

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: SHANI K PARSONS | INFO@TYPOLOGY.CA



CHINA NOW | INDEPENDENT VISIONS

GROUNDBREAKING ANIMATIONS & EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA FROM ACROSS THE MAINLAND
2 SCREENINGS ONLY! MAR 30 + APR 3

TYOLOGY is proud to announce our support for CHINA NOW: Independent Visions, in the form of two exciting film screenings we'll host in Small World Music Centre's theatre space at Artscape Youngplace this spring.

Organized by Toronto-based curator and critic Shelly Kraicer, LA-based producer Karin Chien, and Chicago-based filmmaker JP Sniadecki, CHINA NOW is the touring arm of *Cinema on the Edge*, a program of 29 experimental films representing the best of Chinese independent film festivals from 2012-14. Launched to wide acclaim in New York last summer, *Cinema on the Edge* will debut in Toronto this March with a monthlong program of eight documentaries hosted by TIFF Cinematheque, under the series title *The Crisis of the Real: New Chinese Independent Documentaries*.

Following fast on their heels, TYOLOGY will present our own selection from the original series: **three groundbreaking animations and one experimental feature** which comprise an eye- and ear-opening program of independent contemporary cinema from across China. Featuring filmmakers from Shenyang in the north to Guangzhou in the south, and Tibet in the west to Taiwan in the east, this selection bespeaks volumes on the vastness of space, time scales, and cultural difference experienced by these artists, who must find their voices in a country where censorship remains the order of the day.

CHINA NOW | Selections from Cinema on the Edge, presented by TYOLOGY:

THE HUNTER AND THE SKELETON, 2012 | Directed by BAI BIN | 26 min animation

FAMILY REUNION, 2012 | Directed by CHEN LI-HUA | 18 min animation

PERFECT CONJUGAL BLISS, 2014 | Directed by ZHONG SU | 5.5 min animation

YUMEN, 2013 | Directed by HUANG XIANG, JP SNIADOCKI, XU RUOTAO | 65 min feature

see page 2 for film descriptions and more -->

TYOLOGY

180 SHAW ST / SUITE 302 / ARTSCAPE YOUNGPLACE / TORONTO / ONTARIO / M6J 2W5 / WWW.TYOLOGY.CA / INFO@TYPOLOGY.CA
REGULAR EXHIBITION HOURS: FRI-SUN 12-5 PM AND BY APPOINTMENT



FILM DESCRIPTIONS

THE HUNTER AND THE SKELETON, 2012 | Directed by BAI BIN | 26 min

This splendid animation of an Eastern Tibetan folk tale is a visually inventive mash-up of traditional Tibetan thangka painting techniques and 80s video arcade game aesthetics. Rendered in Flash with a score that blends native Tibetan music and contemporary sounds, it is an audiovisual delight that goes much deeper — a riveting adventure story with an allegorical twist.

FAMILY REUNION, 2012 | Directed by CHEN LI-HUA | 18 min

A–mei, an indigenous Taiwanese woman working in a fish processing plant, is called home for the Harvest Festival, but her boss refuses to let her go. Chen's imaginatively drawn tale is artfully rendered in stop motion style — a moving family portrait with a quirky, storybook feel that has universal appeal.

PERFECT CONJUGAL BLISS, 2014 | Directed by ZHONG SU | 5.5 min

Surreal and playful, this lusciously rendered animation streams across the screen like a magical river of plenty or a fantastical living scroll emerging and transforming out of the wreckage of a virtual wasteland. Accumulating a hallucinatory visual force which recalls the explosive ending to Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point*, *Perfect Conjugal Bliss* deeply satisfies the eyes even as it questions the origins and implications of humanity's insatiable desires.

YUMEN, 2013 | Directed by HUANG XIANG, JP SNIADOCKI, XU RUOTAO | 65 min

This collaboration between two Chinese avant-garde artists and an American experimental filmmaker is a visually stunning ficto-documentary aptly described by curator Shelly Kraicer as a "celluloid psycho-collage". Shot on 16mm film, it's set in the largely abandoned oil town of Yumen in China's Gansu province near Mongolia. Moving between a barren yet starkly beautiful landscape and what's left of a city torn by economic collapse and decay, signs of life (or afterlife?) in the form of nameless, wandering characters (ghosts?) perform impromptu, absurd, poignant, or poetic actions and interventions to the sounds of 70s Taiwan pop, contemporary Korean girl bands, and much more. A meditation on survival, this follow-up to Sniadocki's acclaimed 2012 film, *People's Park* (which will be screened at TIFF on March 15), is an altogether different take on life in contemporary China. Made with the support of Harvard University's Sensory Ethnography Lab. 16mm-to-digital, in Mandarin Chinese and Gansu dialect with English subtitles.

Fusing documentary and staged scenes in a manner reminiscent of Godard from the 1970s onward, Yumen brings dignity and beauty to a place that lies in near ruins, and was the finest piece of cinematic portraiture I witnessed at this year's Berlinale.

— Travis Jeppesen, *Artforum*

When a film like this articulates its setting... a once oil-rich beacon of production in the northwest Gansu province that has since been nearly abandoned — one realizes how few films understand how to create a vivid sense of place.... The monstrous, pulsating rhythm of drilling, the contrastive contours of the landscape, and the lonely group of buildings contained therein. The sound design brings forth a new layer of varying ironies and heartbreak — the very fabric of a broken space.

— Adam Cook, *Mubi*

see page 3 for screening details -->



SCREENING DETAILS

THERE WILL BE ONE EVENING SCREENING AND ONE DAYTIME SCREENING, each beginning with a brief introduction and closing with a short Q+A as follows:

Wednesday, March 30 from 7–9 pm (animations from 7–8, feature from 8–9 + Q&A) or
Sunday, April 3 from 1–3 pm (animations from 1–2 + kids' Q&A, feature from 2–3)

TICKETS MAY BE PURCHASED online at www.universe.com/chinanow.

Space is limited; advance purchase recommended. Plus save up to \$3 per ticket over the door price!

Tickets are available for the full program or each half separately (animations or feature):

\$12 for the full program

\$8 for just the animations (bring the kids! / 3 shorts / approx 1 hr / suggested age 5+ with caregiver)

or just the feature film (bring the film buff! / experimental documentary / approx 1 hr)

A limited number of tickets will be available at the door for \$15/full program or \$10/half program

40% of every ticket sold will go to the featured filmmakers in China

THE SCREENING LOCATION is Artscape Youngplace, Suite 101 (Small World Music Centre's the 1st Floor theatre space), 180 Shaw Street between Dundas and Queen, Toronto, ON M6J 2W5

FILMMAKER and ORGANIZER BIOS

KARIN CHIEN (producer, *Cinema on the Edge*) is committed to championing independent voices from around the world. She has produced ten independent features including *Stones in the Sun* (2012), *Circumstance* (2011), *The Exploding Girl* (2009), and *Robot Stories* (2002). Among her productions are films that have premiered at the Sundance and Berlin Film Festivals, won over 100 festival awards, and received distribution in 30+ countries. Chien is a recipient of the Independent Spirit Producer's Award and is the founder/president of dGenerate Films, the leading distributor of independent cinema from mainland China, as well as founding director of the Center for Asian American Media Fellowship, a mentoring program for emerging Asian American media professionals.

SHELLY KRAICER (curator, *Cinema on the Edge*) is a Canadian writer, critic, and film curator. Born in Toronto and educated at Yale University, he lived in Beijing for ten years, and has written film criticism in *Cinema Scope*, *Positions*, *Cineaste*, *the Village Voice*, and *Screen International*. Since 2007, he has been a programmer for the Vancouver International Film Festival, and has consulted for the Venice, Udine, Dubai, and Rotterdam International Film Festivals.

JP SNIADOCKI (co-organizer, *Cinema on the Edge*, and co-director, *Yumen*) is a filmmaker, anthropologist, and professor of documentary media at Northwestern University in Chicago. His films, which include *Chaiqian* (2008), *Foreign Parts* (with Verena Paravel, 2010), *People's Park* (with Libbie Cohn, 2012), and *The Iron Ministry* (2014), have won many awards at festivals around the world. His work has been featured in the 2014 Whitney Biennial, the 2014 Shanghai Biennale, the UCCA in Beijing, MoMA, the Guggenheim, the American Museum of Natural History, and a special section of the Busan International Film Festival 2012. He has written on Chinese independent cinema for *Cinema Scope*, *Visual Anthropology Review*, 电影作者 and *DV-Made China* (Hawaii University Press).

bios continue on page 4 -->

TYPOLGY



FILMMAKER and ORGANIZER BIOS, continued

BAI BIN (director, *The Hunter and the Skeleton*) was born in 1979 in the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of China's Sichuan province, and is of Tibetan ethnicity (his Tibetan name is Gentsu Gyatso). Bai has a Master of Arts degree in painting from the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, and since 2002 has participated in numerous exhibitions in China (Chengdu, Chongqing, Beijing, Hong Kong) and abroad (Kassel, Germany).

CHEN LI-HUA (director, *Family Reunion*) is a member of the Taiwanese Amis indigenous people. Born in 1985, she graduated from the Visual Communication and Design department of DaYeh University in 2007, and has since been involved in creating independent animated films.

XU RUOTAO (co-director, *Yumen*) is a visual artist and filmmaker, born in 1968 in Shenyang. He began his career at the famous pioneering independent creative community Yuanmingyuan around 1990. His first experimental feature, *Rumination* (2010), received a special mention at the 2010 Vancouver International Film Festival.

ZHONG SU (director, *Perfect Conjugal Bliss*) is a native of Hangzhou, China. After graduating from the New Media department of the China Academy of Art and Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Zhong pursued a practice focused on oil painting, video and installation art, documentary film, and experimental theatre. Starting in 2011, he began to specialize in experimental video art, and has been featured in three solo exhibitions to date.

HUANG XIANG (co-director, *Yumen*) is an avant garde artist and filmmaker, born in 1974 in Guangdong province. He has made two feature films, *Roast Chicken* (2012) and *Gossip* (2014). In 2011, Huang was one of three artists arrested for "causing a disturbance" by participating in a performance art piece at the Songzhuang art colony in Beijing. More information on Huang Xiang can be found on his website.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CINEMA ON THE EDGE ORGANIZERS TAKE TORONTO!

Karin Chien also happens to be the producer of *UNTITLED (STRUCTURES)*, 2012 by Leslie Hewitt in collaboration with cinematographer Bradford Young, currently on view as part of the exhibition *Collective Stance* at The Power Plant through May 15.

Shelly Kraicer (and possibly Karin Chien) will be on hand to answer questions about *Cinema on the Edge* and the state of contemporary Chinese independent filmmaking after the evening screening on Wednesday, March 30.

JP Sniadecki's masterful 2012 film, *People's Park* will be screened at TIFF on March 15 as part of their lineup of documentary films from CHINA NOW. Go see it there, then come see *Yumen*, his 2013 follow-up to *People's Park*, with us!

...

FOR ANY INQUIRIES or group sales, please contact info@typology.ca. More information and a link to purchase tickets online can be found on our event webpage: www.typology.ca/exhibition/china-now/

TYPOLGY