

cast
LI RONGKUN / YANG XUAN / KANG HANG

written & directed by
LIU YAONAN

produced by
CYRIAC AURIOL and SHAN ZUOLONG

The Great Phuket 小半截

presented by MORTON SHEN for MONOLOGUE FILMS co-producers DRIES PHLYPO / KAROLINE HENKEL / JASPER MIELKE / ARTO SEBASTIAN cast LI RONGKUN / YANG XUAN / KANG HANG / YOU JUNFEN and LIU HUIYUN
guest appearance LIU LIJUN screenplay by LIU YAONAN director of photography LIU YAONAN production designer AURÉLIEN KRAFFT / ZHAO XUYING costume designer ZHAO XUYING sound supervisor & re-recording
mixer ANGE HUBERT sound engineer LI FAN edited by CLARA SAUNIER / LIU YAONAN music by AURELIEN KRAFFT supervising colorist YANNIG WILLMANN animation LIU YAONAN line producer MEI RUI

Remora Films



a LIU YAONAN film

PRESS KIT

Remora Films



a
private
view
productions



WOOD
WATER
FILMS

Technical information

Title : The Great Phuket

Genre : Fiction

Shooting Format : 4K/Color

Year of Production : 2023

Length : 97min

Language : Chinese

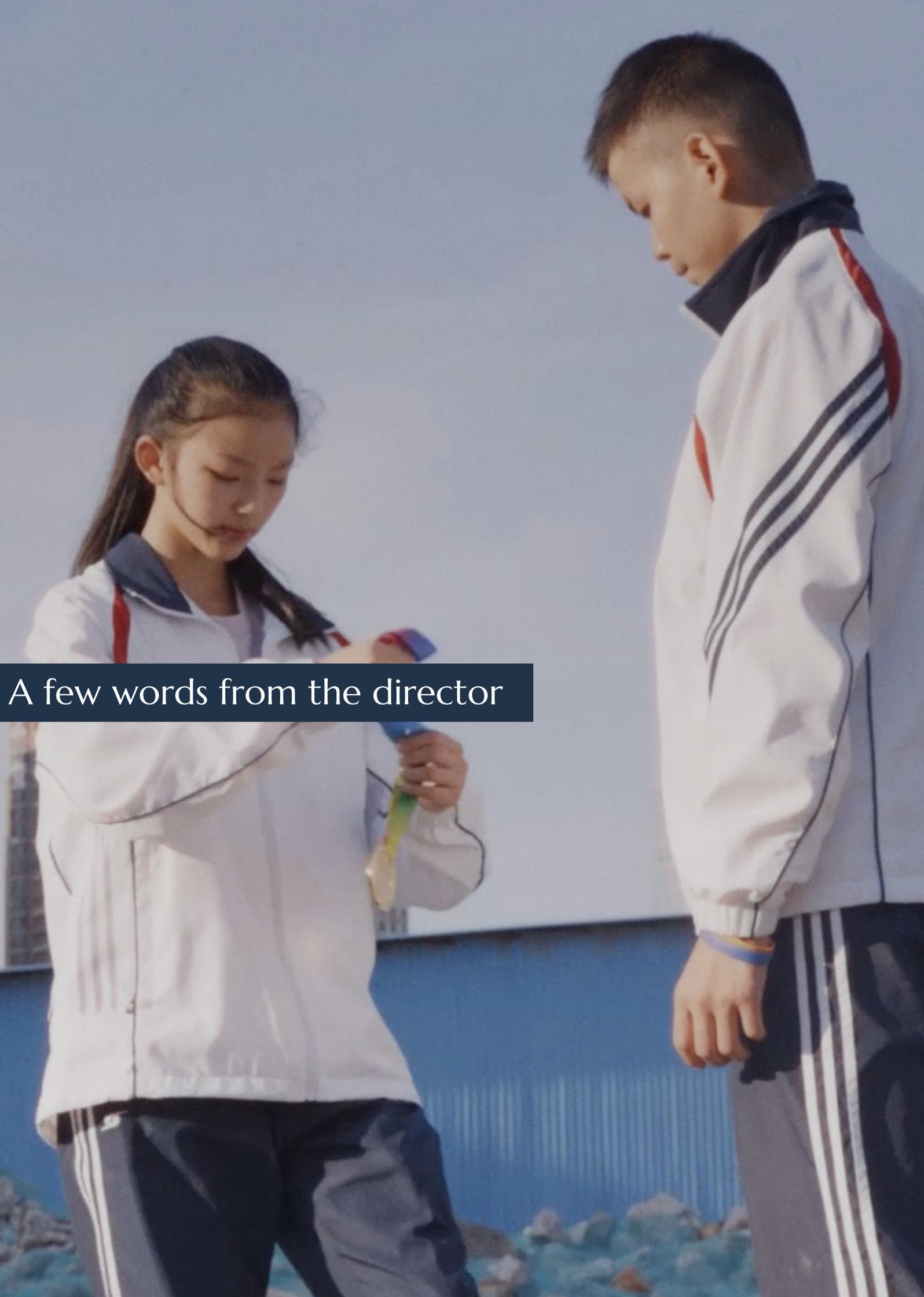
Synopsis

Li Xing, a fourteen-year-old teenager, lives in the Great Phuket district in South China, a setting of ruins and reconstruction. He doesn't get along well with his mother who refuses to leave the family house planned for destruction, and the middle school where he studies brings him nothing but problems. One day, he finds an underground shelter where he can escape his teenage life and where strange things are happening...

"It's truly a unique and wonderful film, offering a rich and multidimensional landscape, in the literal sense, of a specific place undergoing rapid and sometimes violent change, and of an emotional landscape of youth's dreams, and desire, which much like the city that they inhabit, is shaped by forces beyond their control, but within which they develop their own strength and forge their own path. The elegant and beautiful use of the animation sequences further adds to this complexity by offering a glimpse of things unseen."

Sebastian Markt - Berlinale 2024, Generation, Section Head





A few words from the director

A few words from the director

The story of youth that I am talking about is the process of a teenager gradually finding and defining himself. At the age of 14, Li Xing begins to wonder what kind of person he will become. So he needs to find references in this vague adult world, he looks for them in his stepfather, in his friend Song Yang, in his mother, in Song Yang's mother and in the girl of the school radio. After these distress signals all go unnoticed, he gradually desponds and seeks a refuge different from his daily life, in which he could release his destructive instincts. He lives the same thing as the Great Phuket, he falls apart, dismantles, goes through hardships and then rebuilds himself. The life of this teenager is a reflection of this community, of these populations lost in changes that always go faster than they do.

In the story, the air raid shelter that Li Xing and his friend Song Yang find in the ruins of the Great Phuket is a clone of Li Xing. Once inside, the changes in the shelter due to the demolition of the neighborhood begin to have sexual and carnal implications. There is a similarity between this process of accumulating unknown power and the boy's first nocturnal ejaculation, between fear, arousal and pain. Finally, when these powers have erupted, he can finally calm down and observe his mother, his stepfather and the place where he lives. Something more essential and deeper begins to connect to his life.

I tried to take a special angle to show these characters, to avoid the film becoming a voyeuristic consumption of their misery. There are violent conflicts in the background, we see them very often on their television reports, but all these contents, are in the background, I focus instead on the evolution of their emotional worlds. Their ability to be resilient and to regain strength, to continue to lead their lives, is precisely what I find beautiful, although it is often ignored, as if they were only abstract concepts, with no real weight in the world. Most of the political class ignores this part of the people, ignores to get closer to them in an intimate way, and therefore create conflict born from this feeling of abandonment.

Unlike the rational world, the world of a teenager is like a kind of emotional addiction, an illusory reality, an addictive fantasy, that's why some surrealist elements can exist in harmony in the so-called realistic part of the film. The style of the film is between documentary and fiction, with a tone of "diary" of this character, by an elliptical way, I would like to invite the spectators to experiment this small universe of adolescence. The two styles coexist with each other and stimulate each other. Some of the surreal scenes in the film are done in animation to fit the context of the story's youthful fantasy.

The film uses non-professional actors in the urban villages. We trained them for 8 months outside of school, including a theatrical and performative approach as well as basic film knowledge workshops (screenings, discussions and debates etc...). They all play their own role, as if it were "real life".

Yaonan LIU



A childhood memory

A childhood memory

When I was a teenager, there was a smelly river not far from my home. On the other side of the river was a small village. One day a motorcycle and a body were found in the river, it looked like they had been soaked in soy sauce. A little past the villagers' houses, across the large fields, you can walk to Dianchi Lake. The surface of the lake is covered with blue-green algae that look like puddles of paint, and on these puddles water hyacinths intermingle. This world is separated by a wall, it is both a paradise and a hidden danger. At the time, all my adventures and daydreams were linked to it.

The urban areas surrounding these villages become islands in the city. The villagers rent their self-built houses, the rent is not very expensive and a lot of people from other cities, regions and border countries come here. Here, in one house, can live a hundred people. The lack of security facilities, chaotic urban planning, frequent domestic accidents, crime stories, work, life and entertainment of the inhabitants of these neighborhoods easily blend together. Visually, the whole area is urban but the temperament of the people around is quite different. After 2010, these urban villages have been displaced, destroyed and rebuilt one after another. The history of the « Great Phuket » is inspired by this period.

This urban form has undergone drastic changes and will sooner or later disappear in the city, replaced by new urban spaces and new ways of life. I miss this dirty and messy place, the carnival atmosphere is getting old, the villagers are looking longingly at their houses, now replaced by huge buildings.

The urban village of the Great Phuket is a place in which one is embarrassed to be born in, a temporary town sandwiched between two periods, very similar to the short and violent adolescence of young Li Xing in the film's story.

Yaonan LIU



Director's biography

LIU Yaonan's biography

Born in Kunming in 1987, LIU Yaonan is a Chinese screenwriter, director and artist. He first graduated in Cinema from Beijing Normal University. He made his debut in the industry behind the scenes as a set photographer, making-of director and assistant to various directors on feature film shootings such as *Cold War* (Pawel Pawlikovski, 2018) or *Seek McCartney* (Wang Chao, 2015). In 2013, he entered the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Art de Bourges in France to continue his studies in contemporary arts and cinema. After having graduated in France in 2016, he returned to China to his first feature film *The Great Phuket*. The screenplay was awarded the Special Jury Award of 2017 for Outstanding Young Director Film Project by the China Film Foundation Wu Tianming Youth Film Summit. In 2021, he returned to France for a one-year master course in graphic design and then back to China where he shot *The Great Phuket* with the help of his family and friends and the support of some French cinema technicians. In 2023, *The Great Phuket* was also granted the postproduction fund of Ile-de-France with the support of the French CNC. LIU Yaonan now lives and work in Kunming.

Filmography :

Director

- *Incarnation* – 2021 (4'), short film.
- *Imminent Death Experience* – 2013 (6'), short film.
- *Two Days* – 2010 (26'), short film.

Producers



Producers

AURIOL Cyriac (Remora Films, France)

As an experienced French film producer with twenty feature films and about fifty short-films, Cyriac Auriol has emerged as a daring contributor of French and international cinema. Through his first company, Les Films du Requin, his main credits include *Jeanne and The Perfect Guy* (Olivier Ducastel & Jacques Martineau – Berlin Competition 1998) and *Heroes* (Bruno Merle – Cannes 2007). In 2013, he founded the independent company Remora Films, to support audacious authors such as Romanian director Mihai Mincan (*To The North* – Critics Prize Mostra 2022). Currently, he finishes Iranian Alireza Khatami's upcoming feature film, *Things That You Kill* (2023).

SHAN Zuolong (Monologue Films, Hong Kong SAR, China)

A Chinese film producer based in Beijing.

In the past years, his main producing credits include *Kaili Blues* (Locarno 2015, BI Gan, 110min.), *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (Cannes 2018, BI Gan, 138/130min.), and *Love Is A Gun* (Best Debut Film Award, 80th Venice IFF, LEE Hong-Chi, 81min.); his executive producing credits including *The Water Murmurs* (Short Film Palme d'or 2022, CHEN Jianying, 15min.); his co-producing credits including *Dwelling By The West Lake* (Tokyo 2023, main competition, GU Xiaogang, 115min.).

PHLYPO Dries (A Private View, Belgium)

Dries Phlypo started his career as a youth programmer for the Cultural Capital of Europe Brugge 2022 and launched the school programme *Lessons in The Dark*. He has produced a dozen films including *My Dad is a Sausage* (2021) by Anouk Fortunier, *Zagros* by Sahim Omar Kalifa (2017, Grand Prix Filmfest Ghent) and *Oxygen* by Hans Van Nuffel (2011, Best Discovery – EFA). He has also co-produced more than thirty international, including *Dirty Gold* (2019) by Sacha Polak and *Cobain* (2017) by Nanouk Leopold. His current films include *Zeewonk* (Generation Berlinale 2023) by Domien Huyghe, *Crossing* by Jacqueline Van Vugt and *Inside* (Panorama Berlinale 2023) by Vasilis Katsoupis starring Willem Dafoe.

HENKEL Karoline (Wood Water Films, Germany)

Karoline Henkel studied International Producing at at Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg and la Fémis. During her studies, among others, she produced *Two Mothers*, which premiered at Berlinale in 2013. In 2015, she co-founded the production company Wood Water Films in Berlin and Mannheim with her fellow students Jasper Mielke and Arto Sebastian. Wood Water Films specializes in producing feature films and documentaries for the international market. Notable projects include the award-winning films *Raw Materials* (2023), *Alaska* (2023) and *Mayor, Shepherd, Widow, Dragon* (2021). Currently, Wood Water Films is actively developing and financing two feature films, three documentaries and two TV series.

Casting



Actors

Main characters

Li Xing.....Li Rongkun

Song Yang Yang Xuan

Wang Yan You Junwen

Duan Fashun Liu Huiyun

Gan Xiaojie Kang Hang

Xiao Xiang Xie Zhenan

Song Qing Liu Lijun

Chen Rong Yan Huimei

Lu Meili Zhao Qunying

Xiao Shun Geng Fan

Wang Hong Li Hui

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Remora Films



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