1997), Jia Zhangke's *Platform* (*Zhantai*, 2000), Fruit Chan's *Durian, Durian* (*Lauh Lin Piu Piu*, 2000) and *Public Toilet* (*Hwajangshil eodieyo*, 2002). His first film, *Two Hearts* (*Xin xin*, 2003), was shown at the Berlinale. His second feature, *Bliss* (*Fu Sheng*, 2006) won the NETPAC Award in Locarno. In 2009, he teamed with journalist Emma Tassy to co-direct the French-Chinese documentary on the contemporary Chinese art scene, *Chine, l'empire de l'art ?*

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Pomona College Museum of Art / Media Studies

www.pomona.edu/museum/
Pomona College Rose Hills Theatre
Smith Campus Center
170 E. Sixth St., Claremont CA 91711
1-909-607-2212

Mon Apr 11 | 7:30 pm
Liu Jiayin: *Oxhide II (Niupi II)*
in person : Liu Jiayin

Tue Apr 12 | 7:30 pm
Zhu Wen: *Thomas Mao (Xiao Dongxi)*
Preceded by: **Sun Xun: *21G (21 KE)***
in person: Zhu Wen

Wed Apr 13 | 7:30 pm
Jia Zhangke: *I Wish I Knew (Hai Shang Chuan Qi)*

Thu Apr 14 | 7:30 pm
Huang Weikai: *Disorder (Xian Zai Shi Guo Qu De Wei Lai)*
Preceded by: **Ying Liang: *Condolences (Wei Wen)***

Pomona College Museum of Art's Projection Room: ongoing looped projection of Chinese animation, installation video, and documentary

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UCLA Film & Television Archive – www.cinema.ucla.edu
Billy Wilder Theater
Located at the Courtyard Level of the Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Sun Apr 17 | 7:00 pm

Olivier Meys and Zhang Yaxuan: *A Disappearance Foretold (Qian Men Qian)*

North American premiere | 2008, 86 min, DigiBeta

SCAM International Award, Cinéma du Réel Festival (Paris)



In the run-up to the 2008 Olympics, Beijing became an epicenter of the mass destruction and forced relocation of working-class dwellings that have swept urban China in recent years. Many ancient neighborhoods of the capital city were destroyed and “renovated.” Belgian documentarist Olivier Meys and Chinese producer/critic Zhang Yaxuan teamed with a group of independent filmmakers to follow the

transformation of Qianmen, a 600-year old neighborhood just south of Tiananmen Square, into a field of rubble. The film portrays the dramatic fight between the real estate developers and the 80,000 inhabitants of Qianmen—from couples leaving their family house in tears and disenfranchised demolition workers to spirited grannies defiantly resisting eviction.

“A powerful documentary, shot with the acute gaze of a true filmmaker, which poses lots of questions about a China that is usually never shown, and, beyond, about the world we live in. An endless interrogation without pre-packaged answers. Not to be missed.” *Télérama*

“*A Disappearance Foretold* is on the side of these people who refuse to leave, who say no to evictions and resist the powers-that-be when they toy with people’s lives and treat urban dwellers as “parasites” slowing down their great leap forward. Eschewing the use of voice-over, the film presents us with the everyday existence of these men and women reduced to living in the rubble of their homes...” *Cinergie*

Olivier Meys (born 1974) studied film production in Brussels, then radio and film direction in Louvain-la-neuve (Belgium) and started his career as a film and radio documentary maker in 1995. He has directed numerous award winning social justice radio and film documentaries around the globe, such as *Fever (La Fièvre, 2001)*; *People of the Earth (Les Gens de la terre, 2003)*; *New lives, a big lake* (2004, co-directed with Weng Liping); *Four Seasons under the Earth (Quatre Saisons sous la Terre, 2006)*. He lives in Beijing.

Zhang Yaxuan was the director of CIFA (Chinese Independent Film Archive) at Iberia Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing). A film critic

and curator focusing on Chinese independent film, she has contributed to several publications and organized film festivals both in China and internationally. She has been involved in the production of a number of documentaries, such as Feng Yan's *Bingai* (2007).

Fri Apr 22 | 7:30 pm

Zhao Ye: *Jalainur (Zha Lai Nuo Er)*

US premiere | 2008, 92 min, HDCAM

FIPRESCI Prize, Pusan International Film Festival



“Even if I can accompany you for one thousand miles, finally we must bid farewell.” Inspired by this old Chinese saying, Zhao Ye films the parting of two friends working on the last Chinese steam engine trains, in the Jalainur coal mine (Inner Mongolia). Old Zhu, a train conductor, has decided to retire a few

weeks early, to be with his daughter, who lives miles away. His apprentice and close friend, Li Zhizhong, boards the train to be with him until the last minute... With a stunning sense of visual composition, Zhao directs his non-professional actors documentary-style, capturing intimate details that express emotions more powerfully than words can.

“Wim Wenders transposed to China: a beguiling rural road movie swirls across the screen like train smoke across an azure sky. Intimate in emotion, yet stunning in scope, this is cinema at its most rapturous.”

– Edinburgh International Film Festival

“The story's poignant romanticism permeates the dream-like depiction of Jalainur and its people. Shots of men playing basketball in the dusty desert, or chasing a pig across town, are rendered in glistening, often backlit, textures that are at once sincerely regretful and perversely absurd.”

– Brian Hu, UCLA Asia Institute

Zhao Ye (born 1979) graduated from the Animation Department of the Beijing Film Academy in 2004. He directed his first short, the animation *Cai Wei*, in 2004. His debut feature *Ma Wu Jia* (2007) won the Best Picture Award at the China Independent Film Festival. In 2010, Zhao shot *The Last Chestnut*, a short HD film for Nara film festival in Japan, produced by Kawase Naomi.

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Museum of the Moving Image (NY)

– www.movingimage.us/

35 Avenue at 37 Street – Astoria, NY 11106

(718) 777-6888

Fri Apr 29 | 7:00 pm

Zhu Wen: *Thomas Mao (Xiao Dongxi)*

with Sun Xun: *21G (21 KE)*

Sat Apr 30 | 2:00 pm

Liu Jiayin: *Oxhide II (Niupi II)*

Sat Apr 30 | 5:00 pm

Huang Weikai: *Disorder (Xian Zai Shi Guo Qu De Wei Lai)*

with Ying Liang: *Condolences (Wei Wen)*

Sat Apr 30 | 7:00 pm

Hao Jie: *Single Man (Guangyun)*

Sun May 1 | 2:00 pm

Lu Chuan: *City of Life and Death (Nanjing! Nanjing!)*

Sun May 1 | 5:00 pm

Zhu Wen: *Thomas Mao (Xiao Dongxi)*

with Sun Xun: *21G (21 KE)*

Sun May 1 | 7:15 pm

Li Hongqi: *Winter Vacation (Hanjia)*

Zhu Wen's and Liu Jiayin's trips to the US have been organized in collaboration between REDCAT, Pomona College Museum of Art/ Media Studies and the University of Oregon's Cinema Pacific.