

## Document Citation

Title	<b>Ju Dou : Secret love, hidden faces</b>
Author(s)	Piers Handling
Source	<i>Toronto International Film Festival</i>
Date	
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	99
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Ju dou, Zhang, Yimou, 1990



## Ju Dou Secret Love, Hidden Faces Zhang Yi-mou

People's Republic of China/Japan, 1989,  
94 minutes

Colour/35mm

Production Company: China Film Co-Production  
Corporation/Tokuna Communications/China Film  
Export and Import Corporation

Executive Producer: Tatsumi Yamashita, Shigemi  
Suzuki

Producer: Zhang Wen-ze, Yasuyoshi Tokuma, Hu  
Jian

Screenplay: Lui Heng

Cinematography: Gu Chang-wei, Yang Lun

Editor: Du Yuan

Art Director: Cao Jui-Ping, Xia Ru-Jin

Sound: Li Lan-hua

Music: Zhao Ji-pin

Principal Cast: Gong Li, Li Bao-tian, Li Wei, Zhang  
Yi, Zhen Ji-an

Print Source: Cineplex Odeon Films Canada,  
1303 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
M4T 2Y9. Tel: (416) 323-6600. Telex: 217615. Fax:  
(416) 323-3924.

Foreign Sales Agent: China Film Export & Import,  
25 Xin Wai Street, Pekin./Tokuma  
Communications Co. Ltd., Daiichi Hibiya  
Building 18-21, 1-Chome, Shinbashi Minato-ku,  
Tokyo, Japan. Tel: 03-5937991. Telex: J 28438.  
Fax: 03-5937993.

Zhang Yi-mou, whose last film was the extraordinary *Red Sorghum*, has again reached into China's rich past for inspiration. Set in the twenties, *Ju Dou* is an even more haunting story, told with consummate artistry and all the pictorial skills that this eminent cinematographer can command. To say that *Ju Dou* is a sumptuous visual delight is an understatement. Rarely has colour been used with such expressive power and with such restraint. Designed to highlight and accentuate mood and atmosphere, Zhang Yi-mou's carefully composed palette and beautiful images function as counterpoints to a story that unfolds with hypnotic logic. *Ju Dou*, a wide-eyed virginal beauty, has been bought as a bride by the elderly and malicious owner of a dye factory. Beaten and tortured by the impotent old man, her fate arouses the sympathy of the worker, Yang Tian-qing. One night, amidst the brightly coloured tanks of dye and the bales of cotton cloth, they become lovers and eventually a son is born. This is just the beginning of a complex and fateful story of love. *Ju Dou* and Yang's passionate love for each other is taunted and tested by the loyal parental love that their son acquires as he grows into adolescence. As *Ju Dou* humiliates her hated husband and lavishes all her affection on her lover, her son chooses his own singular path. The tangled web of relationships unravels with tragic implications. Zhang Yi-mou has unquestionably moved into the front ranks of the fifth generation of Chinese filmmakers with *Ju Dou*, a film of staggering beauty and deep insights, told with exceptional ability.

**Zhang Yi-mou** was born in 1950 in Xi-An. He was 16 years old when the Cultural Revolution began and, as a young intellectual, he was sent to work as a farmer, a sheppard, and finally as an unskilled worker in a textile factory. In 1978, having won prizes for his still photography, he applied and enrolled in the newly re-opened Beijing Film Institute. In 1982 Yi-mou worked as a cameraman on *One And Eight*, which came to be known as the first of the fifth generation films. He has been working as a cinematographer and director ever since. His first feature, *Red Sorghum* (88), won the Golden Bear Award at Berlin in 1988. *Ju Dou* (89) is his second feature film.

Piers Handling