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STILL LIFE

SAN XIA HAO REN

HONG KONG/CHINA

2006

108 MIN.

DIR Jia Zhang-ke

PROD Xu Pengle, Wang Tianyun, Zhu Jiong

SCR Jia Zhang-ke

CAM Yu Likwai

ED Khung Jinlei

MUS Lim Giong

CAST Han Sanming, Zhao Tao, Li Zhu Bing, Wang Hongwei

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A major new work from Jia Zhang-ke, a leading figure of what is known as the Sixth Generation of filmmakers in the People's Republic of China, **Still Life** won the top prize, the Golden Lion, at the 63rd Venice Film Festival. Massive change has come to the town of Fengjie. Because of the construction of the immense Three Gorges Dam project, countless families who have lived there for generations are being displaced. The film's beautiful opening scene of villagers slowly drifting down the Yangtze River sets the tone for all that follows. It is immediately clear that the ideas of the film will be told through images rather than dialogue. Han Sanming, a miner, travels to Fengjie to find his ex-wife, who he hasn't seen in almost two decades. Somehow he finds her and they debate whether to remarry. In a parallel story, a young nurse is looking for her husband, who has disappeared for two years. Much of **Still Life** is devoted to following these lost souls as they wind their way through the ruined streets and buildings. As much a documentary as a dramatic narrative, the film's gaze is intensely compassionate and laced with moments of quiet surrealism. Jia is the most successful chronicler of change and discontent in contemporary China. He bears witness to the country's often vicious shift from state-controlled communism to capitalism (and its inevitable rip-offs). One of the world's great contemporary filmmakers, he chronicles the lives of people who are caught between two poles, just like the tightrope walker glimpsed in the film's final scene.

—Joel Shepard



JIA ZHANG-KE

Jia Zhang-ke was born in 1970 in Fanyang, in the Shanxi Province of China. He graduated from the Beijing Film Academy before making his first feature, **Xiao Wu** (SFIFF 1999). He followed that with **Platform** (SFIFF 2001), **Unknown Pleasures** (2002) and **The World** (SFIFF 2005). **Still Life** is his fifth feature film.

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The Western
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FRI MAY 2 6:30 KABUKI
SUN MAY 4 9:00 KABUKI
TUE MAY 6 8:45 PFA

STIL02K
STIL04K
STIL06P