

**Mongrel Media**

Presents

# **A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP**

A Film by Zhang Yimou  
(95min., China, 2010)

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## **CREDITS**

Starring	SUN Honglei XIAO Shenyang YAN Ni
Co-starring	NI Dahong CHENG Ye MAO Mao
Special Appearance	ZHAO Benshan
Edited by	MENG Peicong
Music Composed by	ZHAO Lin
Sound Designed by	TAO Jing
Production Designed by	HAN Zhong
Director of Photography	ZHAO Xiaoding
Production Manager	HUANG Xinming
Executive Producer	ZHANG Zhenyan
Produced by	ZHANG Weiping BILL Kong GU Hao
Story Consultant	ZHOU Xiaofeng
Screenplay by	XU Zhengchao SHI Jianquan
Directed by	ZHANG Yimou

## **A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP**

*A film by Zhang Yimou*

*A tale of a wife, her gun and the noodle shop*

**A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP** is a remake of the 1985 directorial debut of Joel and Ethan Coen, **BLOOD SIMPLE**. Transposing the Coen Brother's celebrated mix of dark humor and riveting suspense to China, the film is helmed by Zhang Yimou (director of **THE RED SORGHUM, TO LIVE, HERO, HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS** and other masterpieces), one of the most eminent directors of the "Fifth Generation". This black comedy thriller is an exposé of how intense desires can consume humanity, and the irony that life never submits to our calculation.

### **SHORT SYNOPSIS**

Wang is a gloomy and cunning noodle shop owner in a desert town in China. Feeling neglected, Wang's wife secretly goes out with Li, one of his employees. A timid man, Li reluctantly keeps the gun the landlady bought for 'killing her husband later'. Every single move they make, however, does not escape the boss's notice. Wang decides to bribe patrol officer Zhang to kill the illicit couple. It looks like a perfect plan: the affair will come to a cruel but satisfying end... or so he thinks, but the equally wicked Zhang has an agenda of his own that will lead to even more violence...

### **LONG SYNOPSIS**

In a small desert town near Jiayu Pass in China (the first pass at the west end of the Great Wall), Wang owns a noodle shop where he, his wife and his employees also live. Not exactly a loving boss, he spends every penny to his own advantage, owing his workers their wages for months.

Miserable from suffering with Wang's dark temper and abuse, his wife has an affair with Li, who can spin round sheets of noodle dough nimbly but never shows the same confidence outside the kitchen. Every time Li drives her to buy rouge, the two have sex in the carriage. One day, to Li's dismay, she purchases a gun from a Persian merchant, claiming that only Wang's death can guarantee their happiness. Never a match for her biting wit and tongue, Li agrees to hide the weapon.

Meanwhile, waiter Zhao and patrol officer Zhang – both bribed by the cunning Wang – inform him of the gun and the affair respectively. After catching her wife red-handed and grappling with her during one of her rouge trips, Wang resorts to paying Zhang to kill the illicit lovers.

The day after, Zhang returns with a blood-stained piece of clothing and fiercely pierced woman's underwear. In his client's secret chamber, Zhang waits for his reward and, all of a sudden, shoots Wang with Li's gun he found earlier. As Wang lies completely motionless, Zhang struggles to open the safe but fails. Outside, Zhao and waitress Chen are arguing about whether they should sneak in and 'steal' their wages from the safe. As the door squeaks and a ray of light seeps through the crack, Zhang loses his nerve and escapes through the window, leaving the gun behind... Will someone discover Wang's body? What will be done with his money? Who will lay hands on the gun? Nobody can say for sure because everyone is either silently plotting or plotted against...

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

I love all the works by the Coen Brothers. Some twenty years ago at a film festival, I saw their directorial debut BLOOD SIMPLE, which left me with a great impression. The film keeps coming back to my mind, although I haven't seen it for a second time.

One day, a curious idea struck me: what would it be like if Blood Simple was made as a Chinese story? That was how A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP began to take shape.

I gave the remake a rich Chinese flavor, casting Xiao Shenyang – a young comic actor who recently shot to fame in China – to add in a sense of farcical humor at the beginning. The fun soon turns into riveting suspense. I also adopted the aesthetic style of the old Chinese opera piece, *San Cha Kou*. The result is the confinement of all the characters within the same space, each of them shifting roles with one another and making similar mistakes. This lays bare the absurdity of life – something ironically repetitive, always beyond our control.

I would like to thank all of the actors for their wonderful performances. I truly appreciate the effort and commitment of every member of the crew.

- Zhang Yimou

## **THE CAST**

### **SUN Hunglei** (as Zhang)

A 1997 graduate of The Central Academy of Drama, Sun Hunglei is an acclaimed character actor both on the stage and screen. Having started his film career in Zhang Yimou's *THE ROAD HOME* in 1999, he won the 2000 Plum Blossom Award – a prestigious accolade in Chinese theater – with his performance in *THE THREEPENNY OPERA*. With a confident ease of identifying with the characters he portrays, Sun has attracted comparisons to veteran actor Jiang Wen (*WARRIORS OF HEAVEN AND EARTH*). Since the new millennium, he has been featured in a great number of popular productions, including Tsui Hark's *SEVEN SWORDS* (2004), Alexi Tan's *BLOOD BROTHERS* (2006) and Chen Kaige's *FOREVER ENTHRALLED* (2007). Sun is also a beloved television personality, starring in celebrated drama series such the thrilling spy story *Lurk* (2008). He is a two-time winner of the Shanghai Television Festival Magnolia Award.

### **Filmography:**

2010 A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP  
2009 MY FAIR GENTLEMAN  
2007 FOREVER ENTHRALLED  
2006 BLOOD BROTHERS  
2006 MONGOL  
2005 SHANGHAI RED  
2004 SEVEN SWORDS  
2001 MANHOLE  
2001 ZHOU YU'S TRAIN  
1999 THE RIVER  
1999 THE ROAD HOME

**XIAO Shenyang** (as Li)

Born in Liaoning Province, Xiao Shenyang developed his singing and other musical talents in performing groups during his teenage years. A student of renowned comedian Zhao Benshan (*Getting Home*), he rose to fame with his charismatic mimicry of pop singers at China Central Television's 2008 Spring Festival Gala. He kicked off his acting career in the entertainment industry with TV series *Love in a Village 2*, later appearing in another series, *Guangdong Da Xiansheng*. This year, he returned to CCTV's Gala and participated in its short comedy, *Got the Money Anyway*. *A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP* is his first film.

**YAN Ni** (as Wang's wife)

An actress at the Television Art Center of the People's Liberation Army Air Force, Yan Ni garnered wide recognition with her role as an endearing tavern owner in the period drama series *My Own Swordsman* (2005), which won the 26<sup>th</sup> Flying Apsaras Award for Top Drama. The Chinese screen industry saw her popularity soar further when she received the Plum Blossom Award for Best Actress with *The North Wind* in 2009. Yan has also been casted in numerous films, notably the Hua Biao Award winning, New Year-comedy *BIE NA ZI JI BU DANG GAN BU* (2007) and the starry coproduction *KUNG FU DUNK* (2008).

**Filmography:**

2010 A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP  
2009 TRUE LEGEND  
2009 COW  
2008 KUNG FU DUNK  
2007 CALL TO DESTINY  
2007 BIE NA ZI JI BU DANG GAN BU  
1999 COG AND HEN

**NI Dahong** (as Wang)

An eminent actor on the Chinese stage, in films and television, Ni Dahong graduated from The Central Academy of Drama in 1986. He is a leading player with The National Theatre Company of China, and has received two of the highest honors in Chinese theater, the Plum Blossom Award in 2000 and the Wenhua Award in 1999. His theater work includes both the Chinese and Western classical repertory. His film work includes roles in Zhang Yimou's *To Live* (1994), which won the Grand Prize at the 47<sup>th</sup> Cannes Film Festival, and *Journey to the Western Xia Empire* (1997) directed by Lu Wei, a prizewinner at the 50<sup>th</sup> Locarno International Film Festival, Switzerland. He has also been seen in numerous leading roles on Chinese television.

**Filmography:**

2010 SI DA MING BU  
2010 A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP  
2009 BIRTHDAY  
2009 TOUXI  
2006 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER  
2005 LOACH IS FISH TOO  
1997 JOURNEY TO THE WESTERN XIA EMPIRE  
1994 TO LIVE

**CHENG Ye** (as Zhao)

Cheng Ye has been devoted to folk performing arts since childhood. An avid entertainer, he is one of the most skilled students of Zhao Benshan. He has mesmerized a vast audience with his vivacious appearance in *Guo Nian Le* at Liaoning Television's 2008 Spring Festival Gala, as well as TV series *Guangdong Da Xiansheng*.

## **MAO Mao (as Chen)**

Mao Mao has performed in various TV shows such as China Central Television's 2009 Spring Festival Gala. She played "Ya Dan Er" in the Gala's comic piece, *Got the Money Anyway*.

## **THE FILMMAKERS**

### **ZHANG Yimou (Director)**

Ever since his directorial debut, *RED SORGHUM* (1987), which won the Golden Bear Award at the Berlin Film Festival, Zhang Yimou has established his reputation as one of the most talented and influential directors today.

Zhang Yimou was born in China in 1950 and studied cinematography at the Beijing Film Academy. He became a leading member of China's Fifth Generation Filmmakers, the first group to graduate following the turbulent Cultural Revolution. He is an accomplished actor, starring in *Red Sorghum* as well as earning the Best Actor Award at the Tokyo International Film Festival for his performance in *OLD WELL* (1986). Zhang Yimou is also a skilled cinematographer, with credits including *YELLOW EARTH* (1984), *OLD WELL* (1986), and *THE BIG PARADE* (1986).

Zhang Yimou has received multiple honors as a director. He is the first Chinese filmmaker to receive Motion Picture Academy recognition, being nominated for Academy Awards® in the Best Foreign Film category for *JU DOU* in 1990, *RAISE THE RED LANTERN* in 1991, and *HERO* in 2003. He has earned numerous top honors, including the Silver Lion at the 44<sup>th</sup> Venice International Film Festival for *RAISE THE RED LANTERN* (1991), the Golden Lion Award at the 45<sup>th</sup> Venice International Film Festival for *THE STORY OF QIU JU* (1992), the Grand Jury Prize at the 47<sup>th</sup> Cannes International Film Festival for *TO LIVE* (1994), the Golden Lion Award at the 52<sup>nd</sup>

Venice International Film Festival for NOT ONE LESS (1999), the Silver Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival for THE ROAD HOME (1999) and the Alfred Bauer Prize for HERO (2003).

HERO went on to sweep the board at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Hong Kong Film Awards, winning awards for Best Action Choreography, Best Art Direction, Best Cinematography, Best Costume Design, Best Music, Best Sound and Best Visual Effects.

Zhang Yimou's box office hit HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS received multiple international awards as well as BAFTA and Golden Globe nominations for Best Foreign Film. He followed up with 2005's RIDING ALONE FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES and 2006's CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER.

Zhang Yimou has mastered new realms of creativity in recent years. On the stage of New York's Metropolitan Opera in December 2006, he directed Placido Domingo in the world premiere of composer Tan Dun's original opera *The First Emperor*. He also acted as the chief director of the spectacular opening and closing ceremonies of the 29th Olympic Games in Beijing, 2008.

**Films as Director:**

- 2010 A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP
- 2006 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
- 2005 RIDING ALONE FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES
- 2004 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
- 2002 HERO
- 2000 HAPPY TIMES
- 1999 THE ROAD HOME
- 1999 NOT ONE LESS
- 1997 KEEP COOL
- 1995 LUMIERE AND COMPANY
- 1995 SHANGHAI TRIAD

1994 TO LIVE  
1992 THE STORY OF QIU JU  
1991 RAISE THE RED LANTERN  
1990 JU DOU  
1989 THE PUMA ACTION  
1987 RED SORGHUM

**ZHANG Weiping (Producer)**

Before launching his career in the film industry as a producer, Zhang had worked in various businesses ranging from property to pharmaceuticals. Since Zhang Yimou's 1999 KEEP COOL, he has produced many of the director's works, including the beautifully crafted epic HERO (2002). Zhang is now the president of Beijing New Picture Film Co., Limited.

**Films as Producer:**

2010 A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP  
2006 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER  
2005 RIDING ALONE FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES  
2004 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS  
2002 HERO  
2000 HAPPY TIMES  
1999 THE ROAD HOME  
1998 NOT ONE LESS  
1996 KEEP COOL

**BILL Kong (Producer)**

Bill Kong is head of Edko Films, one of Hong Kong's longest-standing independent film companies. Kong's production debut, THE BLUE KITE (1993) received multiple awards including Best Feature Film at the Hawaii and Tokyo International Film Festivals. Bill

Kong's production credits include Yim Ho's THE DAY THE SUN TURNED COLD (1994), which won Best Picture and Best Director at the Tokyo International Film Festival, and the Academy Award® winning epic, CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON (2000 Best Picture).

CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON became not only one of the biggest hits of 2000, but also the most popular foreign film in US cinematic history. It went on to earn a roaring US\$210 million at the box office and win multiple awards including four Academy Awards® in Best Foreign Language Film, Best Art Direction, Best Original Score and Best Cinematography, as well as two Golden Globe Awards in Best Foreign Language Film and Best Director.

In 2002 alone, Bill Kong produced Sun Zhou's acclaimed love story ZHOU YU'S TRAIN, starring Gong Li, Tian Zhuangzhuang's remake of the Chinese classic film SPRINGTIME IN A SMALL TOWN, which won the San Marco prize at the 2002 Venice Film Festival, and Zhang Yimou's nominated martial arts drama, *Hero*.

*Hero* smashed box-office records when it opened in China, grossing more than US\$1.45M in a single day from 200 screens, then opened to a staggering US\$18M in the U.S. in 2004. Winner of the Alfred E. Bauer Prize for innovation at the 2003 Berlin Film Festival, HERO has been nominated for a host of awards, including Best Foreign Language Film at the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Academy Awards, Best Foreign Film at the Golden Globe Awards, and 14 nominations at the Hong Kong Film Awards, including Best Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay and Best Actress for Maggie Cheung.

Bill Kong's 2004 projects include WINDSTRUCK, the first Korean film to open day and date in Korea, Hong Kong and China, and Zhang Yimou's Academy Award® nominated HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS, which premiered at the 58<sup>th</sup> Cannes Film Festival to great acclaim. 2006 has seen three Bill Kong productions released in the US: FEARLESS, directed by Ronny Yu and starring Jet Li, Zhang Yimou's RIDING ALONE

FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES, CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER, and now A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP.

Bill Kong's recent projects include Yuen Woping's TRUE LEGEND and Tian Zhuangzhunag's THE WARRIOR AND THE WOLF.

**Films as Producer:**

- 2010 TRUE LEGEND
- 2010 A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP
- 2009 THE WARRIOR AND THE WOLF
- 2009 MURDERER
- 2009 SUBARU
- 2009 BLOOD: THE LAST VAMPIRE
- 2007 LUST, CAUTION
- 2006 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
- 2006 FEARLESS
- 2005 RIDING ALONE FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES
- 2004 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
- 2004 WINDSTRUCK
- 2003 ZHOU YU'S TRAIN
- 2002 HERO
- 2002 SPRINGTIME IN A SMALL TOWN
- 2000 CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON
- 1994 THE DAY THE SUN TURNED COLD
- 1993 THE BLUE KITE

**GU Hao (Producer)**

Holding a master's degree in Arts and Media, Gu has accumulated a solid knowledge of film theory, film laws and regulations. A winner of over 20 awards, he boasts a professional experience of over 30 years in filmmaking and distribution. He is also well

known for producing outstanding genre films.

Gu is now the Executive President of Huaxia Film Distribution Co., Ltd.

### **XU Zhengchao (Screenplay)**

While working as a screenwriter for the Liaoning Provincial Department of Culture, Xu Zhengchao acts as the Vice President of Benmountain Media Group, a Liaoning-based group that oversees various performing troupes in Liaoning. The originator of sitcom *Jin Re Sheng Tang*, he has written comic sketches for China Central Television's annual Spring Festival Gala since 2007, namely *Ce Hua* (2007), *The Torchbearer* (2008) and *Got the Money Anyway* (2009).

Zheng has directed two TV series, *Guandong Da Xiansheng* (2008) and *Love in a Village 3* (2009). He is also the author of the 2009 novel, *Chuang Dang*.

### **SHI Jianquan (Screenplay)**

Shi is a graduate of the Art Department of Capital Normal University, specializing in oil painting. He has worked as artistic editor for a number of newspapers and magazines, while writing several popular television series such as the spy story *No Regrets* (2003). He is also one of the screenwriters of the acclaimed black comedy, *DEVILS ON THE DOORSTEP*. The film premiered at the 2000 Cannes Film Festival and garnered the Grand Prize, as well as the France Culture Award for Foreign Cineaste of the Year.

### **ZHOU Xiaofeng (Story Consultant)**

A Beijing-born graduate of the Chinese Department of Shangdong University, Zhou worked as an editor of children's literature for 8 years. In 2000, she joined the Beijing Publishing House as a magazine editor. She is also the author of several award-winning prose works.

## **ZHAO Xiaoding (Director of Photography)**

Zhao Xiaoding graduated from the prestigious Beijing Film Academy in 1987 with a degree in Cinematography. Zhao shot his first feature film, SOUL OF THE THUNDERING MOUNTAIN (1987) straight out of college and has since been extremely prolific, averaging at least one film a year. His other works include the critically acclaimed A SEASON OF FLOWERS AND RAIN (1999) and SPRING SUBWAY (2001).

In 2001, Zhao Xiaoding began his collaboration with Director Zhang Yimou, working as the cameraman on Zhang's martial arts epic, HERO (2003). The two struck up a great working relationship, and when Zhang Yimou began preparations for HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS, the helmer quickly asked Zhao to be Director of Photography on his new film. Zhao's work on the film earned him his first Academy Award nomination for Best Cinematography.

Aside from his cinematic commitments, Zhao Xiaoding is a refined and experienced television commercial cinematographer. Zhao has shot advertising campaigns for some of the leading brands in the world including Coca Cola, Armani Perfume, Toyota and the Bank of China.

Zhao Xiaoding was Director of Photography on the successful publicity film for Beijing's Olympic bid, the Shanghai Expo bid and the Beijing 2008 Logo Unveiling publicity film.

### **Films as Director of Photography:**

- 2010 TRUE LEGEND
- 2010 A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP
- 2008 KUNG FU DUNK
- 2008 THE CHILDREN OF HUANG SHI
- 2008 AN EMPRESS AND THE WARRIORS
- 2006 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

2005 RIDING ALONE FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES  
2004 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS  
2003 HERO  
2001 SPRING SUBWAY  
1999 A SEASON OF FLOWERS AND RAIN  
1998 THE PROSPEROUS QUEEN MOTHER  
1997 LOVE FOOL

**HAN Zhong (Production Designer)**

Han Zhong is a 1993 graduate of the Department of Art Direction (Art Design) at the Beijing Film Academy. He is the Supervising Art Director of Zhang Yimou's HERO (2002) and HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS (2004). In 2007, he won the Grand Bell Award for Best Art Direction with THE RESTLESS (2006).

**Films as Art Director:**

2009 A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP  
2009 A TALE OF TWO DONKEYS  
2009 EMPIRE OF SILVER  
2006 THE RESTLESS  
2004 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS  
2002 HERO

**TAO Jing (Sound Designer)**

A veteran of the prestigious Beijing Film Academy, Tao Jing was nominated for the Best Sound award at the 8<sup>th</sup> Golden Rooster Awards for work on his debut project, Chen Kaige's THE KING OF CHILDREN (1988). This proved to be an auspicious start to a career that includes work on Chen Kaige's Palme d'Or winning FAREWELL, MY CONCUBINE (1993) and Zhang Yimou's BAFTA and Cannes Grand Jury Prize winning TO LIVE (1994). In 1989, Tao Jing supervised the sound for Mu Deyuan and Liang

Ming's LONELY SOUL IN A BLACK CHAMBER, the first film in China to be mixed in Dolby Stereo.

A long-time collaborator of Director Zhang Yimou's, Tao Jing was awarded the Golden Reel Award for Zhang's SHANGHAI TRIAD in 1995, the Best Sound Award at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Hong Kong Film Awards for *Hero* (2003), and a BAFTA nomination for HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS (2004). Tao Jing is a two-time winner of the Golden Rooster Award for Best Sound for Chen Kaige's THE EMPEROR AND THE ASSASSIN (1999) and HERO (2003). He has published widely on the subject of sound in film and is a Visiting Professor at the Beijing Film Academy.

**Films as Sound Designer:**

- 2010 TRUE LEGEND
- 2010 A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP
- 2009 EMPIRE OF SILVER
- 2008 THE FORBIDDEN KINGDOM
- 2006 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
- 2005 RIDING ALONE FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES
- 2004 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
- 2003 HERO
- 2003 BEAUTIFUL SHANGHAI
- 1999 THE EMPEROR AND THE ASSASSIN
- 1997 KEEP COOL
- 1995 SHANGHAI TRIAD
- 1994 TO LIVE
- 1993 FAREWELL MY CONCUBINE
- 1992 MORNING BEIJING
- 1991 LIFE ON A STRING
- 1990 OH SNOW OF FRAGRANCES
- 1989 LONELY SOUL IN A BLACK CHAMBER
- 1988 THE KING OF CHILDREN

## **ZHAO Lin (Music Composer)**

Zhao Lin graduated from the Central Conservatory of Music in 1996 with a specialization in composition. The deeply moving score of Chen Kaige's TOGETHER (2002) is one of his celebrated works. He also composed the theme songs for the 2003 TV series *Legend of the Eagle Shooting Hero*.

### **Films as Composer:**

- 2010 A WOMAN, A GUN AND A NOODLE SHOP
- 2005 GIMME KUDOS
- 2004 ELECTRIC SHADOWS
- 2003 GODDESS OF MERCY
- 2002 SPRINGTIME IN A SMALL TOWN
- 2002 TOGETHER
- 2001 THE MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE
- 1999 YEUNG YUET LAU STORY
- 1998 GOING TO SCHOOL WITH DAD ON MY BACK