

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





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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 lenses 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 very much evidenced among the residents. While desperately trying to adapt to the new Chinese way of living, they and their families have been constantly put to confrontations. 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 the two years stay on the street, Xun Yu has become 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. Such 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 later on 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 Robertson
Roy Cross
Bob Moore
Halima Ouardiri
Xi Feng

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

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

Special thanks to all the West Street residents.
Without their support this film could not have been made.

EYESTEELFFILM

is a film media company listed on the Real Screen Global 100 since 2009. Dedicated to using cinematic expression as a catalyst for social and political change It has created cinema that empowers people 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. This mandate has continued to flourish with the new-media project www.HomelessNation.org and the several films from director Eric "Roach" Denis, including the new release *Les Tickets*.

Eyesteelfilm has also 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 and *Last Train Home* 2009) 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*, won the Joris Ivens Award at IDFA 2009 and continues to receive international acclaim. *Up the Yangtze* director Yung Chang's next China project, *China Heavyweight* (projected 2012), is an official Canada-China co-production.

Other award winning films include: Omar Majeed's *Taqwacore: The Birth of Punk Islam* introduced viewers to a young and vibrant Muslim community in the United States and Pakistan. Brett Gaylor's *Rip: A Remix Manifesto* broke new ground in Fair Use and Copy Left approaches to Documentary Filmmaking while winning audience choice awards on 5 continents. Halima Ouardiri's acclaimed drama film *Mohktar* challenges preconceptions and the boundaries between custom and Islam.

Eyesteelfilm is currently releasing a number of new films, in addition to *Les Tickets* they are: *A Fortunate Son* by Tony Asimakopoulos; *Rainforest* by Richard Boyce, *Inside Lara Roxx* by Mia Donovan; *Frog Princes* by Ryan Mullins and Omar Majeed. We are also actively in production with a Sweden-Canada coproduction set deep in the congolese rainforest (*Inkulal*, projected 2012), and a series exploring humankind's co-evolution with fruit, shot around the world (*The Fruit Hunters*, projected 2012). The feature drama *Les Riches et Les Puissants* (projected 2013) is currently in development.

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