

仁禮信義智
FIVE CLASSICS:
SIX FILMS

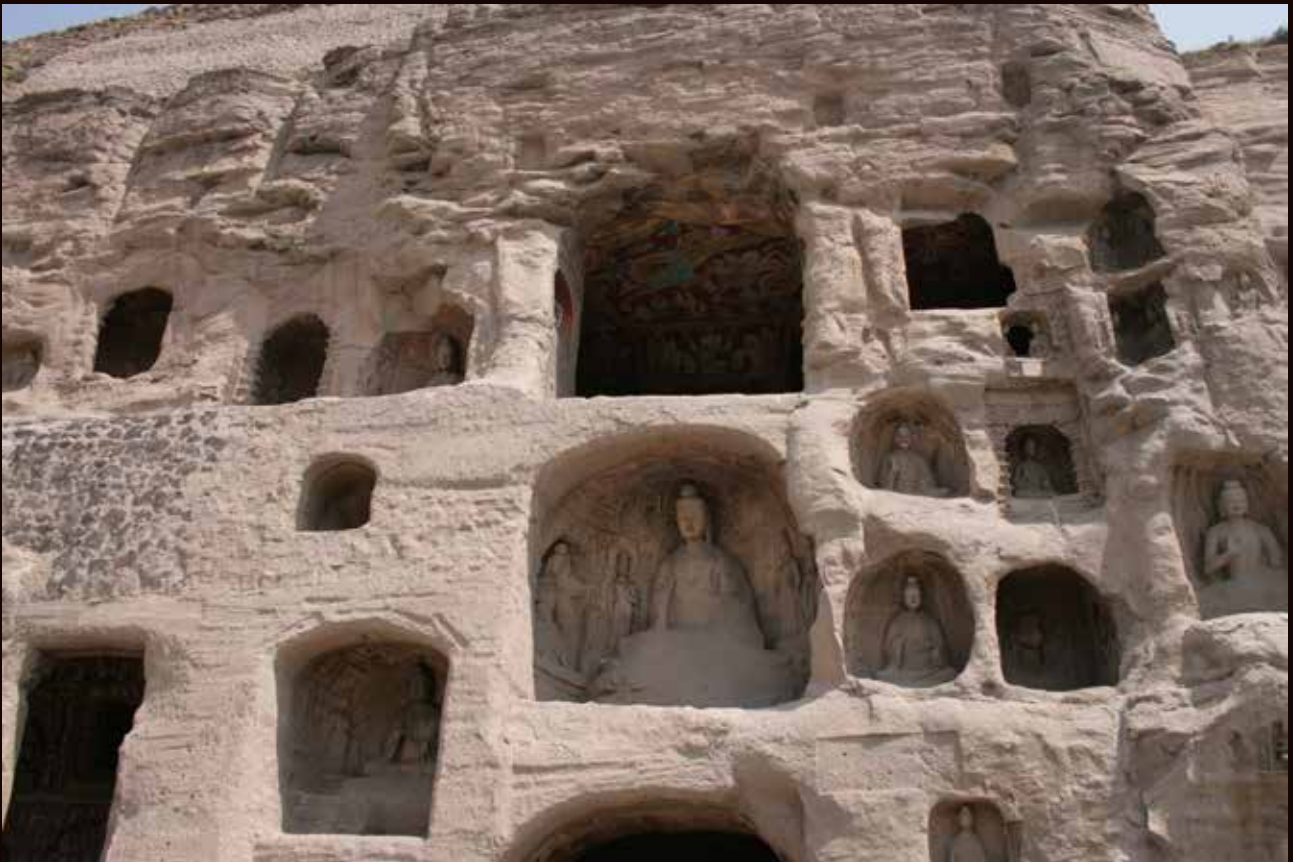
仁禮信義智

FIVE ORIGINS

REN HUMANENESS
YI APPROPRIATENESS
LI RITUAL
ZHI KNOWING
XIN SINCERITY

MOTIVATION

This movie cycle is created and dedicated to all the world, and will be as poignant for the worldwide market as for Chinese audience itself. These films are works made according to the principles of thoroughness of art. They will serve to acquire and expand our knowledge of these principles. These are not publicist informational or expo promotional movies - these are works about humans and society from multiple angles. The authors will be given their creative freedom within a framework of complete respect to the cultural sensitivities of China.



SHANGHAI

Is one of the key frameworks to communicate through universal tools and expression of art. Through this aperture, the films will explore SHANGHAI - globally and generally.

Our selected creators of the films share our vision and want to contribute artistically towards the understanding and transmission of the rich tapestry of Chinese history, culture and values.



AUDIENCE

These films are designated for the global cinema and television audience. World re-known directors from different countries will make a universal and multi-cultural film cycle. Through this approach the films will appeal and captivate viewers worldwide. The films will interest and move the Chinese audience by the introduction of its culture in this exclusively novel form while the western audience will be able to gain a deeper understanding of the essence of Chinese culture. Five books encompass everything. The same traditions will be honored and explored in the six films. K.G. JUNG describes the cardinal philosophical differences between eastern and western cultures. Western thought is based on causality, while eastern thought is based on synchronicity.

SHI - A WORD THAT CONCERNS ASPIRATIONS.
BY CONNECTING POETRY, MUSIC AND DANCE ELEMENTS, IT CREATES THEIR HARMONY.
SHIN JING - A SYMBOL OF THE HIGHEST CHINESE ESTHETIC VALUES.

CONFUCIUS:

*„Pupils – why are you not going into the heart of „Shi jing“? Songs develop human, sharpen his gaze, strengthen accord, dissipate sorrow and dissatisfaction. Songs teach that which is near – duty to parents, and that which is far – duty to a ruler. They bring us closer to birds, animals, grass and trees“ (XVII, 9)
.....Tzu-hsia continued my thought – it is already possible to speak with him about „Shi jing“*

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FIVE CLASSICS: SIX FILMS

SHI JING „THE BOOK OF SONGS“
SHU JING „THE BOOK OF HISTORY“
YI JING „THE BOOK OF CHANGES“
LI JI „THE BOOK OF RITUALS“
CHUN QIU „THE BOOK OF SPRING AND AUTUMN“
YUE JING „THE BOOK OF MUSIC“



FIVE CLASSICS: SIX FILMS

The classics, which constitute a part of the golden Chinese legacy, were written as far back as 5000 years ago. Of the several scribed, five of them remain intact today.

These books reflect the unique and fundamental thinking of the nation. The content and context has been studied and relied on by generations of Chinese. Amongst the long history of students of these texts were great Chinese philosophers - LAO ZI and CONFUCIUS. The western world, however, has been relatively late in discovering these rich landscapes of Chinese culture.

In comparison to the west, the Chinese path of thinking is based on a rather different socio-historic set-up. An understanding of eastern cultures was, and is, important to the western world. This understanding serves not only as a way to reflect on one-self, but also in our search for answers to historical and philosophical crises.

The book is one of the oldest forms of systematic cultural legacy. Today it is an archaic media. Gradually new forms of communicative systems have emerged. Among them - THE ART OF CINEMA. Chinese know quite well their legacy, which in large part still remains unrevealed in the west. Only few westerners know the mentioned books. Only a few had a chance to discover the distinctive world view which is embedded in them. Cinema is a suggestive art form as it is capable to transmit content relative easily. Thus, this "Perfunctory" art form has enormous potential to be a highly expressive medium for viewing, sharing ideas and experiencing the world.

FIVE CLASSICS: SIX FILMS

THE SIX FILMS narrative is founded on a captivating challenge: to use NEW MEDIA - CINEMA - in order to communicate at the same level about fundamental matters as books have always served to do. This film cycle changes not only the content, but the media itself with its creative form of expression. Since the art of cinema is suggestive and evocative, the project's idea is very fruitful. Our narrative of the essential elements eternal to these classic books will be presented in a new multilayered format, with the help of a symbiosis of sound and images. In the process we create new concept replacing a category JING (canon) with a category CINEMA.



FIVE CLASSICS: SIX FILMS

Contents of the films would be based on deep contents of the books. Characteristic structures and storytelling techniques are used as the foundation for far more than the simple imitation or illustration of the books. Rather, creative decisions in narrative will be based on deep codes that are embedded in them. Every media has its own instruments, which help to transmit content. The art of cinema has independent principles and ways of communication. Thus, a book mysteriously becomes film.

THE CHINESE GOLDEN LEGACY is newly converted and presented suggestively without leveling its significance and meanings. These films are a way for the Chinese to look at their heritage in a novel way. The western world will have a chance to see China in a new light, to honor its historical-cultural heritage, and, as a consequence, to develop a higher sense of respect towards this nation by avoiding stereotypes and simplistic vision.

The films will not be over intellectualized as to captivate audiences of all ages of and nationalities.



FIVE CLASSICS: SIX FILMS

In these films allow the audience to understand both the historical past and future by exploring cultural archetypes that are characteristic to Chinese culture . Currently, the rest of the world tends to view China only through economic and political angles. Our goal is to convey a broader picture. China is not a just a powerful economic industry, but also a country with a rich cultural heritage.

These films will have an additional significant meaning to Chinese viewers as they will pay homage to their country and cultural legacy. Chinese are currently associated by the west with the tag-line “made in china” that is seen on the label of many consumer products. A vast majority of westerners simply do not know about the unique Chinese world-view and refined culture.

THE SIX FILMS could significantly contribute to a better understanding and deeper appreciation of Chinese culture in the west.



FIVE CLASSICS: SIX FILMS

The economic book of China will sooner or later cease to be the only reality. Art and other forms of expression can assist the audience to understand which way to navigate in the future.

The significance of art will continue to expand. The euphoria of better socio-economic aspirations will end and it will be increasingly necessary to stress other, non-economic values.

It is in this context the film cycle grows in importance as it connects THE PAST AND THE FUTURE.



CONCERNING FILMS CREATIVE DECISIONS:

Each author will have the opportunity to develop an individual concept. Each of the five books have innate spaces in which authors are able to explore their own structural, ideational and esthetic choices.



FIVE CLASSICS: SIX FILMS

The art of cinema was born in Europe 100 years ago.

The Chinese books were written 5000 years ago.

What kind of cinema would we have, if it was born in China?

As eastern and western worlds differ, the attempt to search for the language of cinema becomes highly interesting and significant.

The six films could serve as an integral searching ground.



CONCEPT & STRUCTURE

THE BOOKS OF ANCIENT WISDOM HAVE THEIR OWN STRUCTURE,
STYLE OF NARRATIVE AND NATURE.

TOGETHER WITH PAINTING, THIS IS AN ANCIENT FORM OF MEDIA.

However, all these characteristics are also peculiar to the art of cinema. In the process of creating their movies, authors have an opportunity to exploit the books and to rely on their deep meanings and narrative styles.

By using these books as our spine we actualize them to contemporary audience. The distinctiveness of the project is that it seeks to create, with the help of cinema, cultural and artistic value that is worth the significance, uniqueness and evocativeness of the old books.

The goal is to create a piece of cultural legacy that would approximate the significance of the books. Each movie has a worth of its own, independent from the whole cycle.



仁禮信義智
易經片

仁 禮 信 義 智



震 zhen

离 li



坤 kun



乾 qian



坎 kan



THE FILM OF CHANGES

Yi jing - the book of changes:

Fundamentals of China's culture, philosophy and medicine, the book reflects Chinese cosmological and ontological worldview, revealing how is what is. Like an oracle, the canon of Yi jing does not so much provide answers to questions, as it shows to a human the context of his/her position, that is, at which stage of perpetual transformation he/she is at the moment. In this way a human receives a key to a successful resolution of his/her situation.

The Film of Changes

The structure of the book is based on a creation of hexagrams and comments on each of them. These texts create the book's universe of meaning. Hexagrams are the earliest layer of the book. The Chinese cosmological view is embedded in the texts. The same way as the book did in its time, the film could creatively and in a new way transmit this world-view. In the movie, structural elements of the book could be mirrored by an author's free will – hexagrams would be a basis for the choice of themes, while a reference to specific part of the book in the film could become a new content, new answer to the author's view of the world. If the book's storyteller is anonymous as is often the case, the director of the film could become a new and REAL storyteller, with all freedom and responsibility that entails. Unique spiritual and cultural themes embedded in the book are represented in a frame of strict structure, which makes the book easy to use and exceptional in the richness of its themes. The movie could follow this logic – simplicity of structure and uniqueness of meanings. The author would have to simply take a deep look into the book, which presents an opportunity to pose questions and find answers, allowing the author to seek the perfection of the book with the help of the new media.

The authors of the films are given their freedom and the responsibility of creating a truly invaluable and timeless media tool for generations, just as the FIVE CLASSICS still apply today. The creation of hexagrams is visually unique and compelling because at the CONCRETE MOMENT of creation the author is able to search for answers to his/her questions. At the same CONCRETE MOMENT the audience is also able to search for answers to the most important questions that, in this instance, are being formulated by the creators of the movie. Thereby these films reach the ultimate aim of the artist, that is, they become living interlocutors, speaking to humans.

THE FILM OF CHANGES

The authors of the film will have the opportunity to develop the script in an unlimited way, to create and to make dramatic decisions that will transcend and guide the films narrative.

The structure of the film would be based on and reflect the emotional, intellectual and conceptual substance found in the book. The book has no plot, no traditional narrative and characters. In this lies its uniqueness, for, paradoxically, the reader becomes the storyteller. We should expect the same from the audience, which becomes active participants in the movie. A challenge for film authors is how to seek generalizations and timeless creative solutions with the help of cinematic language. It is an impossibility to illustrate or present this book in a traditional way.

A SCRIPTWRITER HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SOLVE THIS IN A VARIETY OF WAYS:

To create a narrative based on traditional dramatic structures.

To use characters that act in the narrative according to rules of the causality.

To create associative plots that combine to shape the narrative.



THE FILM OF CHANGES

The structure and genre of the movie depends on the author's creative position, with its vast spectrum of creative possibilities. The film leaves space for the director to decide which documentary threads to include in the overall frame of the movie.

After the script is completed, further steps are conventional – preparation for shooting, shooting itself and post-production. Thus, it can be inferred that scriptwriters are faced with the most difficult task. It is the author who is confronted with the uniqueness and eternal actuality of the book.

The book was and remains innovative, thus, film authors have a chance to be similarly innovative in their search for cinematic language.

Filmmakers have the opportunity to utilize scientific, psychological and historic research material; to use knowledge gathered by commentators and interpreters about the book, its structure, historic context and significance.

The name of the book itself already expresses an important code – change and alteration. The modern author will capture, even if unintentionally, the era in which the film is being made, changes in the context of the dynamic Chinese culture, certain historical periods and ones own life.

In this framework rests the topicality of the film and the responsibility of the author, with which the book was originally written.

THE FILM OF CHANGES WILL BE OFFERED TO A DIRECTOR WHO
SEES AND PORTRAYS THE WORLD WITH A VISIONARY AND CREATIVE MATRIX.

仁禮信義智
書經片

THE FILM OF HISTORY

Shu jing - the book of history:

It is a collection of historical narratives, legends and myths. The narratives are about the principles of everyday human interaction. Especially important are parts that contain the principles of political life and the duties of a ruler. It is a tradition and culture translated through narrative.

Film of History:

Throughout the ages stories, legends and myths contained in creative works served as a canonized way of telling about the behavior and destinies of humans. The art of cinema is also perfectly capable of serving this purpose. We have numerous examples in the history of cinema. Often the best way to express a current zeitgeist is by telling a story and evoking a myth. The authors of this film have an opportunity to look through the narratives of Shu jing and recode them anew according to their own will. Perhaps the most suitable devices to tell eternal narratives and plots are precisely stories and myths. The content of a film creates huge possibilities to speak to audiences about the past, the present and the future.

The distinctiveness of the book is that the characters and the situations of the narratives are perpetual, recognizable and archetypal. The diverse possibilities of form are in the structure of the book. An author is free to interpret it. Another possibility presents itself to authors – to exploit the perpetual topicality of the form and the content of the book, and to create similarly topically ageless cinema. A film would be an inventive synthesis of documentary and fictional forms of cinema.

THE FILM OF HISTORY

Film authors choose creative and dramatic solutions according to the principles embedded in the book and their own discretion.

There is an opportunity to create archetypal, mythological narratives in today's context or rephrase them into the past and the future.

The film would be a synthesis of a feature and documentary cinema.

The genre of the film – historical, aspiring to broaden possibilities of the genre, narrating today's urgent stories based on old narratives that are told in Shu jing, with the principles of figurativeness and timeless relevance.

The goal is to present the past in a novel way.

WHAT IS GOING ON WITH MODERN CHINA?

WHAT SUPPORTS THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PEOPLE?

WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES OF MODERN CHINA?

WHAT KIND OF TRADITIONS AND EXPECTATIONS PEOPLE HAVE TODAY?

All of these questions can be answered by today's historic film.

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春秋片

THE FILM OF SPRING & AUTUMN

Chun qiu - spring and autumn annals:

It is a collection of historical facts about the events in the kingdom of Zhou. It is a chronicle registering historical facts and precedents to future generations by avoiding clearer evaluations.

Spring and autumn film:

The resolution of the narrative of this film is based on chronicles that register historical facts and precedents in the same way as Chun qiu did in its time. The book reflects an interesting juxtaposition between the storyteller, the scribe of historical events and their characters/heroes. The book portrays rather than generalizes, while its creators, paradoxically, through their neutral style of storytelling become acute judges. The use of chronicles and historical imagery would be the main elements of the film. By relying on the uniqueness of the book, detailed stories submit to generalization and become global. The film's stylistic solutions would be based on what the book prompts.

The utilization and the effect of chronicles in the cinema would be dependent not on the material at hand, but exceptionally on the author. The goal of the film is to convey chronicles and historic footage through the eyes of the author, through the vision and understanding of a modern storyteller. In comparison to Chun qiu, this is a unique feature of the art of cinema. The personality of the storyteller in the book is hidden, it is concealed behind narration of facts and the flow of millennia. The main text of the book is filled with facts about the events in the kingdom of Lu: diplomatic ties, deaths of rulers, natural calamities. In the midst of the flow of these quasi-faceless events the self-perception and the self-understanding of the reader becomes sharper as he/she realizes being but a small part in the torrent of history. In this the suggestiveness of the book lies. Identically, in this the suggestiveness of the film will lie.

THE FILM OF SPRING & AUTUMN

The creative solution of the film is a combination of both feature and documentary cinematic styles. The author is presented with an opportunity to use various historical archives and the legacy of cinematic history.

The movie is a NOVEL chronicle, which can be channeled not only to the past, but, paradoxically, also to the present and the future. A unique feature of CANONS themselves is paradox and freedom of thought.

The dramatic presentation of the film is predominately in creative documentary style. Precisely for this reason, this movie is going to be proposed to a world-renowned documentary filmmaker.

仁禮信義智
詩經片

THE FILM OF POETRY

Shi jing - the book of poetry:

This is one of the oldest collections of poetry and hymns, portraying the lives of common folk and glorifying nature. It is an aesthetic celebration of human rituals and the cycles of nature. These are hymns that sustain cultural memory.

Film of Poetry:

Cinema is an excellent art form through which to convey the book. Poetical categories of cinema exist, the language of which relies on one of the oldest sources of poetry. Capabilities of poetical cinema rely on perfect poetic forms and fill a movie without imitation and illustration. The strictness of the book's form only enhances the freedom of expression and pays homage to its ancient metric, rhythm and symbolism. The book also expands the notion of poetry because it conciliates words with musical rhythm and evocativeness. It is like a movie soundtrack, exposing dramaturgic components and independently bringing a charge of emotion and meaning. It was understood long ago, precisely with Shi jing, that the addition of music makes a word and its meaning more imposing and suggestive. In cinema it is a combination of imagery and sound. Deep poetical world-view embedded in this book allows an author of a film to utilize the principles of ancient poetry or to creatively expand them. The audience that is already familiar with Shi jing will have the pleasure to experience its poetical retranslation and, at the same time, explore free poetical interpretations which will be valuable on their own. For the western viewer this film will be a key to a deeper understanding of Chinese culture, which is brought into perfection by a harmony of word, rhythm and music. That is the freedom and the responsibility of the authors.

THE FILM OF POETRY

The movie is not about recreating and illustrating the book, but is based on the perfect metric, harmonious word-use and musical combination embedded in the book.

The plot and its execution is an opportunity to contribute to poetical cinema, which was flourishing during the 60s and the 70s of the last century. It is a manifestation of cinematic language, which requires a clear vision.

Among the various streams, poetic cinema is historically considered to be the closest to perfection. The same is thought about the CANON of POETRY (Confucius).

Music and a poetic word accompanying it coexist together in this book. There is both imagery and sound in a movie.

It accentuates the importance of the soundtrack, the creation of which would be entrusted to a master of cinematic music.

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禮記片

THE FILM OF RITES

Li ji - the book of rites:

It is a register of customs, rituals, ethics and etiquette, which informs about the cultural matrix and grammar. The book enables us to comprehend the behavior of certain peoples and gives a measuring rod for its evaluation. It is a recorded form of cohabitation of the people, the content of which is further specified by other canons.

Film of Rites:

A film becomes a novel register of customs, rituals, ethics and etiquette. It will catalog the present realities of China and the rest of the world. The movie relies on human behavior described in the book, which thru the technique of contrast will even more effectively articulate our present state. The contrast between the present behavior and ethics, and the one found in the book, allows authors of the film to discover additional spaces. This movie, just as the Li ji, is not a mere illustration of society's life. The old authors understood that direct preaching narrows suggestiveness and the essence of things that are being conveyed.

The questions that the book poses – what the world is like? What society is like? What its inhabitants are? – receive their meaning precisely through their neutrality. The reader is left with space to pose these questions to oneself without simplistic directions, only with the help of examples. This is the ancient Chinese wisdom. The authors of the film have a lot to aim for by trying to convey the book's matrix of wisdom into the present and into the new media. To observe the world and human behavior, to try to understand them and become nobler. In this sense, this film entails ethical, philosophical and esthetical messages of all the movies in the cycle. The category "ritual" is perpetual, modern and very relevant. The main dramaturgic heart of the movie is narration about modern rituals with direct or indirect reference to the old ones embedded in Li ji. This film might be called the film of rituals with reference to the enduring property of this category.

THE FILM OF RITES

It is a feature film.

Li ji, with its canonical form, offers traditional dramatic solutions based on a foundation of a concrete story.

Plot solutions are in the CANON; they can be integrated indirectly into a movie.

What kind of rituals characterizes today's culture in China?

Which social layers reflect them the most accurately?

What bridges old and new rituals?

By searching for answers to these questions we can expect a contemporary film, reflecting the consciousness of modern

China and of global humanity.



THE FILM OF MUSIC

This film is inspired by the lost Yue jing, short extracts of which are found in the other canons.

The missing, but once very real, object arouses our curiosity, forces us to guess and experience new sensations.

It is precisely this magical want to guess that is fascinating. During such moments we start to fantasize and create.

Music is one of the most salient forms of human expression.

Interdisciplinary authors – directors, composers, musicians – create their short, up to 3-5 minute-long Film of Music, with complete freedom of genre, form and filming technologies.



THE FILM OF MUSIC

Authors of a movie represent various cultures.

We illustrate the concept of music and its relationship between sound and silence. A synthesis of what has been said (sound) and what has been kept to oneself (silence). The precise dramatic formula is left to the discretion of the artist. The movie can be either a feature or a documentary film.

The genre can vary; it can be a mini-musical, drama or even abstraction.

Directors are given space to develop and determine what kind of film they choose to create. Some of the authors will not be cinema artists. They will have, according to a confirmed plot, full consultancy and support of academic community with regards to questions related the project.

Authors will be able to create a feature or a documentary film, by shooting new footage and using existing material. The critical requirement from the authors is a good knowledge of all the CANON books.

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FIVE CLASSICS:
SIX FILMS

INTRODUCTORY

An 8-10 minute documentary will be created for the whole cinematic cycle and will be presented at the beginning of each of the 6 movies. The purpose of this introduction is to provide the viewers with the cultural and historical significance and exceptionality of the FIVE CANON books.

In this way the audience is familiarized and brought into the context of a movie. This introductory documentary film will be intriguing and engaging. It's not going to be didactic or educational; it's going to help to read the codes of ancient culture and, thus, require the same creative power and weight as the creation of the main movies of the cycle.

This film introduction is an additional product and global marketing tool of the entire PROJECT.

All authors will be required to write a short essay about their relationship with the creative task of making the film and the process of its creation, experiences and thoughts that accompanied it.

Why am I doing this? What do I think about the essence of this creative process and about the CANON itself? This essay would be an integral part of a film, its prologue.

THESE ADDITIONAL WORKS (DOCUMENTARY ON THE FIVE CANONS AND ESSAYS) WILL HELP TO UNITE SEPARATE FILMS INTO A UNITARY CYCLE AND WILL PAY RESPECT TO THE ANCIENT CHINESE WORLDVIEW THAT IS REFLECTED IN THE FIVE CANONS.

FILMMAKERS

The selection of the filmmakers for each movie of the cycle will be based on earlier works since each film requires different sensations and experiences of life, certain conception of cinematic language and esthetics.

Each movie is special and individual. An author that is suited more to the FILM of CHANGES might have less space to blossom in another movie. A film in which documentary genre predominates will be offered to a distinguished and well-known documentary-maker.

According to its form, artistically the freest point of view is left to creators of the FILM of MUSIC.

What will be required of authors is good knowledge and direct or indirect reflection of all the CANONS, even those according to which an author is not making a film. FIVE CANONS is a universal reflection of human nature and existence. That's why this cycle is universal and interesting to a viewer from any nation and culture. This is the main substance of the scope of this project.

Taking this into account, the authors of the project rely on the legacy of Chinese culture. It is a tribute to a nation that gave birth to these monumental works.

The art of cinema is a deep well from which one can draw numerous possibilities for expression. Consequently, the motivation for selecting film directors will be based on a quest for new forms of cinematic language, esthetics and style.

SUMMARY

In a large part this is concealed in the books themselves because they undoubtedly remain brave, unique and contemporary.

Before beginning the shooting phase, authors of the movie scenarios will have to defend their final script before the art council (committee), which will ensure that films broadly correspond to the philosophy of the project and guarantee the integrity of the cycle. Movie soundtracks, which will receive special attention, will be released independently from the films.

The creators of the project aim to ensure that movies do not turn out to be didactic and introductory. They must entice the audience to deepen its knowledge about classical Chinese culture and its legacy, but to do so without using formal, typical and commonplace viewpoints and illustrations of China.

These films, by drawing on cultural impulse and inspiration from the FIVE CANONS will convey the grandeur and greatness of the Chinese nation.

Film narratives are unique, but recognizable and readable at the same time. Consequently, the cycle is meant for a broad audience, both Chinese and international. The space for understanding and the interpretation of movies is expansive, thus ensuring their accessibility and the overall long-term value of the project.

These films will not attempt to explain China in depth because it is too large and too multifaceted. However, they can serve to reveal to the audience core elements of historic Chinese culture and to help us grasp why today's society and its values are in existence. There will be more suggestions, paradoxes and questions in the films than direct declarations.

Precisely that worldview will attract contemporary, inquisitive and open-minded global audience.

Experts of Chinese culture will directly participate in the process of filmmaking by being available to the authors. This will help to ensure a high level of historical accuracy and enable filmmakers to strive for authenticity.

The creative team [casting, DP, composer etc.] shall be assembled by each of the films director.

MA NO FILMS in partnership with directors, composers, cultural experts, top producers and co-production partners will ensure effective production management and organization of all phases in the development of the creative process.

CONTACTS

Giedrius Zubavičius
Director of MA NO FILMS
Phone: +370 69839383
E-mail: info@manofilms.net
www.manofilms.net

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