

UFO IN HER EYES

A feature film written and directed by Xiaolu Guo
Produced by corazón internacional

One very hot afternoon, the life of an anonymous Chinese village woman abruptly changes when she believes that she has just witnessed a UFO flying through the sky. The village chief takes advantage of this unexpected event to boost the poverty-stricken local economy – to stimulate tourism, get government support, and even make contact with the USA. Under a scrutinizing police eye, a collective portrait unfolds ...

Partly inspired by Kafka's "The Metamorphosis", and Kurosawa's "Rashomon", the film portrays the lives of ordinary individuals dealing with radical political changes in a chaotic contemporary Chinese society.

Director's Statement

Falling to the earth, returning to the sky – the inspiration for UFO IN HER EYES comes from two worlds: my personal experience and an intellectual bricolage.

The landscapes that surrounded the rural village where I grew up in South China lacked any civilized character. Neither did the cruel, unimaginable daily life that every peasant faced as they struggled to survive. I remember from my childhood the old people in the village, full of bitterness and dark habits. For me, the old peasants were always the most fascinating people because they had lived through it all. They had witnessed the radical changes of China's history in the last century – from Feudalism to Communism, and then to the new Capitalism. Most of them had grown up with memories of the Emperor's times of slavery, yet now they were finding the kids around them drinking Coca Cola and playing with iPods. The old ones had not been able to adjust to the new demands of Capitalism; they were living the rest of their lives in sorrow and anger. The young ones in the village were confused by the anger of their elders, they were bored by the old morality and a life under totalitarianism and just wanted to leave. I remember that because it is what I also felt – the restless and troubled feeling under the burning sun in the abandoned rice fields, as if the only chance to live life was by taking to the road and leaving.

On an intellectual level, my work finds inspiration in symbolic and surrealist artwork. I want to find an expressive method to portray how a small individual tries to find a path of survival in the midst of history playing out within a totalitarian society – it is the perpetual, ongoing story of Sisyphus.

Political satire is one way to describe this story, at the same time I am also interested in non-linear structures and multiple points of view in cinema through which, I believe, one can convey a complex social story more effectively. This is the kind of structure I've created in UFO IN HER EYES. The film will be visually rich, alive, and darkly funny, with a poetic, post-modern attitude.

As a filmmaker from a rural village now facing an international audience, I want to tell a story of a country undergoing the turmoil of globalization, and the resulting metamorphosis that is now taking place.

About the Director

Filmmaker and novelist Xiaolu Guo, born 1973 in China, studied film at Beijing Film Academy and the UK National Film School. She has published 7 novels and a book of poetry and has directed several documentaries. Her most popular novel "A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary For Lovers" (2007, Random House) was translated into 23 languages, her other novels include "Twenty Fragments Of A Ravenous Youth". Her first feature film SHE, A CHINESE was awarded with the Golden Leopard in Locarno 2009 and is currently distributed in various countries. Her upcoming feature – based on her latest novel "UFO In Her Eyes" – is a surreal, Kafkaesque political metaphor about how a rural Chinese village is radically transformed due to an alleged UFO sighting, and this parable of change paints a restless future, not only for rural China, but also for the entire world.

Filmography as screenwriter and director

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| 2011 | UFO IN HER EYES
(feature film) |
| 2009 | ONCE UPON A TIME A PROLETARIAN
(documentary) |
| 2009 | SHE, A CHINESE
(feature film) |
| 2008 | WE WENT TO WONDERLAND
(documentary) |
| 2006 | HOW IS YOUR FISH TODAY?
(doc-fiction) |
| 2004 | THE CONCRETE REVOLUTION
(documentary) |

UFO IN HER EYES. A feature film written and directed by Xiaolu Guo In post-production Germany 2011 Technical Data 35 mm / 2.35:1 cinemascope / Dolby Digital / approx. 100 min. Language Chinese Produced by corazón internacional Financed by FFHS, FFA, NDR/ARTE, Hubert Bals Producer Klaus Maeck Cinematographer Michal Tywoniuk Original Score Mocky Cast Shi Ke, Udo Kier

