



Australian Government

SCREEN
AUSTRALIA

Shanghai International Film Festival and Market, Shanghai and Beijing meetings

Report by Chris Oliver and Ross Matthews

To report that the China screen landscape is undergoing change is not new news. All facets of the screen industry development, production, distribution, exhibition and broadcasting are going through change – a change that is in a positive direction. The change in the way the Chinese industry is engaging with the rest of world's screen industries, including the way Government instrumentalities are relating to other countries (eg treaties) will be of real benefit to the Chinese and the international screen industry. Australia is well placed to benefit from those changes if (that's capital IF) Australian producers/players understand the rules of engagement with Chinese producers, broadcasters and exhibitors and the Chinese government departments involved in implementing government policy.

Why should Australia engage with China?

There are obvious **commercial reasons**.

Firstly, the Chinese gross box office (GBO) has increased by at least 30 per cent in the last year to US\$909 million – and has now surpassed Australia to be number six in the world. According to those we had discussions with in China and what can be gleaned from the screen press, the China GBO will grow by at least a further 40 per cent in the 2010 calendar year!

Secondly, China's population has an ever-increasing level of disposable income to underpin the cinema ticket price of \$6–10: it's been reported that middle class numbers will exceed those in the US by 2020.

Thirdly, capital by way of cash and facilities is readily available for approved projects – unlike the present situation in Europe and North America. In North America, the number of banks involved in the screen industry has dropped from 85 to a mere dozen.

Abbreviations

AIDC Australian International Documentary Conference
CCTV China Central Television
CFCC China Film Co-production Corporation
CFGF China Film Group Corporation
CFPC China Film Pitch and Catch
Co-FPC Co-production Film Pitch and Catch
DFAT Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
GBO gross box office
MOU Memorandum of Understanding
PRA People's Republic of Animation
SAFS Shanghai Animation Film Studios
SARFT State Administration of Radio, Film & Television
SFGF Shanghai Film Group Corporation
SIFF Shanghai International Film Festival
SMEG Shanghai Media & Entertainment Group
SMG Shanghai Media Group

Fourthly, a number of key players including, for example, the Huayi Brothers Media Corp, are branching out into the exhibition business. Theatres in China are not your average Australian arthouse fare – the recently opened Ballian Nan'an Shanghai Theatre set in a shopping mall has a capacity to seat 1,400 – complete with luxury VIP and Directors Suite. And there's more for those who have the new movie going habit. It has been reported in the Hollywood press that some two theatres per day are being opened to satisfy the demand.

Besides the obvious commercial advantages, there are specific **cultural opportunities** that Australian producers can tap into. The Feature Film Official Co-production Treaty with China, now in its second year, is one of five that China has agreed with the rest of world, the other countries being France, Italy, Singapore and, you guessed it, Canada!

China does view us as a partner in the truest sense – as we are prepared to work in a collaborative way. We have shared memories and stories. Unlike our relationship with Canada, where we have parallel, unconnected histories, our shared stories with the Chinese diaspora go back some 150 years. We all have fond memories of our local Chinese restaurant – where we tried dim sims or sweet and sour pork for the first time. The cultural connection is deep – and it is from this connection that the stories and opportunities will come.

It is **not just in the cinema but also in television** that there are positive changes linked to growing markets (see below). There is considerable vertical integration (eg the Shanghai Media & Entertainment Group – SMEG), with many of their studios producing in all genres of programming – feature film, TV drama, children's animation, documentary and cross-platform content.

Australian experience with China

There are a small number of Australian producers who have been exploring this growing market for a number of years. More recent trailblazers such as **Mario Andreacchio** are making a mark. Mario is close to completing his first feature *The Dragon Pearl* – the first official Australian treaty co-production with China. Before the treaty, there was **Jonathan Shteinman's** three-way co-financing project *The Children of Huang Shi* (or *Silk Road*) with China, Germany and Australia, which was produced under an MOU. Other producers such as **Antonia Barnard** have produced productions of the calibre of *The Painted Veil*. **Brendan Harkin** of X|Media|Lab has recently opened an office in Shanghai – www.xmedialab.com

There are Australians with post-production houses and others who have been living there for some time. **Roger Savage's** Soundfirm is based in Beijing and **Dale Duguid** is expanding his post-production business with his partners – SMI. **Barry Plews**, who has been working with China since 1995, is currently producing his first animated feature film with the Shanghai Animation Film Studio (part of SMEG), having co-produced *Sweet & Sour*, a 17-minute animated short with Shanghai Animation Film Studios (SAFS) and Adelaide's People's Republic of Animation (PRA) in 2007. *Sweet & Sour* was made under China's generic co-production rules and was certified as an official co-production by the State Administration of Radio, Film & Television (SARFT) in October 2007.

On the doco front there have been a number of producers exploring the territory since the late 80s. It is now much easier in terms of entry and

engagement. In recent times there have been documentary projects such as **Stefan Moore's** (*The Cars that Ate China*); **Larry Zetlin's** work goes back a long way with China Central Television (CCTV) and **Greg Miller** has more recently worked with CCTV. **Georgia Wallace-Crabbe** is currently producing *New Beijing: Reinventing a City* and Producer **Peter Du Cane** is with **Leland Ling's** LIC in Beijing and the likes of **Ron Saunders** from Beyond have also made inroads. An Australian Documentary Producers delegation visited Chengdu to attend the Sichuan TV Festival and there is a close connection with the Guangzhou International Documentary Festival and more recently the Shanghai International Film Festival.

There have been a number of Chinese delegations to Australia. This year, a delegation of producers attended the Australian International Documentary Conference (AIDC) in Adelaide and more recently Vice Minister **Zhang Pimin**, from SARFT, was here with a number of Chinese Government officials for meetings with the Australian Government and the industry.

But how does the Chinese industry work? Where are the specific opportunities in the various genres – feature films, television drama, kids' programs, documentary and new media? Is there a value in festival and cultural exchanges and how do we go forward with China so that we – China and Australia – benefit?

The industry in China

The feature business

All projects produced by Chinese producers or studios for exhibition in China are required to be approved by SARFT, from script stage through production to gaining approval for exhibition or release. This is also true for programs produced for TV broadcast. In a limited sense, SARFT is similar to our Federal Government censorship process, but it has far more overreaching power in terms of determining the actual content of projects and their eventual release. Over 450 feature films are produced annually and films are released almost daily in China – with two major releases on most weekends in Chinese cinemas. The release and production of films works on a number of levels for foreign producers.

Treaty co-productions

Official treaty co-productions are treated as a Chinese film. The number of films produced in China is in one sense capped – the cap being that you require SARFT approval of the film for your project to be produced and ultimately exhibited in cinemas. In other words your film is one of the 450 Chinese films competing for distribution and exhibition each year – in over 4,000 cinemas in urban areas.

Imported foreign films

If your project is regarded as a foreign film wishing to be imported or shot in China (and is not a treaty co-production), then it is more competitive for your film to be co-produced or shot in China. Approximately 40 foreign films (not including 3D) are imported by the Government-owned China Film Group Corporation (CFG) – the only importer in to China – and released annually in to the domestic market. Of these films roughly 50 per cent are licensed by the importer on a flat fee basis and the balance are distributed and exhibited on a revenue-shared basis.

China Film Group Corporation (CFGC) background

CFGC is the largest and most influential state-run film enterprise in China. It is also a major exporter of Chinese films. CFGC is involved in a variety of businesses which include film and television production, film distribution and exhibition, film importation and exportation, cinema circuit management, digital cinema construction, print developing and processing, film equipment management, films and TV CD production, ancillary products, advertising and property management.

For over a decade, CFGC's subsidiary, China Film Import & Export Corporation, has been the sole government-authorised importer of films.

CFGC's film and TV production units include: Beijing Film Studio, China Youth Film Studio, China Film Equipment Corporation, Movie Channel Production Centre, Beijing Film & Video Laboratory and Huayun Film & TV Compact Disk Co Ltd. Each year, the CFGC produces more than 30 feature-length films, 400 TV 'plays' and 100 telefilms. Its films include *The Warlords*, *Three Kingdoms: Resurrection of the Dragon*, *Kung Fu Hustle* and *Protégé*. We suggest you check out the CFGC Website – www.chinafilm.com

My apologies to the Chinese industry at this point as the CFGC are not the only substantial exhibitor, distributor and producer of screen content. An excellent booklet, produced by SARFT and titled *The Guide to the Chinese Film Industry*, provides a background on the industry, including policies on international cooperation and exchange, functions of SARFT and details of the major state-owned film production corporations including CFGC, Shanghai Film Group Corporation (SFGC – itself one of the nine divisions of SMEG) and the Pearl River Film Group in Guangzhou.

Development, financing and production phases

As mentioned earlier, **all projects need to be approved by SARFT** if you wish to film in China. The principal functions include guiding and supervising the production and distribution and exhibition of films, film censorship, approving the establishment or revocation of film production entities, trans-regional distribution entities and trans-regional exhibition entities. See www.sarft.gov.cn as well as the excellent small English publication *The Guide to Chinese Film Industry* described above. The China Film Co-production Corporation (CFCC) is charged by the SARFT with overseeing and managing all Sino-foreign co-productions. The first port of call for co-productions is usually the CFCC then SARFT.

There have been cases where producers have endeavoured to work outside the system. However, it is then not possible to get cinema distribution or a television broadcast in China. The way foreign producers work with China is via the numerous studios, registered production companies, directly with broadcasters or with independent producers. The main production centres are Beijing (eg CFGC) and Shanghai (eg SFGC). There are studios in the provinces such as Hengdian, (who were co-producers of the first Australia-China feature film treaty co-production, **Mario Andreacchio's** *The Dragon Pearl*) and the Pearl River Film Group in Guangzhou, who have also been involved in a number of international co-productions. All have websites.

The **studios generally produce all program genres** and can be accessed directly or via independent Chinese or foreign producers who may have a close working relationship with a particular studio. Many of the studios have the capacity to develop and finance the production of films. SFGC is one of

the nine divisions of SMEG. SMEG has extensive TV broadcasting (the Shanghai Media Group (SMG) is another of its nine divisions), film studios and property interests. SFGC has the capacity to co-produce approximately 10 qualifying Chinese films a year with foreign producers. Investment funds and facilities are available for projects that have a corporate 'fit' and engage with Chinese audiences.

Discussions with many Chinese producers and executives suggest that films with **budgets** in the order of A\$6–8m, not including above-the-line costs, are feasible. Budgets can be higher – up to A\$14m – if the production is more international in appeal, but a lot depends on the content. Films at the A\$6–8m budget level can recoup their budget from their Chinese release. Above that budget level it is risky for a Chinese studio to finance the project and the project will need to sell in other offshore markets.

Script development periods are much shorter than for Australian productions, with financial commitment to production taking place much earlier than in Australia.

Shoots on Chinese films vary from 40 to 60 days and a seven-day week is not uncommon on low-budget projects. The challenge with working in China is to gain a clear understanding of the needs from the Chinese side when negotiating the details of the agreements (and the deal) and to understand how these dovetail with what Australia would find acceptable or workable.

Approval of the script and production by SARFT and CFCC is key and one of the challenges. The relationship of the Chinese studio or producer with those two departments is crucial. Details of the two organisations can be found on their websites – SARFT is at www.sarft.gov.cn and the CFCC is at www.cfcc-film.com.cn.

13th Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF), 12–20 June 2010

While devoted to international cinema, attending the annual festival can provide an insight into the machinations of the Chinese film industry. The Shanghai TV Festival is held the week before SIFF. Both opening nights are glamour red carpet events and a chance to meet key players. If you have a film or TV program that is being launched in China – these are the places to be seen. Websites: www.siff.com and www.stvf.com

A record 2,327 movies from 81 countries were entered for the SIFF main prize – the Golden Goblet Award. Five northern European nations had focused screenings at the festival – Canada, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Japan and Israel. Many of the films, including those from China, which screened their films during the SIFF echoed environmental topics because of the Shanghai World Expo's theme 'Better City, Better Life'. Some 300 foreign and Chinese films were screened at 25 cinemas. According to press and trade reports, there were over 1,200 registered participants at the film festival and some 2,400 at the TV festival.

The President of the 2010 SIFF International Jury for the Golden Goblet Award was the highly regarded Chinese American director **John Woo**. There were separate juries for Asian New Talent and the International Students Awards.

Numerous Chinese actresses with a sprinkling of Hollywood stars were present at the red carpet opening ceremony. Broadcast live to a massive Chinese audience, the red carpet event provides a platform for a film's Chinese and Asian release. Red carpet attendees included **Lin Peng**, **Gan Tingting**, **Che Yongli**, **Zhang Jingchu** and actor **Huang Xiaoming**, **Gong Xinliang** and Hong Kong actor **Kar-Ying**, **Claire Danes** and her husband, actor **Hugh Dancy**, **Barbie Hsu**, **Eddie Peng** and Chinese actress **Yuan Xinyu**, **Gong Li** and actor **John Cusack**, **Adam Brody**, **Li Bingbing** and Hong Kong actor **Daniel Wu**, the Korean actress **Da-hae Lee**, **Ruby Lin** and actor **Mike He**, Miss World **Zhang Zilin** of China, **Maria Grazia Cucinotta**, Hong Kong actress and singer **Gillian Chung** and director **Jeffrey Lau**, the Hong Kong actress **Cecilia Cheung** and French director **Luc Besson**.

Key cast and talent from **Mario Andreacchio's** AMPCO Films and Mr Lui's Hengdian Studios co-production *The Dragon Pearl* were there as part of the red carpet line up – gaining crucial early publicity for the production's Chinese release later this year.

Australian films screened

Australian films screening in the Spectrum section of the festival were *Last Ride* (with producer **Antonia Barnard** and executive producer **Ricci Swart** attending), *Bright Star* (producer **Jan Chapman** attending), *Beneath Hill 60* (director **Jeremy Sims**) and *Red Hill*. Other Australians at the festival included producer actor **Bryan Brown**, writer/director **Gregor Jordan** and producer **Mario Andreacchio** (*The Last Dragon*).

Screen Australia and Australian Government presence

Screen Australia and the **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade** (DFAT) were working closely together to present the Australian Government incentives and film industry presence in China, leveraging off the significant Australian cultural program at the World Expo in Shanghai and *Imagine Australia*, the **Year of Australian Culture in China**. DFAT and Screen Australia hosted a luncheon in the Australian Pavilion at the Shanghai World Expo site attended by Australian producers and members of the Chinese film and TV industry. Ms **Lyndall Sachs**, Commissioner General of the Australian Pavilion at Shanghai World Expo, welcomed guests. At the conclusion of speeches a two-minute promo clip of **Mario Andreacchio's** *The Dragon Pearl* was screened. Website: www.australianpavilion.com

Additionally, Shanghai was a location of one of a new three-city doco initiative, **Crossing Borders**. The last city of the three is Guangzhou and links in with the Documentary Festival in December. Australians selected to participate in the Shanghai workshop in June were **Selene Alcock** and **Elizabeth Tadic** with their project *Son of a Gun*.

Forums and markets

Forums are also part of the Shanghai Film and TV Festivals. At the film festival there were two, which provided opportunities for teams to finance their projects – the CFPC (China Film Pitch and Catch) and Co-FPC (Co-production Film Pitch and Catch) to promote rising filmmakers.

The well attended 2010 SIFFORUM created some heat in the Chinese press. The SIFFORUM attendees included Weinstein Company CEO **Harvey Weinstein**, China Film Group Cooperation chairman **Han San Ping**, Polybona Films president **Yu Dong**, plus well-known Chinese directors **Feng**

Xiaogang, He Ping, Wang Xiaoshuai, Leon Dai, Pang Ho-Cheung and Korean director Kang Je-Gyu.

In addition to the festival events there is a small three-day Shanghai Film Market with some 70 exhibitors including stands from countries such as Korea, Norway, Germany and Italy – which housed producers, distributors and sales agents. There were representatives from the Chinese provinces and major Chinese studios including CFGC and SFGC. Well known Australian company Soundfirm was also part of the mix.

The television business

There have been quite profound changes to broadcasting in China in the last five years. For example, in 2004 SARFT implemented several regulations that included new broadcasting opportunities for IPTV and Mobile TV while allowing non-state owned enterprises to participate in this new arena. In addition, four national permits were granted to operate digital platforms, breaking the government broadcasters' CCTV monopoly. Liberalisation efforts have continued – with SARFT and the Ministry of Commerce allowing the establishment of foreign-invested TV production joint ventures. These changes have ebbed and flowed. China does occasionally express a real concern “against harmful foreign culture” (sounds familiar re Australian broadcasting and Australian content requirements) and that the export of Chinese culture to the world must be promoted. There is a bit of a two steps forward one step backwards approach to reform – and this is understandable – given the extent of the changes that are occurring.

With the 2008 Olympics, media products and demand increased and now regional broadcasting is booming and more popular. This has resulted in CCTV, the country's main public broadcaster, looking more closely at how it operates. CCTV has increased output of drama in recent times to ensure that it does not lose its audience. Losing audiences means losing advertising spend. (All government TV channels carry advertising.) Additionally, the public broadcaster's range of channels is increasing – helped by changes in technology. With some estimated 360 million TV homes and over 150 million cable homes, the demand for programming of all genres in a multi-channel environment is increasing. This is good news for Chinese producers as it would appear that for CCTV to accommodate the hours required for their channels the public broadcaster is commissioning more programs to be produced by Chinese producers and ultimately looking to work with others wishing to co-produce with China.

Details of key meetings with Chinese broadcasters, producers and studios are set out below. Be aware that meetings in China may take longer than the usual hour, especially if you are not fluent in Chinese and need an interpreter. It is not uncommon for a schedule of, say, four meetings a day to constitute a busy day.

Conclusion

The increasing opportunities of working with China are clearly evident. However, it is a far more complex – and a much more expensive – exercise than most might realise. There are challenges ahead in what promises to be an exciting period. To facilitate increased official treaty co-productions, co-financing or television productions including documentary, Australia needs to maintain regular contact and keep clear lines of communication between the

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various entities associated with the screen industries in Australia and China. This includes not only regular contact between Australian screen agencies, DFAT and Chinese counterparts (the PRC Ministry of Culture, SARFT and CFCC), but also with the major film players in China, such as the CFGC in Beijing, the SFGC in Shanghai and Guangzhou's Pearl River Film Group. Utilising embassies and consulates is a crucial part of that until Australian producers have a clear understanding of how best to work with China.

Importantly, we also need to closely support Australian producers working on the ground in China, for they are the ones with both expertise and the connections (*guanxi*) so necessary for ensuring that we can develop these growing film, TV, animation and documentary opportunities in China.

A few weeks ago China accepted a World Trade Organisation ruling to open its entertainment industry and market to the US under the free trade agreement. It is envisaged that in 2011 there will be more US product being exported to China. One could expect that the US studios and other countries will also be seeking to make entry into China, adding to the competitiveness of trying to establish a feature film co-production. In addition there is the increasing value of the RMB, which will have an impact on the cost of production.

There is a window of opportunity for Australia, with some experts estimating a window of three years. There is a keenness from China to be involved with Australia. This keenness could be consolidated by further exchanges of producers from China to Australia and vice versa. A delegation of feature film producers including the Beijing and Shanghai studios to SPAA (Screen Producers Association of Australia), or some other tent pole event such as an industry conference or film festival could possibly be the next step.

**Prepared by
Chris Oliver and Ross Matthews
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Shanghai meetings

Mr Tom Connor – Australian Consul-General Shanghai

Attending: Bryan Brown, Gregor Jordan, Elizabeth Tadic, Selene Alcock, Ross Matthews and Chris Oliver

Discussed the Australian industry and how the diplomatic posts could help in connecting Australian producers to the Chinese industry in particular provinces as well as to potential industry and festival events in China.

Laurie Smith – Regional Director North-East Asia, Austrade & Vivian Zhao – Business Development Manager, Austrade

The Austrade people have a clear understanding of how the screen industry works in China – Laurie has extensive experience throughout China and the Asian region and can point you in the right direction in contacting the relevant screen businesses in China. However, he does warn producers that they need to have a clear plan as to what they wish to achieve in China and they need to fully research this complex market before making the journey.

Mr Ren Zhonglun – President Shanghai Film Group Corporation (SFGC), which includes both the Shanghai Film Studios (SFS) and the Shanghai Animation Film Studios (SAFS) & Ms Helen Li – Assistant Director, Co-production Company, Shanghai Film Group Corporation

Mr Ren Zhonglun is also a Vice President of the Shanghai Media & Entertainment Group (SMEG), Secretary General of the SIFF and Director of the SIFF Competition and Film Market. Websites: www.sfs-cn.com and www.ani-sh.com

SFGC is one of the three largest studios in China – the studio outputs include film, TV drama, animation (SAFS), and documentary production. This is an impressive operation and studio, (the latter even includes a working 1930s'-era tram line). SFGC also includes companies that carry out marketing, film rental, tech support and other hi-tech labs functions. SFGC owns five large film production enterprises, 14 TV-series production enterprises with a large studio filming facility. SFGC also owns the East-Movie-Channel and have the largest cinema circuit in China with 75 cinemas and 198 screens – the "Shanghai United Circuit". SFGC has a large library of over 640 feature films, 30,000 mins of animation films, 1,555 documentary films and about 10,000 episodes of TV series. Revenue is in the order of US\$190m/year.

SFGC sees opportunities for Australian producers in China and is keen to encourage official treaty co-productions between Australia and China. The studio is an extensive producer of programs in all genres. However, when working with partners for the first time, budgets need to be set at realistic levels so that films can recoup from the domestic (ie Chinese) marketplace. Any 'first-time' approach to the studio should be to start small and build from there. Approaches should be with a treatment or synopsis before development of a script.

Mr Liu – Chief Executive, Hengdian Studios & Mr He – Head of Production, Hengdian Studios

Hengdian World Studios is located four hours by bullet train and car from Shanghai or a three-hour car journey. It is located in Hengdian, a village of Dongyang county in Zhejiang Province. Hengdian Studios is operated by the privately owned Hengdian Group founded by a farmer turned millionaire Mr **Xu Wenrong**. Ten years in operation, the Studios and associated tourist areas are located on 330ha. This extensive studio houses a replica of the

Forbidden City and the set of the highly regarded feature film *Hero*. There are numerous Chinese streetscapes and village settings that can be filmed at the Studios. The Studio has co-invested in a number of feature film and television projects, and it also contains a theme park and other activities for tourists.

Mario Andreacchio's AMPCO Films is just completing their first production *The Dragon Pearl* with Hengdian. Mario has managed to produce the first Treaty feature film co-production between Australia and China. Hengdian are now moving towards producing further projects with Mario – one of them is *D2*, the sequel to *The Dragon Pearl*, which is slated to commence later this year. Website: www.hengdianworld.com

Mr Wang Lei – Deputy Director Film & TV Drama Centre, Shanghai Media Group (SMG)

Shanghai's Film & TV Drama Centre is a division of SMG, (itself is one of the nine divisions of SMEG). The Film & TV Drama Centre also has links to the Shanghai Toonmax Satellite TV. Mr Lei has extensive experience in all facets of production in all genres and is keen for SMG to explore working with Australian producers. Website: www.smg.cn

Maggie Zhou – Deputy General Manager, Shanghai Wings Media Group Ltd

Shanghai Wings Media Group is another division of SMG. It is involved in the international sales and acquisition of titles for the SMG group internationally. Keen to read and acquire projects that would be of interest to Chinese audiences. Website: www.wingsmedia.com.cn

Madame Tang Lijun – Managing Director & Ms Christian Bian – Manager of Panorama, Shanghai International Film Festival

The SIFF people were particularly helpful in ensuring that all producers attending the festival were well looked after during their stay. The festival organisation sees itself as a national Chinese film and television festival for the industry at large and a venue for producers, distributors and broadcasters to screen their films and programs, to meet, exchange ideas and hopefully from these events mount new productions. SIFF are keen that producer and studio exchanges occur between Australia and China. Website: www.siff.com

Marcus Lim – Vice President International Co-production, SMI Corporation Limited & Dale Duguid – CEO, SMI-Photon

SMI are a vertically integrated media company and are also listed in Hong Kong. The company has substantial real estate, cinemas, studios (Stellar Feiteng Cinema City), and is producing 3D animated features. They have some 380 screens and according to corporate plans are aiming to have 500 screens by 2012. They are also owners of the post-production company Photon run by former Brisbane based Dale Duguid and are currently setting up a new post production facility in Beijing. The new entity, SMI-Photon will have both an Australian and Chinese (Beijing) base. Under the leadership of Duguid, Photon has provided visual effects to many studios including Warner Bros and Columbia. Website: www.smi198.com

Barry Plews – Animation Producer, Reckless Moments

Barry has been working with China for the past 15 years. He is well connected and is currently in production for *Henrietta Brave and the Troublesome Forest*, his first English-Mandarin animated feature with the Shanghai Animation Film Studios (SAFS). In 2007, Reckless Moments co-produced *Sweet & Sour*, a 17-minute animated short with SAFS and

Adelaide's People's Republic of Animation (PRA). This was made under China's generic co-production rules administered by the China Film Co-Production Corporation (CFCC), charged by SARFT to oversee and manage all Sino-foreign co-productions. Website: www.reckless.on.net

Ling Geng – General Manager, Soundfirm, Beijing

Soundfirm was one of the many companies with a stand at the Shanghai Film Market. Australian-based **Roger Savages'** Soundfirm (Melbourne & Sydney) continues to have close ties with China with their post facility in Beijing – servicing the post needs of the industry. Soundfirm and Ling Geng have provided services and helped a large number of Australian producers over the years. Website: www.soundfirm.cn

Guan Zhaoyi – General Manager, Qujiang Film & TV, Xi'an Qujiang Film & TV Investment Group Ltd

Qujiang is a New District located in the south-eastern city of Xi'an. The Qujiang New District was begun to assist cultural tourism, with film and television exhibitions, conferences and other creative exhibitions for the publishing and media industries. The Qujiang Group is keen to have Australian films screened in the province and to facilitate Australian production in the Qujiang region. Website: www.qjmovie.cn

Jiancheng Wang – Star Motion Picture Company Ltd Shanghai, Independent Producer

Jiancheng has a close relationship with the Pearl River Film Group, (who are also worth checking out) and has a number of feature films to his credit. He has just completed shooting a feature in Malaysia.

Beijing meetings

Mr Miao Xiaotian – Vice President & Mr Zhang Zhengzheng – Director, Business Development, China Film Co-production Corporation (CFCC)

As detailed previously, CFCC is charged by SARFT to oversee and manage all Sino-foreign co-productions. There are four official feature film treaties at present with China – Italy, France, Canada and Australia. CFCC are negotiating future treaties with other countries. They have already considered a number of projects for official co-productions this year, and imagine that in the future it will be competitive for projects to enter China and receive distribution. As detailed previously, only 50 foreign films (including 3D) can receive distribution in China if they are not treaty co-productions. For local China productions, the market is also competitive. In 2006, 200 films were produced and in 2009 close to 450 films were made – but of these only about 100 will get a domestic cinema release.

Mr Guo Benmin – Deputy Director & Mr Zhou Dongyuan – Chief Editor, CCTV Centre of China Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio Beijing

One of the oldest studios producing documentary in China with an extensive library that dates back to 1920s. Produces a large number of documentary programs that are screened on CCTV. Producers at this studio have shot some of their documentary programs in Australia. Two producers at the studio visited Australia as part of the Chinese delegation to the AIDC in Adelaide earlier this year. Looking for projects that would work for a Chinese audience, but would generally require a commitment from a Chinese

broadcaster to trigger their production funds. They do provide production services and facilities for foreign productions in China.

Han Wen – Producer & Deng Wu – Producer, Cultural Feature Programming, CCTV Social and Educational Documentary Programming Centre

This CCTV unit has worked with a number of international partners, including Discovery, on documentary programs and is keen to do so in the future provided the content suits the CCTV schedule. Have had contact with Australian producers and have a real interest in environmental programs for their regular series *Greenspace*, which airs on CCTV at 7.30pm. Also looking for content for their *Explorer* slot – similar to *National Geographic* type of programming – with 45 minutes of programming airing each day. They also have a *History* slot. Examples of programs screened on the *History* program include a documentary on Darwin and one on the 10,000 Chinese who helped build the American railways. Biographies of famous people have also screened in this slot. Website: www.cctv.com

Mr Xue Jijun – President & Zhang Ziyang – Vice President, CCTV Drama Production Centre

Mr Xue has just been appointed to the position and prior to that he was Vice President of the Drama Centre. He expressed interest in co-financing drama, children's animation for under 14-year-olds and live action and documentary production with Australia. His CCTV audience is older than 18, as most younger children are meant to be studying. Mr Xue co-produced a documentary program with Australia and was very happy with the collaboration. Mr Zhang Ziyang has produced numerous hours of drama programming for CCTV. Both expressed a keen desire to find stories that were based on true stories or literature that had a relevance to both our audiences. CCTV has worked with North America and Japan on co-productions. This entailed shooting an English or Japanese (in the case of Japan) and the Chinese version for their respective territories with the English version selling into other world markets. One series was the story of a Chinese police officer in the US. There have been cases where both languages have been tolerated in programs going to air, (not unlike what occurs when programs are transmitted on SBS in Australia). Chinese audiences have a keen interest in contemporary economy/business stories, Australian landscapes/geography and history. Long form and series episode lengths are 44 minutes. Long form series of 30 plus hours are not uncommon. Three or six telemovie franchises are also a popular format. With the increased number of CCTV channels, CCTV does not have the capacity to produce the programs and are commissioning Chinese studios to produce large numbers of hours of drama programming for CCTV. Website: www.cctv.com

Lesley Dong – Project Manager, China International Department Program Production Department, CCTV

This is a department in CCTV that assists international producers working in China. They assist by obtaining the necessary government permissions for you to enter and shoot in China – including equipment and your journalist visa. They also service your other production needs including accommodation, cars, locations and location permissions (eg to shoot in an office or hospital). They have access to freelancers to handle their workload. Costs charged are \$US100/day/person, so if you have three crew and wish to

shoot for three days the cost is \$US900. The daily fee is negotiable depending on the number of crew and length of shoot. Website:

www.cctv.com

Leland Ling – Chief Executive & Peter Du Cane – Producer, LIC Beijing

LIC Beijing has worked closely with positioning Australian producers with broadcasters for projects and has a number of services. Australian producer Peter Du Cane is now working with LIC on a regular basis in Beijing as its Executive Producer for International Productions. LIC purchases and versions foreign documentary content for domestic TV, DVD and publishing in China. It has six timeslots, five of which show foreign documentaries, reaching 320 broadcasters across China. The company is closely connected to the broadcasters and is a substantial supplier of content. Its LIC China department produces and markets Chinese documentaries to the world TV market. LIC can also provide a number of services to producers wishing to work in China. Website: www.lic-bcbc.com

Melanie Ainsley – Producer, Production Manager, Interpreter & Sam Voutas – Writer/Director

Sam and Melanie have a close connection to Australia and are now working in China. A fluent Mandarin speaker, Melanie has substantial documentary production, writing and research experience and is a conduit and interpreter for offshore producers wanting to shoot in China. In addition, Melanie and Sam have just completed shooting their first feature film in China with the working title *Red Light Revolution* for which they are looking for distribution and a sales agent. Check out their website at: www.redlightrevolution.com