

Nezha Bros. Pictures Company Limited and
Le-joy Animation Studio
present



HAVE A NICE DAY

a film by Liu Jian



CHINA | ANIMATION | 77 MIN | DCP | 5.1

CONTACTS

international press in Berlin

WOLF Consultants

Gordon Spragg, Laurin Dietrich, Michael Arnon

+49 157 7474 9724

hello@wolf-con.com

www.wolf-con.com

international sales and festivals (outside Asia)

Memento Films International

sales@memento-films.com

festival@memento-films.com

tel.: +33 1 53 34 90 39

<http://international.memento-films.com>

international sales and festivals (Asia)

Edko Films

Mobile: +852-9739-8628

chiujulian@edkofilm.com.hk

SYNOPSIS

A hard rain is about to fall on a small town in Southern China.

In a desperate attempt to find money to save his fiancée's failed plastic surgery, Xiao Zhang, a mere driver, steals a bag containing 1 million from his boss.

News of the robbery spreads fast within the town and, over the course of one night, everyone starts looking for Xiao Zhang and his money...

Liu Jian delivers a whirlwind neo-noir, cementing his place as a pioneering force in independent Chinese animation.

HAVE A NICE DAY- In Conversation with Liu Jian

1. Can you describe your process for creating HAVE A NICE DAY? How different was it from PIERCING I, which you drew and animated single handedly on a tablet?

Generally, the process of conceiving, drawing, and animating HAVE A NICE DAY was not so much different from the way I worked for PIERCING 1 - I did most of the work by myself. At the same time the different themes and stories of the two films led me to incorporate different artistic ideas and distinct forms of visual expression, and in the end the two films each have their own visual universe. PIERCING 1 is a work that draws more on realism, and focuses on evoking the world and the society we live in, whereas HAVE A NICE DAY turns its gaze more towards the absurdity, the fantasy and the magical realism, or surrealism of the story I'm telling. In terms of the production itself, HAVE A NICE DAY is definitely more elaborate. In addition, I also tried to work with a new structure and way of storytelling for HAVE A NICE DAY, for example, there are more **blank shots (blank leaving)** in this film. I always try to add new and fresh elements to my films, and each new attempt is me aiming to achieve deeper artistic value and social relevance for the work.

2. Can you talk about the way you draw characters, as compared to the way you render urban landscapes and interiors?

My favorite artistic style (and in fact my artistic philosophy) is plain and simple. In this film, I use the minor actions and subtle movements of the characters to evoke their emotions, which, along with the vivid landscapes and interiors the characters exist in, constitute the poetic, and in some sense sad and melancholy, aesthetic philosophy of the film. In my eyes, this film as a whole can be seen as a landscape painting representing modern China.

3. What is your relationship to realism, and what role do the social and cultural dynamics of contemporary China play in your films?

HAVE A NICE DAY is an animation film, but it's penetrated through and through with the philosophy of realism. The film portrays an urban story that takes place on the edges of a southern Chinese city. There are so many uncertainties and possibilities to be imagined in such a dynamic and lively space as the city's borderlands. What some might call surrealism is often the reality there, and that is fascinating to me in itself. I love to observe and reflect on how people there are living, thinking, and acting. The cultural landscapes of the city's edges and the people who live there are one of the main sources and inspirations for my work.

At the same time, the coexistence of realism and symbolism emphasizes the fantasy and the absurdity of these characters and their stories. In modern China, magical realism is happening around us almost every day. Life at times can resemble a surreal comedy that is filled with both jubilation and self-paralysis.

4. Do you see HAVE A NICE DAY as a genre film, and does the idea of genre have a different meaning in China as compared to the West, or with animation as compared to live action films?

I like the cinematic language of genre films, and the idea of genre has had an influence on my filmmaking. HAVE A NICE DAY is an art-house animated film touching on serious themes, that is also in some ways a combination black comedy, fantasy, and crime story elements.

I see genre as a universal concept. No matter whether in China or in the West, genre is a set of parameters for cinematic language, so to me it's not a geographically specific concept. I think there are good genre films, and there are also bad genre films, but I don't call a film a "Chinese genre film" or a genre film from the west. When it comes to animation, I'm very open-minded too. My understanding and definition of animation is broad and open, the same way I think of filmmaking and cinematic art itself. To me what animation films have in common with live action films is more important than any differences between them.

5. Are there any heroes in HAVE A NICE DAY, and how do you think the film reflects the impact of the rapid change affecting certain parts of China?

HAVE A NICE DAY is an ensemble film with no specific character who could be described as the main protagonist, unless we say that the bag of money is actually the film's lead. The movie is set in a town outside a small southern city in China, and the trends of rapid urbanization and industrialization in the country change a small town like this in vivid as well as in subtle ways. I am fascinated by all of these changes and the people whose lives are affected by these dynamics. My main goal is to stay close to them, to observe the lives of the different groups of people, listen to their voices, and then be able to share their stories through filmmaking - showing their happiness, their anger, their sadness, but also their hope.

LIU JIAN



Liu Jian (China, 1969) majored in Chinese Painting and graduated from the Nanjing Art Institute in 1993.

Since then, he has made various works that met with the criteria of modern art and that were presented in some of the most important exhibitions in China and abroad. He is one of the representative artists of Gaudy Art and Conceptual Photography. He began working on animations in 1995 and founded Le-joy Animation Studio in 2007. His first feature animation, *Piercing 1*, screened in numerous film festivals, including Holland Animation FF, Annecy International Animation FF, and Hong Kong International FF. The film also won Best Animated Feature Film at the 4th Asia Pacific Screen Awards. Liu Jian also teaches animation filmmaking at the China Academy of Art.

- 2017 Have A Nice Day, Writer / Director
- 2011 Look at This Man (short), Writer / Director
- 2011 Face (short), Writer / Director
- 2011 Chaos & Order (short), Writer/ Director
- 2010 Piercing 1, Writer/ Director
- 2002 Chicken Poets, Animator
- 2001 Da Wan, Animator

Piercing 1

- 2009 Holland Animation Film Festival
- 2009 Castelli Animati - Official selection - Fabrizio Bellocchio Award
- 2010 Brussels International Animation Film Festival
- 2010 Annecy International Animation Film Festival - Competition
- 2010 ReAnimania International Animation Festival
- 2010 Beijing Independent Film Festival
- 2010 China Independent Film Festival – Best New Film Award
- 2010 Fantoche International Animation Film Festival
- 2010 Ullens Center for Contemporary Art China Premiere

2010 4th cinema digital seoul_film festival - Green Chameleon Award
2010 34th CINANIMA International Animated Film Festival - Best Feature Film
2010 4th Asia Pacific Screen Awards - Best Animated Feature Film
2010 Festival Les 3 Continents
2011 35th Hong Kong International Film Festival
2011 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston Animation Celebration
2011 Lisbon Animated Film Festival
2011 The Zagreb World Festival of Animated Films
2012 Centre Georges Pompidou Screenings

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Screenwriter/ Director

Liu Jian

Presented By

Nezha Bros. Pictures Company Limited
Le-joy Animation Studio

Creation & Production

Le-joy Animation Studio

Executive Producer

Yang Cheng
Liu Jian

Produced by

Lynne Wang

Producer

Yang Cheng
Liu Jian

Co-Producer

Jin Rui

Line Producer

Guan Bo

Character & Background Design

Liu Jian

Director of Photography

Lin Shan

Editor

Minbing Xiaoliu

Music

The Shanghai Restoration Project Presents

Sound Director

Li Danfeng

Art Director

Lai Baoer

Cast (Voice)

Xiao Zhang	Zhu Changlong
Lao Zhao	Cao Kai
Fang Yuanjun	Liu Jian
Uncle Liu	Yang Siming
A De	Shi Haitao
Skinny	Ma Xiaofeng
Old 3	Xue Feng
Second Sister	Zheng Yi
Yellow Eyes	Cao Kou
Ann Ann	Zhu Hong
Wu Lidu	Wang Da
Swallow's Mom	Wu Yu
Man Look for Money	Zhao Xingjun
Little Boss	Zeng Hongyu
Land Rover Man	Gao Jie
Li Er	Liu Jian
Zhang Cuifang	Li Haochen
Hacker	Liu Pincun
Student 1	Zhang Renwen
Student 2	Wu Qicheng
Desk Attendant	Li Kexin
Incense Burning Woman	Li Haochen
Brother Biao	Yang Yuexin
Waitress	Wang Xinyue
Construction Work	Yao Gaosheng

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