

2020 Taipei Produce Au Sud Workshop

FARUK & ABDULLAH Taiwan

Main data

Category	Drama
Lenght	110 minutes
Language	Uyghur language - French
Shooting format	4K
Shooting location	Kazakhstan - France
Shooting dates	January 2022 - May 2022
Expected date of compleiteion	October 2022
Stage of production	In development



Synopsis

In this film, two storylines are combined, one set in the early spring of 2025 revolving around Faruk's life in Paris, the choice he has to make and the events leading to it over the time of two weeks. The second one, set in the summer of 2003, tells about Abdullah's love of a summer afternoon in the barren countryside of Artux, in Xinjiang. The two stories will be told separately, with an unequal amount of time for each.

Production

Budget	550,000 €
Financing in place	NA
Production company	VOLOS Films Ltd.
Workshop & platform attended	2020 Taipei Produce au Sud workshop
Current situation	In development



Echo Ku

Producer

Graduated from the National Taiwan University of Arts, Echo Ku produced first shot film "Spring Breeze" in 2014, and then started her career in making films. She worked as a production coordinator for RED Iron film and participating several feature films such as "A Fish Out of Water" (San Sebastian 2017) and the short film "Arterial". In 2018, she started producing her first documentary "LOMA - Our Home (directed by Huang Hui-Chen) for Volos Films and worked as an assistant director for the feature documentary "Cheng Wen" (directed by Wan-Jo Wang) of which she also directed the web version.



Tawfiq Nizamidin

Director

Tawfiq Nizamidin is a Uyghur director born in Urumchi, Xinjiang, in 1991. Tawfiq has focused on telling the story of his people, the Uyghur - a Turkish minority in the west of China - from an everyday perspective, through their interactions with other culture and an underling sense of homesickness. In 2014, his first short film "The Night of Arzu" was selected as one of the five nominees for best short film at the Golden Horse Award Festival in Taipei. In 2018, he finished his second short film "Maria by the Sea", shot in Korea in collaboration with the Korean Academy of Film Arts, which premiered in Rotterdam Film Festival. He is currently completing the script for his first feature film "Faruk And Abdullah".

Director's statement

"The situation at present in China for Uighur people has earned the attention of international media and concerns for the safety of our people and our culture are often expressed in several reports nowadays. As a Uighur myself, since my short films, I have tried to approach the description of the tough times we are living in with a different perspective, that of our everyday life. My goal was to let the audience understand how Uighur people feel, and how their life is affected by the events that unfold in our country. These are indeed very hard times for my people; many of my personal friends have left the country and cannot go back to their families. They might have to live abroad all their life, yet even in another country, they gather and long for a future moment when they will be able to go back to their homes again and live free.. My film talks about them, and this is why I don't want it to be a statement to spark conflict but a poetic reflection about belonging and family. I have imagined a near future that could set our characters apart from the present world, so that I could focus more on their emotions. But at the same time, I want this future to feel just right the present moment, because only like this I have the chance to explain the struggles we face every day. In the year 2025, when rumor spreads that they could finally be able to go back, what would my friends feel like? What decisions would they make? How have their lives changed abroad? And what would I do if I was in their place? (...)"

Contacts

Producer

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Director

Tawfiq Nizamidin

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LIFE DERAILED (偏安之鄉) Taiwan

Main data

Category	Drama, Coming of age
Lenght	100 minutes
Language	Mandarin
Shooting format	4K
Shooting location	Taiwan
Shooting dates	Summer 2022
Expected date of compleiteion	Winter 2022
Stage of production	In development

Production

Budget	698,778 €
Financing in place	NA
Production company	NA
Workshop & platform attended	Taipei Film Academy - Filmmakers Workshop 2020
Current situation	In development



Synopsis

Life Derailed is based on a true story revolving around the Puyuma Express train derailment accident in 2018. On the eve of Taiwan's controversial referendum related to same-sex marriage, the world is crying for an outlet under the stifling social atmosphere. JIE, a woman in her early 30s, is trying to balance her life between taking care of her ill mother in Taipei city, her aspiration as a substitute teacher in a rural county, and her lesbian identity. Her effort to earn recognition from her parents and from work falls apart after experiencing a major train derai ment accident, followed by the death of her mother. Such life-changing events awaken her desires to break free from the status quo burdened by social and familial responsibilities to "fit in" and "impress". She realizes she cannot fulfill her aspiration as an educator in the current education system and starts making peace with life of her own accord.

Director's statement

Growing up in a stereotypical middle-class family, I have become observant about the subtlety of oppression in what appears to be a stable and "functional" family. The struggle between self-discovery and familial bond exists not in severe clashes between family members but plants a time bomb waiting to implode, creating destruction within. Both of my parents worked for the government, and I was raised to believe that working as a government official or teacher is the best way to settle in life. To earn my parents' attention, I strived to be a straight-A student but there was always fear that I was not good enough for them. The constant self-examination and self-doubt not only created a distance between my family and I but also between me and myself. It wasn't until the illness of my mother changed her controlling way of parenting that she finally shared her vulnerabilities with me. Eventually, I convinced my parents who opposed my decision to work in the field of art to let me study filmmaking abroad. Still, I could feel their constant anxiety towards my future—having no stable job, no chances of building a "happy family." I found myself creating the protagonist of Life Derailed—Jie, a woman who carefully balances two lives to escape the inescapable pressure from her family, yet the dynamic equilibrium collapses after her mother's passing. It is a coming-of-age story of an East Asian woman trying to come to terms with her conflicting identities in a cultural space that restrains her from listening to her own voice. It is a journey of making peace with oneself when the tension and hope for reconciliation is stripped away by the uncertainty of life, and one must let go of the attachment to familial and social recognition to begin the process of self-discovery.



Yu-Hao Su

Producer

Yu-Hao Su is an alum of AFI conservatory's producing MFA program. He line-produced The Cloud In Her Room, which won the Tiger Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2020 and produced the Kino Lorber acquired feature Test Pattern. He has also produced numerous short films selected into Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival and AFI Festival...etc. After participating in Film Independent's Project Involve in 2018, David is currently developing his Taiwanese feature Run Zombie Run, a Taipei New Horizon Screenplay Award winner at the Golden Horse Film Project Promotion in 2019 and The Mushroomers, a 2020 Tribeca/TFI Network selection.



Hsuan Chao

Director

Hsuan Chao is a Taiwanese writer-director, who earned her MFA in Film Production at USC's School of Cinematic Arts. Her recent short Big Little Man (2019) received the Taiwan Ministry of Culture's grant for short films and Taiwan United Fund. It had its world premiere at The Oscar and BAFTA qualifying Rhode Island International Film Festival. It is also selected by the Golden Harvest Award for Outstanding Short Films. The Restoration (2015) premiered at the Hollywood Reel Independent Film Festival and many other film festivals overseas. She is currently developing her feature Life Derailed a selection for the 6th Produce au Sud Taipei Workshop and the Taipei Film Academy Filmmakers Workshop.

Contacts

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Director	Hsuan Chao	dianaspy116@gmail.com

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NATALIE (娜塔麗) Taiwan

Main data

Category	Family drama - Suspense
Lenght	100 minutes
Language	Mandarin - Cantonese
Shooting format	4K
Shooting location	Hong-Kong - Taiwan - France
Shooting dates	October 2022
Expected date of compleiton	March 2023
Stage of production	In development



Synopsis

For the very first time, Natalie accepts to leave Mainland China to go to Hong Kong to meet her biological father, whose days are numbered. With mixed feelings, she will have her first encounter with this unknown man, whose mistress once was Natalie's mother. While facing the other members of his family, Natalie's arrival will deeply disturb their peaceful appearance.

Production

Budget	1,200,000 €
Financing in place	NA
Workshop & platform attended	2020 Taipei Produire au Sud workshop
Current situation	Negotiations with co-producers

Director's statement

«I lived in Hong Kong for some time in the recent years. At that time, there were several large-scale civil protests and the society was filled with an undercurrent of hostility. Even I, as a Taiwanese citizen, who could not speak the local language (Cantonese), suffered a lot of inconvenience. This strong sense of not being welcome affected me a lot and has had an impact on my identity until now. During the same year, I just finished my graduation project at the Beijing Film Academy. It was a family drama adapted from my own personal experience. The main female character, who just turned 20, met her father for the first time. I discovered that family could be an epitome of human society. Such internal family conflicts and external social conflicts could have a common point which I would call «prejudice». Prejudice is the habit of human society to «label» people based on self-defense. «Labeling» saves us the time and the energy we would need to understand each other. Besides, one tends to label people to protect one's own feelings and emotions. The growth of families, children and women are important themes that I have been focusing on for many years. This time, I wish to explore the concept of "relationship" from a deeper level. In this suspenseful story, through the appearances of this harmonious family and through the chemistry of their deep and shallow relationship, I look forward to bringing the audience onto a journey through the human psyche (...)

Contacts

Producer	Aymerick Pilarski	rikem2@gmail.com
Director	Yvonne Zuo	lefty228@gmail.com



Aymerick Pilarski

Producer

Aymerick Pilarski obtained his film master degree at Paris Sorbonne Nouvelle and worked at Mosaique Films, a Paris based production company while supervising artistically and technically local stage drama performances. He then studied visual arts in Melbourne before moving to Hong Kong to have a better understanding of the Asian film market. In 2007, he studied Mandarin and entered the Beijing Film Academy. He has worked in the Asian film industry for more than 10 years, mostly collaborating on co-productions along with young Asian directors.



Yvonne Zuo

Director

Yvonne Zuo has worked in the film industry for fifteen years. She completed her BA in Film Production at the Taiwan University of Arts, and earned her MFA in Directing with her teacher Tian Zhuangzhuang at the Beijing Film Academy. Her short films won several awards at many domestic and international film festivals.

2020 Taipei Produire Au Sud Workshop

ONLY SUN KNOWS (破曉)Taiwan

Main data

Category	Biography / Drama
Lenght	100 minutes
Language	Taiwanese - Japanese - Mandarin - French
Shooting format	4K
Shooting location	Taiwan - Japan
Shooting dates	May-June 2022
Expected date of completion	December 2022
Stage of production	In development

Production

Budget	907.802 €
Financing in place	NA
Production company	La Vie Cine
Workshop & platform attended	2019 Taipei Film Academy Co-production Workshop 2020 Taipei Produire au Sud Workshop 2020 Talents Tokyo
Current situation	In development



Synopsis

Weng Nao (29), a Taiwanese youth who claims to be the next master in the Japanese literary world, arrives in the blooming modern city Tokyo in 1934. However, as a result of the rogue and decadent life, his manuscript of writing is useless rubbish, and his love letters to Japanese girls are regarded as ugly harassment. The sight of his birth mother's figure under the colonial red sun keeps haunting him within various love affairs and sensual experiences. He begins to write a novella that an adopted daughter and her biological father find each other after experienced countless difficulties. Nevertheless, the determination of the Japanese authorities to root out the left-wing thought and the Communist Party cannot be questioned. Nao's previous works which are describing Taiwan's poor peasants were reported as supporting the proletariat. He is printed guilty. Like the protagonist in his novella, he set a new life as a true Japanese from Kobe Port, and ends up to be a nameless shadow under the sun of Empire. Another exile begins. A writer, a man, a Japanese or a Taiwanese. Maybe only the sun knows.



Naikang Zhang

Producer

Independent Producer, Master's degree in Journalism & Communication. Worked with young directors in developing independent film projects since 2018, also have 5 years experiences on the development and business strategies of commercial feature films. She's developing the feature film project 'Only Sun Knows' as Producer under the production company La Vie Cine.



Yu Tong Weng

Director

Graduated at ESRA Paris, Master's degree in Production and Distribution. She started from production management, and engaged in international co-production for years. As a director, Weng's films have a special focus on Taiwanese history, social class and gender issues. "The Double" (2012) is her first short film which is about the sexual identity confusion of adolescent under Japanese rule. "Undercurrent" (2020) is another short film of her, set in the martial law era and implies the subject of political victimization of gender minority. She's now working on the development of her first feature film "Only Sun Knows".

Director's statement

"The story is adapted from the real life of a Taiwanese author WENG NAO, which mixed the fictional characters to present the "lost in self-identification" status of Taiwanese for over 100 years. Tokyo and Taiwan in 1930 are both like dreams yet the lost places for him. I'm good at transforming the Taiwanese history into a mixed-blood sensory experience. Therefore, I would like to bring up a modern parable about a man chasing somewhere as spiritual motherland under the sunshine of a great era (...)"

Contacts

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Director	Yu Tong Weng	info.laviecinema@gmail.com

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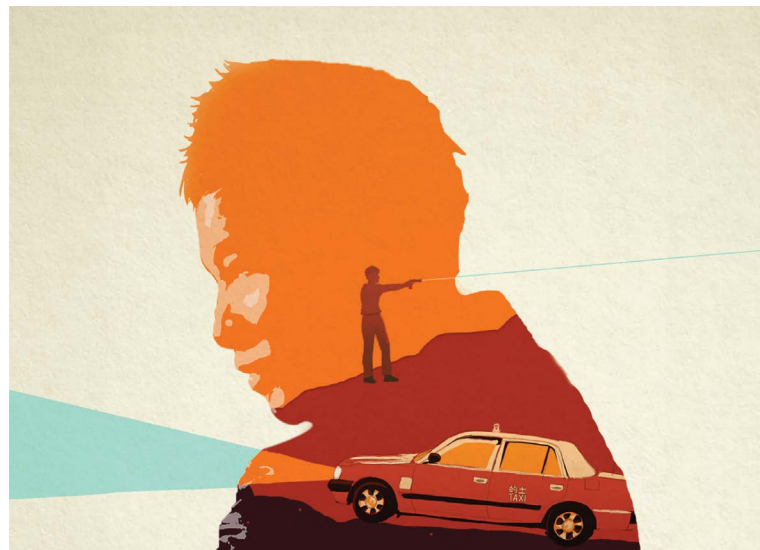
THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET (白日青春) Taiwan

Main data

Category	Drama, Crime
Lenght	100 minutes
Language	Cantonese, Urdu
Shooting format	4K
Shooting location	Hong-Kong
Shooting dates	End 2021
Expected date of compleiteion	2022
Stage of production	in development

Production

Budget	884,000 €
Financing in place	NA
Production company	Thousand Sails Pictures
Workshop & platform attended	HAF Film Lab Pilot Programme
Current situation	in development



Synopsis

Hassan is a Pakistani kid, who arrived in Hong Kong even when he wasn't born. His only dream is to move to the United States with his family, and the dream is shattered when his father is accidentally killed by a Hong Kong local in a car crash. Losing the guidance of a father, Hassan has no choice but to join a mafia organized by refugees. He gets into trouble during a crack-down by the police. However, the witness Yat gives his hand to Hassan. Yat not only assists Hassan to escape from arrest but also promises to help Hassan fleeing to Taiwan for security. Ironically, the policeman chasing after them on the road is Yat's son. Hassan starts to build trust in Yat as a father figure during the journey. Nevertheless, he discovers that Yat is actually the murderer of his father. Should he continue the journey with Yat?

Director's statement

"I am fourth generation Chinese-Malaysia, growing up in a small town full with immigrants. My grandparents moved from southern China to Malay peninsular many years ago. The domestic helper of my family always worries for her children in Indonesia. The construction workers worked for my father's construction company had sent most of their income back to Myanmar. Many of my relatives chose to work in Singapore, whereas my sister pursued her university in Taiwan. I, inevitably, become an immigrant when I grow up. I moved to Hong Kong after my high school in pursuit of filmmaking, even I didn't know Cantonese or anyone in this city. Just like every refugee here, I expected a better tomorrow. The truth is that integrating into a new society was quite an ordeal for me, even as an ethnic Chinese. It takes me many years to master the language, values and lifestyle that make me feel comfortable in the city. Not to mention how a refugee from South Asia or Africa will suffer during his or her time waiting for refugee status, which could last for more than ten years. Whilst working on documentary on refugees in Hong Kong, my biggest challenge has been dealing with the proposition that the refugees choose their own fate – where in fact they have no choice. They are thrust about by the forces of the times, drifting from one place to another and with their children growing up in tumult. I want to make a film about a refugee and a Hong Kong local, where the refugee ultimately does make his choice (...)"



Ivy Yu-Hua Shen

Producer

Ivy Yu-Hua SHEN, the Taiwanese producer, has the experience of film production, film distribution, and international sales & acquisition. As the producer, her recent project Dostojee, which is in post-production, has selected in NFDC Film Bazaar Recommends' section 2019, Marche du Film Goes to Cannes section 2020 and Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) WIP section 2020. Another developing feature project Anjuma has selected in Locarno Open Doors Consultancy.



Kok Rui Lau

Director

Kok Rui LAU is a Hong Kong-Based Malaysian writer-director. His shorts, Let's Get Lost (2017), Have A Nice Day (2018) and Rootless in the City (2019), were selected by various film festivals, such as Asian American International Film Festival (USA), Taipei Golden Horse International Film Festival (Taiwan) and Fresh Wave International Short Film Festival (Hong Kong). He is currently developing his debut feature film The Sunny Side of the Street, which has won 'Script Service Award' in Film of Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum.

Contacts

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Director	Kok Rui Lau	lau.kok.rui@gmail.com

2020 Taipei Produire Au Sud Workshop

THE WILD GRANDMA (阿嬤的奇幻冒險) Taiwan

Main data

Category	Adventure, Comedy, Drama
Lenght	100 minutes
Language	Mandarin, Taiwanese
Shooting format	4K
Shooting location	Taiwan
Shooting dates	January-February. 2023
Expected date of compleiteon	February 2024
Stage of production	In development

Production

Budget	1.461,468 €
Financing in place	NA
Production company	Svemirko Audiovisual Art
Workshop & platform attended	2020 Taipei Produire au Sud Workshop The Golden Horse Film Project Promotion
Current situation	In development



Synopsis

A 70-year-old grandma is a loyal listener of the radio program, Get Ready for Sleep. After the program is off the air without warning, alongside the disappearance of host Noah, grandma stands up and gathers other older people to join the search. Those elders use their network to discover that the host Noah is suffering from taking care of his ill mom, Ruby. Grandma recognizes Noah's mother was the most famous singer back then. Ruby also knows Grandma, and they talk about all those happy bar street memories they've had. Grandma helps Noah find people to take care of Ruby, and also organizes a comeback concert. Ruby dies right after that concert. Get Ready for Sleep is on air again, grandma also takes this opportunity to start life anew.

Director's statement

Growing up and knowing that my parents from different backgrounds, like two juxtapositional narrative lines, should never cross. My father was from a once powerful family in a famous bar street of Taiwan, a local, friendly, and warm gangster family, and he believes in the value of justice. My father aims to do the right things, even in a hard time. My mother was from a family where her brothers were all doing entertainment-related businesses, from Taiwanese opera, puppet show, and outdoor cinema. However, she ran away when she was 11-year-old to seek freedom and lived a life without taking care of her brothers in a patriarchal society. Perhaps that's the exact reason I want to tell this story. The heart of the story is that everyone has their superpower, even the elders. All we need to do is put them in the right position or give them a chance to shine. Over time, while I spent time around elders, some of them have very low self-esteem, and they think they are too old, useless, or a burden for the next generation. I don't see it this way. I feel quite the opposite. Like my parents, they can be the most open-minded person around me, giving me the support of discovering my sexual orientation, fully accepting me even as I was not in a "normal" relationship. According to their own words, "Life is too short for the bullshit." I aim to make this film a "feel-good movie," although it tackles the issue of life and death, you should still feel good watching it till the end. The pace and tone just like the film, *The Farewell Party*, written and directed by Tel Granit and Sharon Maymom.



Denise Lin

Producer

Denise Lin has a Bachelor's Degree in English Literature from Huafan University. She has worked in film production in Taiwan since 2004, establishing strong connections in the film industry. She was involved in the production of the local feature film "Seediq Bale" as well as the Hollywood film "Life of Pi", which broadened her perspective and allowed her to witness a significant shift in the production system in Taiwan. In the last few years, Denise has produced both local and international projects of all genres, gaining knowledge of how to operate in both. She's now developing the feature film project "The Wild Grandma" with scriptwriter/director Ai-Lung Huang, with Svemirko Audiovisual Art Company.



Ailun Huang

Director

Ailun Huang earned her MA in Screenwriting from Kinoyes European Movie Master. The art of storytelling has been a focus for her for years, from fiction, film, documentary, and commercials. Apart from the never-dying passion for writing, she also discovers another perspective to shape the story in production design. She is also the alumna of Asian Film Academy and Siff Next.

Contacts

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