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COCOON



BASIC INFORMATION

Total Running Time 25:40

Country: China

Genera: Drama

Niche: China, LGBTQ, Coming of age, Developing nations, Women, Children, Youth

Premiere Status: world premiere

Production Location / Filming Location: China

Language: Mandrine Chinese

Budget: 80,000 USD

Website: www.cocoonthefilm.com

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Baixiang Film Studio

Beijing, China

Contact Person: Xu Zhang

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*Photos included in this press kit are film stills from COCOON.

LOG LINE

Set in 1997 China, a little girl discovers her mom's affair with another woman, and she has to make a decision of whether keeping this secret or not.

SYNOPSIS



1997 China is a place of transitions.

Control of Hong Kong has just returned to the mainland. Western values are beginning to impact traditional Chinese values.

At this time, 11-year-old Qingqing is also in a place of transition. On the cusp of adolescence, she lives with her mom in

the peaceful city of Wuhan. Her father, who works in Shenzhen (China's first special economic zone) comes home only once a month. Qingqing and her friends are beginning to discover the opposite sex, and each other.

When Qingqing discover her mom's oddly close relationship with a female friend, she starts stalking them, only to discover a secret that will unravel her peaceful family life, and all her burgeoning conceptions about love, sex, and female desire.

CAST

Qingqing: Jinger Li

Hui-yun: Jing Yang

Wang Er-de: Yuan Xu

Miss Ling: Zhe Gong

Liu Tin: Longgang Yu

Mrs. Zhang: Song Song

CREW

Director: Mei Liying

Writers: Mei Liying, Xu Zhang

Producer: Xu Zhang

Director of Photography: Jon Keng

Production Designer: Yiyong Yang

Editor: Yifan Zhang

Sound Designer: Qianbaihui Yang

Composer: Pantawit Kiangsiri

Unit Production Manager: Hui Liu

First Assistant Director: Amour Li



DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

MEI LIYING

Director, Co-writer

Mei Liying is a writer, director who grew up in Wuhan and Beijing, China. She has a MFA degree from School of Cinematic Arts, University of Southern California and a BA degree on Communication Studies and Film Studies from Northeastern University.

Mei's documentary short *AMITABHA*, which explores contemporary Chinese Buddhism, was nominated for China's prestigious Gold Panda Award for best documentary. Her fiction short films *NAACH* and *ONE DAY* were awarded and screened at film festivals across the world.

Mei is now working on the post production for her feature length documentary *WHCP*, about the controversial Needle Exchange Program for drug abuser in Washington Heights, New York City. She is also finishing her light comedy *MUTATA*, about a woman's encounter with her inner child.

Apart from her passion for filmmaking, Mei has been working for non-profit organizations that lobby for Women's and Children's rights.



DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY



Mutata (2017)

Washington Heights Corner Project (2017)

Cocoon (2017)

True Red (2016)

Undo (2015)

Turn to Water (2014)

Cabaret (2014)

One Day (2014)

Naach (2013)

The Funeral of Love (2013)

Amitabha (2012)

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



feeling that my country was growing up together with me.

I was born and raised in Wuhan, a secondary city in Mainland China. When I was about 11 years old and heading into my adolescence, China was also going through a transitioning period, from a post-revolution socialism country to a more diverse and modern country. Western value started impacting people's lifestyle and behavior. When I was growing up, I had a

This film is a coming of age story about a broken modern Chinese family, female sex awakening and homosexuality in China.

The 12-year-old Qingqing is a sensitive and curious girl, she is at the life stage of 'too old to be naïve and too young to be mature'. What happens at home and school makes her very confused. At home, she stalks her mom and tries to figure out what's going on between mom and auntie Ling. She doesn't understand whether their intimacy is pure friendship or something else. At school, the girls start talking about the growth of their bodies while the adults try to keep them away from the topic "sex."

From this little girl's point of view, I want to tell a Chinese story that's never told before.

KEY CREW

XU ZHANG

Producer, Co-writer



Born and raised in China, Xu Zhang is a writer, director and producer who worked on projects that range from narrative, documentary, experimental, web-series, music videos to PSAs.

Xu graduated from the University of Southern California, with an MFA in Film and Television Production in 2014. Her short film *En Route* was screened at over 20 international festivals across North America, Europe and Asia. In 2015, she co-directed *Don Quixote: The Ingenious Man of La Mancha*, a feature-length film developed by James Franco. In Fall 2016, Xu is selected as one of the five candidates for the Warner

Brothers Emerging Directors Workshop, to direct an original short film with \$100k budget.

Xu is a passionate backpacker who has travelled to 22 countries. She is interested in creating stories that evoke universal emotions and inspire social awareness. She hopes to continue engaging in high-quality, original and forward-thinking storytelling.

JON KENG
Cinematographer



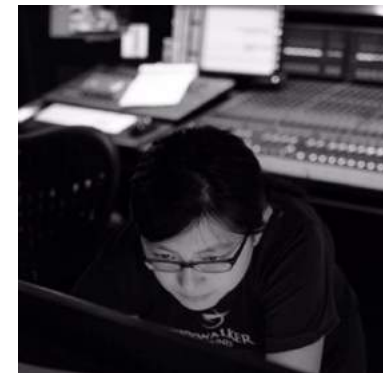
Jon's work revolves around visual storytelling and exploring the nuances of the human condition. He has lensed films across Singapore, London, Beijing and Los Angeles, screening at over fifty renown film festivals across the world.

Jon is a recent cinematography graduate of the American Film Institute Conservatory, where he was the first Singaporean to be accepted to the selective program. His thesis film, 'Fata Morgana', was among only three films to be selected for AFI's 2015 industry showcase, as well as CAA's best thesis films showcase. It later went on to screen at the two largest premiere short film festivals in the world, Clermont Ferrand and Palm Springs. Jon has also lensed the Universal/Disney technical short, 'The Suitcase', one of the first productions in the world to feature a front-to-end HDR workflow. Among Jon's latest works is 'Pineapple', a TV pilot by Project Greenlight Digital Studios which is slated for release on HBO Go.

QIANBAIHUI YANG
Sound Designer

QianbaihuiYang was born and raised in Qingdao, China. In 2005 to 2009, Yang studied Recording Arts at Communication University of China. She moved to Los Angeles in 2009 and received her MFA degree in Film and Television Production from University of Southern California in 2012, focused on sound.

She started working at Skywalker Sound, a Lucasfilm Company since 2012. Her work includes 'Despicable Me 2', 'Minions', 'The BFG' and 'The Guardian Brothers'.



YIFAN ZHANG

Editor

Yifan Zhang is one of the best editors from mainland China. He started working with A list Chinese directors such as Jiang Wen, Lu Chuan, Zhang Yi Bai, Ning Hao, Xu Jinglei since the early 90s. Zhang is famous for breaking the original script structure and reshaping the story in picture editing. He is also famous for his fast pacing editing style. Zhang won 'Best Editing' award at the 44th Taiwan Golden Horse Film Festival for his work on 'The Sun Also Rises'. He was nominated three times before. His 2002 film 'Silver Medalist' was a huge box office hit in Chinese cinema history.



PANTAWIT KIANGSIRI

Composer



Pantawit Kiangsiri is a composer of more than ninety works, including chamber music, orchestral compositions, and opera. Pantawit is also active in film and commercial music, his recent credits including Thailand's epic "King Naresuan 5", Chinese box office hit "The Monkey King", British Animation Television Series "The Paddle Pop Adventure", Netflix's original series "Chef's Table". Among the companies he worked for such were Sony, Google, Netflix, Digital Domain, Vevo and many others. Pantawit is currently scoring a science fiction feature by China Film Group. He received his diploma in film scoring at University of Southern

California and M.M. in composition from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Among his teachers were legendary Bruce Broughton, Christopher Young, Somtow Sucharitkul and Narong Prancharoen.

PRODUCTION NOTES

- **Female Filmmakers:** 70% of the crew members are female filmmakers.

- **The cocoons in the last shot:** Originally, the last shot should be two moths breaks out from a cocoon while one stays inside the cocoon. To achieve that effect, the prop team has to cut the the cocoons open right before the camera starts rolling, but the moths inside will then die. The director insists no animal should get harmed during the production and used the complete cocoons.



- **The Girl:** Li Jinger, the actor who played Qingqing was already an A-list star and very experienced actor before this production. The director casted her through Facetime audition three days before the shoot. During the shoot, the director asked her to forget all the acting techniques she learned before in order to get a natural performance. Each shot had in average 10 takes.

- **The Mom:** Jing Yang, the actor who played mom, refused to take a lesbian role. She has a daughter that's about the same age with 'Qingqing'. After being turned down three times, the director and producer insisted on meeting for lunch, and convinced her to take this role.

- **The Bless from Buddha:** *Summer is the rain season in Wuhan. The week before and right after the shoot, Wuhan was in showering rain and the whole city was in severe flood. The director's mom took the key crew to a Buddhist temple the day before the shoot to pray for safety and good weather. The week of production was sunny throughout.*
- **Filming Location:** *The film was shot in Wuhan, the director's hometown. It's a city that as very little experience and resources for film production. All the equipment, cast and crew were transported there from Beijing.*
- **Inspiration:** *The director, producer and DP worked closely and shared same filmmaking taste. The film was influenced by Hirokazu Koreeda, Hou Hsiao-hsien and Edward Yang.*



PRODUCTION STILLS



