

A Cinema Guild Release

24 CITY

A film by JIA ZHANG-KE

2008 / China / 107min / HD / 35mm / Chinese with English Subtitles
Not Rated / Stills available at: www.cinemaguild.com/downloads

The Cinema Guild, Inc.
115 West 30th Street, Suite 800
New York, NY 10001-4061
Tel: (212) 685-6242, Fax: (212) 685-4717
www.cinemaguild.com

Synopsis

“24 City” chronicles the dramatic closing of a State-owned munitions factory and its conversion into luxury high-rise apartments.

Given the name Factory 420 as an internal military security code, the Chengdu Engine Group was founded in 1958 to produce aviation engines, and saw years of prosperous activity. Now abandoned, the factory awaits its destiny. Sold for millions to real-estate developers, it is being transformed into an emblem of market economy: an apartment complex called 24 City.

Director’s Note

This film is made up of interviews with five workers, who share their real-life experiences with us, and of fictional monologues by three women. I decided to integrate documentary and fiction in this parallel flow because this seemed to me the best way of representing the last half-century of Chinese history. As far as I’m concerned, History is always a blend of facts and imagination.

The stories of these characters, both real and fictional, center on a state-owned factory which supplies the Air Force and other sectors of the military. The factory was founded 60 years ago, and was moved to Chengdu City 50 years ago. It has weathered all of the successive political movements under communist government. I’m not interested in chronicling this history as such, but rather in seeing how a century of experiments with Socialism has impacted on the fate of Chinese people. To understand the complexity of the social changes, we need to listen to the direct and in-depth testimonies of the people who have lived through them.

Present-day films rely more and more on action and movement. In this film, I wanted to return to spoken language. Here, narration is taken as a kind of movement to be captured by the camera. I want to allow the narration to provide access to the speakers’ innermost feelings and experiences.

Whether, in the best of times or the worst, no individual’s experience should be neglected. In this film, we hear from eight Chinese workers. I think it is more than likely that many who see the film will hear echoes of their own lives.

Jia Zhang-Ke

Key Words from the Film

FACTORY 420

Chengdu Engine (Group) Co., Ltd, also called Factory 420 (The factory is a military security unit, so its internal code is 420) was founded as a state-owned enterprise in 1958 to produce aviation engines. At first, it was subject to the State Commission of Science and Technology for the National Defense Industry, and now is managed by AVIC II (China Aviation Industry Corporation II). In order to respond to Mao Zedong's demand of developing the third-line area, about 4000 workers of Factory 111 moved from Shenyang to the Eastern suburb of Chengdu to found Factory 420. The two glorious periods of Factory 420 were around 1964 and 1985, but at the beginning of the 1990s, the reduced demand from the Chinese war industry meant this factory experienced hard times. In 2001, they seized the opportunity of the factory transplant to change the structure of their products and finally made up the deficits and got surpluses in 2005.

SECURITY UNITS OF WAR INDUSTRY

The work contents of these kind of units are related to the security and benefits of national defense, army and war industry, so only a small range of people are permitted to know the work of these units.

THE THIRD LINE

It refers to the third line area. At the end of 1950s, for the war preparation, the CPC Central Committee and Mao Zedong decided to separate China into three areas (the first line, the second line and the third line) according to different strategic positions. The first line refers to 15 big cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, which are the most important both in politics and economy; the second line refers to the cities less important than the first line cities; the third line refers to the home front of the entire national strategy. In the Southwest of China, it is mainly for industrial development.

THE WAR TO RESIST US AGGRESSION AND AID KOREA (KOREAN WAR)

To accept the request of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to protect our national security, the Chinese government sent the Chinese People's Volunteer Army to Korea to enter the war in the name of defeating the aggression of the U.S. imperialism, which began from June, 1950 to July, 1953.

24 CITY

In December of 2005, China Resources Land Limited (Chengdu) spent 2.14 billion yuans to buy the land of former Factory 420, which is about 560 000 square meters, to build a living community named 24 City. The meaning of this name is from an ancient poem describing Chengdu: The hibiscus of 24 City, considered as a flourishing flower since ancient times. Also, 24 is a meaningful number, for instance, there are 24 solar terms of a year in China and 24 hours in a day, which express the circulation and energy of life. At the same time, Factory 420 reformed their techniques and built up a brand new industry park based on the income of selling land. The new techniques they mastered were not out of date 50 years later.

WUDOU (PHYSICAL STRUGGLE)

At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, Mao Zedong announced the general civil struggle and separated the organizations formed by common people into two sides, one was the left, also known as the rebellion group, and the other was the right, also known as the royalist group. He supported the left to overpower the right. The following year, Jiang Qing claimed that she agreed with the "Verbal Attack and Physical Protection" which caused the booming physical struggle. From 1967, physical struggle, a kind of armed struggle between the two sides of the organizations, extended all over the country and almost went out of control. Until 1969, after Mao's triumph of re-seizing power, people from the left became a block to Mao's reconstruction of power and were sent to the countryside, which ended the general civil struggle gradually. During the three years of physical struggle from 1967 to 1969, the casualty number is between 300 000 and 500 000.

MIG-15

MiG-15 is a high performance swept-wing jet fighter developed by the Soviet Mikoyan-Gurevich design bureau. With its first flight in June, 1947, these jet fighters were used to arm the Chinese Air Force in 1950 and greatly contribution in the Korean War.

SHEBAO (SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM)

Chinese abbreviation of the Social Security System

LAYOFF

The lay off of workers is an objective phenomenon because of the supply has exceeded the demand for a long time. China has a great population, so the total number of the labor force is large and increases rapidly, which surpasses the production need and caused the lack of occupation. In the 1990s, many unwanted workers were laid off since they could not find new opportunities.. This was considered as an inevitable result during the process of the economic system reform from planned economy to market economy. The people laid off had to pay for their own insurance, otherwise they were not covered by the social security, like medical insurance, until they reached the age of retirement.

ORGANIZATION

It means different levels of CPC (Communist Party of China) organization. Under planned economy, the actual political power of many departments and units was controlled by corresponding CPC organizations with lots of issues to solve. So “organization” was the symbol of power among normal people.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Because of the planned economy, basic supplies lacked for a long time in China. During that period, the necessities of life were supplied under a strict system. Only the high-ranking officials could get special provisions like cigarettes, wine and some kinds of food which were not supplied to the normal market.

THE THREE YEARS OF NATURAL DISASTERS IN CHINA (1959-1961)

Refers to the period in the People's Republic of China between 1959 and 1961 (the Great Leap Forward era), in which a combination of poor economic policies and rounds of natural disasters caused widespread famine.

COUNTERATTACK TO MAINLAND CHINA

After the failure of the Kuomintang Party in 1949, Chiang Kai Shek raised a slogan “Counterattack to Mainland China” intending to get the regime back. Afterwards, he actually moved into action in the form of several military provocations, but all the actions ended unsuccessfully.

THE COUNTERATTACK WAR FOR SELF-DEFENSE AGAINST VIETNAM (CHINA-VIETNAM WAR)

Also known as the Sino-Vietnam War: was a brief but bloody border war fought in 1979 between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The PRC launched the offensive in response to Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Cambodia, which ended the reign of the PRC-backed Khmer Rouge. After a brief incursion into Northern Vietnam, PRC troops withdrew about a month later. Both sides claimed victory at the end of this war.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

After the Cultural Revolution ended in 1978, the new Chinese government led by Deng Xiaoping held the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee which confirmed that the emphasis of the government was to transfer the class struggle to economic development . The transformation from planned economy to market economy also began gradually. The Open Door Policy refers to the revolutionary and open economic policies following this committee in the 1980s.

BLOOD SUSPECT

Is one of the first Japanese TV idol series introduced to China in the 1980s. Not only the TV series itself was very popular, but also the leading actors, Yamaguchi Momoe and Miura Tomokazu, became the most favorite pop idols amongst Chinese audiences.

YAMAGUCHI MOMOE

She acted Sachiko, the heroine, in Blood Suspect. Because of Blood Suspect, this famous Japanese film and TV pop star in the 1970s and 1980s, was quite popular amongst Chinese audiences and became the idol of the Chinese youth.

SACHIKO'S HAIRSTYLE

Sachiko's hairstyle (quite short hair with bangs), the heroine of Japanese TV drama Blood Suspect which was famous in China in 1980s. A lot of Chinese ladies imitated this style at that time.

TV UNIVERSITY

Acquiring higher education through some modern means like broadcast, TV or the Internet.

SENIOR CADRE

In China, senior cadre refers to the officer whose rank is as high as a provincial vice department head or undersecretary in the civil service system. It also refers to the military officer whose rank is vice commander or higher.

ATTACHED SCHOOL

This kind of school is established for the children of employees in some important departments and big state-owned enterprises. They are directly managed by the education section of each unit. And the education level is usually from junior school to senior high school.

VESTIBULE SCHOOL

The layoff of workers is an objective phenomenon because of the supply has exceeded the demand. It is the main base to train people with techniques and working abilities. It recruits students graduated from junior high school. With the combination of education and work practice, schooling lasts for 3 years.

OUTSIDE WORLD

Represents a song by the Taiwan singer Qi Qin in the 1980s. Popular at that time, the lyrics of this song speak about young people's longing for a fresh life after the open door policy and the sophisticated feeling when they enter into the real world.

UNPAID LEAVE

Started from the beginning of 1980s, unpaid leave refers to the situation that the employer permits an unused employee to leave his position unpaid but retaining his job. Usually, the employer and the employee sign an unpaid leave contract to establish the rights and obligations of both sides. This regulation is only suitable for the formal employee.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

Chinese college entrance examinations were instituted from 1952. Interrupted by the Cultural Revolution, from 1966 to 1976, they restarted from 1977 until the present day. Due to the great population, the domiciliary control system is very strict in China. Most people can only receive education and obtain employment in the place they grow up in. When the college entrance examination began, the permanent registered residence of a college graduate could be transferred to big and medium cities, which was an important way for those students from small villages and the countryside to live in better places.

The History of Reform of the Chinese Industry System

1. PLANNED ECONOMY ERA

1953-1957 1ST FIVE-YEAR PLAN

1st Five Year Plan means the first five year plan for domestic economy, which was focused on the fundamental industry such as energy resources, raw material and the mechanical industry. During this period from 1953 - 1957, the annual mean growth rate of the gross industry output value was 18% (the original plan was 14%). When the 1st Five Year Plan was completed, the socialism reform in China was almost finished and the 100% planned economy controlled by state-owned systems was completely established.

1958-1960 GREAT LEAP FORWARD

In 1958, the Chinese government introduced a development plan claiming that the main industry output of China would surpass that of the United Kingdom and United States in 15 years or less. Every part of Chinese Industry joined this Great Leap Forward. This kind of movement, which neglected the market rules, and the false reports made on the industry output, seriously blocked the natural development of the Chinese industry.

1966-1976 STEP BACK DURING CULTURAL REVOLUTION

During the 10 years of the Cultural Revolution, the industrialization of China was interrupted by political movements. Under planned economy, the industry development level dropped to a step-back situation.

2. FROM PLANNED ECONOMY TO MARKET ECONOMY

1978 THIRD PLENARY SESSION OF THE 11TH CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND OPEN DOOR POLICY

After the Cultural Revolution was ended, the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee held in 1978 was the turning point for the Chinese economy since 1949. According to the Open Door Policy enforced after this committee, the traditional planned economy was going to be changed to market economy gradually.

1980S - 1990S REFORM OF INDUSTRY SYSTEM

The Industry system is controlled by the economy system. The Chinese industry system about enterprise management was changed from a state-managed system to a state-owned and self-managed system, which led to the management form as "State - Industry Associations - Enterprises". So the state no longer took part in the management and decision-making of state-owned enterprises directly. As a result, those enterprises who got the actual power assumed sole responsibility for their profits and losses, which encouraged them to attract foreign capital and advanced technology. This new active management system accelerated the Chinese industrialization to a great level.

1995-2000 LAYOFF WAVE

From the middle of 1990s, along with the development of the economy system reform and the increasing competition caused by market economy, the problems under planned economy like overstaffed organizations and low working efficiency led to lots of closures and bankruptcy of those factories who could not adjust to market economy. Paying an employment allowance based on the number of years the worker had been employed, enabled some factories to cut down their workforce in order to raise efficiency, which caused the layoff wave. And this situation was an inevitable result on the way that the reform of state-owned enterprise adapted to market economy.

1998 FIRST SUCCESSFUL PERIOD OF THE STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISE REFORM

After 1998, most large and middle state-owned enterprises chose a shareholding system as their management system. Through the integration of capital and resources, the state-owned enterprises made up the deficits and increased surpluses to a great level, which strengthened the state-owned economy.

Cast

JOAN CHEN as Gu Minhua

Born in Shanghai, Joan Chen is a famous Chinese American actress and director.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2007 Lust, Caution - Director: Ann Lee
- 2007 The Sun Also Rises - Director: Jiang Wen
Best Supporting Actress, 2nd Asian Film Awards in Hong Kong
- 1994 On Deadly Ground - Director: Steven Seagal
- 1993 Heaven & Earth - Director: Oliver Stone
- 1990 Twin Peaks (The series) - Director: David Lynch
- 1987 The Last Emperor - Director: Bernardo Bertolucci
9 awards, 60th Academy Awards

LV LIPING as Hao Dali

Born in Beijing, Lv Liping is a famous actress in China. She graduated from the Performance Department of the Chinese Central Academy of Drama in 1984 before becoming an actress at the Shanghai Film Studio.

FILMOGRAPHY

- 1992 The Blue Kite - Director: Tian Zhuangzhuang
Best Actress, 6th Tokyo International Film Festival
Best Actress, 1st Singapore International Film Festival
- 1990 Dragon Year Cops - Director: Huang Jianzhong
- 1986 Old Well - Directed by Wu Tianming
Best Supporting Actress of 8th Golden Rooster Awards
Best Supporting Actress of 11th Hundred Flowers Awards
- 1985 The Way She Lives - Director: Ye Ming
- 1984 Childhood Friends - Director: Huang Shuqin

ZHAO TAO as Su Na

Born in Shanxi province of China, Zhao Tao is a famous Chinese actress who graduated from the Department of Chinese Folk Dance of Beijing Dance Academy in 1998. She began to work with awards in domestic dancing competitions and began to work with director Jia Zhang Ke as heroine in five of his films. She was also one of the producers of Jia Zhang Ke's documentary Useless (2007).

FILMOGRAPHY

- 2008 Waiting - Director: Peng Tao
- 2007 Useless (as producer) - Director: Jia Zhang Ke
- 2006 Still Life - Director: Jia Zhang Ke
- 2004 The World - Director: Jia Zhang Ke
- 2002 Unknown Pleasures - Director: Jia Zhang Ke
- 2000 Platform - Director: Jia Zhang Ke

CHEN JIANBIN as Song Weidong

Born in Urumqi, Sinkiang, China, Chen Jianbin graduated from the Performance Department of the Central Academy of Drama in 1998, and joined the National Theatre Company of China as an actor.

FILMOGRAPHY

- 2002 Chicken Poets - Director: Meng Jinghui
- 2000 Chrysanthemum Tea - Director: Jin Chen

Production Crew

SCREENWRITER / DIRECTOR:

JIA ZHANG-KE

Jia Zhang Ke was born in 1970 in Fenyang, in the Shanxi Province of China. He graduated from Beijing Film Academy and made his first feature film *Xiao Wu* in 1998. He is now settled in Beijing and actively involved in independent filmmaking in China.

FILMOGRAPHY

- 2007 Useless (documentary)
- 2006 Still Life
Golden Lion Award Venice Film Festival
- 2006 Dong (documentary)
- 2004 The World
- 2002 Unknown Pleasures
- 2001 In Public (documentary)
- 2000 Platform
- 1998 Xiao Wu

CO-SCREENWRITER:

ZHAI YONGMING

Born in Chengdu in the Sichuan Province of China, Zhai Yongming is a famous Chinese female poet, who graduated from the University of Electronic Science & Technology of China and worked in an institute of physics in Chengdu. Her works have been translated into English, French, Dutch, Italian, German etc., and have been published in these countries. *She won the A Team Award of Zhong Kun International Poem Awards in 2007.*

DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY:

YU LIKWAI

Born in 1966 in Hong Kong, Yu Likwai graduated from INSAS (Institut National Supérieur des Arts de Spectacle, Belgium) in 1994, majoring in cinematography. He made his directional debut in 1996. He is now actively involved in productions both in Hong Kong and mainland China. He has been DOP of all Jia Zhang Ke feature films. He was already DOP on *In the Mood for Love* (2nd unit)

WANG YU

Born in Beijing in 1966, Wang Yu graduated from the Photography Dept. of Beijing Film Academy in 1987.

Full Cast and Crew

STARRING:	Joan Chen, Lv Liping, Zhao Tao, Chen Jianbin
INTERVIEWEES:	He Xikun, Wang Zhiren, Guan Fengjiu, Hou Lijun, Zhao Gang
CAST:	Jiang Shanshan, Chen Rui, Zhai Yongming, Yang Mengyue, Liu Xiangquan, Luo Gonghe
SUPPORTING CAST:	Jiang Lin, Guo Wei, Pan Yang, Yang Lu, Yu Feng, Backy, Zhao Yanfang, Zhong Hua, Qu Hongjia, Deng Xiaolong, Li Yihua, Lai Yu, Fang Fei, Bai Nu, Zhang Yao, Li Jinmei, Li Dapeng, Yang Yuxuan, Li Zeshunzi, ChengFa Yue Opera Troupe, Sichuan Fairy's Lingzhi Group, Artgroup
POEMS IN THE FILM:	Glass Factory: Ouyang Jianghe, The Coming of Wisdom with Time?: W.B.Yeats, A Dream of Red Mansions: Cao Xueqin, Split Milk: W.B.Yeats, Innate Character: Wan Xia
CO-PRODUCERS:	Masayuki Mori, Yoshida Takio, Sadai Yuji, Kubo Satoshi, Xu Pengle, Zhu Jiong, Ma Ning
SCREENWRITERS:	Jia Zhang Ke, Zhai Yongming
DIRECTOR:	Jia Zhang Ke
FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:	Han Jie
ASSISTANT DIRECTORS:	Chen Rui, Zhou Yan
CONTINUITY:	Yan Fei
DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY:	Yu Likwai, Wang Yu
CAMERA OPERATORS:	Tian Li, Si Guoyi
CAMERA ASSISTANTS:	Ge Yinghan, Zhang Shuo, Luo Meng, Zhang Guangyu, Sun Yong, Wang Ying
LIGHTING DESIGN:	Hao Feng
GAFFER ASSISTANTS:	Cai Xuejun, Xu Lei, Hu Zeyan, Zhang Guqiang, Xie Dongya, Kang Junyue, Yin Xiping, Wang Liufeng, Cai Juntao, Chen Siyang
SOUND DESIGNER:	Zhang Yang (Still Life)
LOCATION SOUND:	Ren Jiajia, Li Danfen
BOOM:	Si Zhonglin, Liu Tao, Hao Teda, Wu Jianxun, Zhao Songqing
ART DIRECTOR:	Liu Qiang
ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR:	Chen Rongchao (Still Life)
PROPERTY MASTERS:	Li Pengkai, Chen Heyong
SET MASTERS:	Qin Mingshi, Zhu Weiping
WARDROBE:	Zhao Tong
MAKE UP:	Cheng Ying, Tan Jiang
COMPOSERS:	Yoshihiro Hanno (Millenium Mambo), Lim Giong (Still Life)
CHIEF EDITORS:	Lin Xudong, Kong Jinlai (Still Life)
EDITOR:	Li Haiyang
ASSISTANT EDITORS:	Zhang Jia, Chen Pei
SOUND ENGINEER:	Shen Jianqin
SOUND STUDIO:	Beijing Film Studio
PRODUCTION MANAGER:	Zhang Dong
LOCATION MANAGER:	Yang Fan, Han Yi
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT:	Ma Hemin
PRODUCTION COORDINATORS:	Eva Lam, Tian Jing
RESEARCHER:	Guan Na
ENGLISH SUBTITLES:	Tony Rayns
ENGLISH TRANSLATION:	T-Win Translation Service
PUBLICITY DIRECTOR:	Dai Yingying
PUBLIC RELATIONS:	Jia Wenyu
CAST COORDINATOR:	Wu Zemin
STILLS:	Jupiter Wong, Ricky Wong
MAKING OF:	Wei Xing
GRAPHIC DESIGN:	DuDo DESIGN & ASSOCIATES
LIGHTING EQUIPMENT SUPPLY:	Cinerent Ltd.
TECHNICAL CONSULTANT:	Liu Gesan

FILMLIGHT TECHNIQUE:	Ping Kailei
COLORIST:	Zhong Xiaobo
VIDEO TECHNICIAN:	Liu Jiansheng
DIGITAL POSTPRODUCTION:	Digital Media Institute of Beijing Film Academy
SOLE SUPPORTER ON PRINT MEDIA:	Chengdu Economic Daily
SOLE SUPPORTER ON WEB:	Sina.com
WARDROBE SPONSOR FOR ZHAO TAO:	Mixmind Art & Design Co., Ltd.
“BRING ABOUT BRILLIANCE AGAIN”	Lyrics by Chengfa Group Composed by Chengfa Group
“SINGING FOR THE MOTHERLAND”	Lyrics by Wang Shen Composed by Wang Shen
“SLEEPLESS TONIGHT”	Lyrics by Zhu Hai Composed by Meng Weidong
“ARIGATO ANATA”	Composed by Tokura Shunichi
“MY DRUNKEN LIFE”	Lyrics by Tong Shu Sum Composed by Lowell Lo Koon-Ting Performed by Sally Yeh
“LOST FUTURES”	Lyrics by Lim Giong Composed by Lim Giong Performed by Lim Giong
“A GIRL IN TEARS LOOKING FOR HER BELOVED ONE”	Lyrics by Kai Chuan Composed by Wang Ming Performed by Li Guyi
“THE WORLD OUTSIDE”	Lyrics by Chyi Chin Composed by Chyi Chin Performed by Chyi Chin

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