

FILM LONDON PRESENTS

A LILTING PRODUCTION

A MICROWAVE FILM

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

BBC FILMS, STINK & SUMS FILM & MEDIA

# LILTING

Writer/Director: Hong Khaou  
Producer: Dominic Buchanan

Running time: 86 mins  
Year: 2013

DEUTSCHER KINOSTART: 1.1.2015

## **LOGLINE**

An intimate and thoughtful film about what it is like to live in a world where you have no grasp of its language, and your only lifeline to that is lost.

## **SYNOPSIS**

*Lilting is a touching, intimate film about finding the things which bring us together.*

Set in contemporary London, *Lilting* tells the story of a Cambodian-Chinese mother mourning the untimely death of her son. Her world is suddenly disrupted by the presence of a stranger. We observe their difficulties in trying to connect with one another without a common language. Through a translator they piece together memories of a man they both loved dearly, and realize that whilst they may not share a language, they are connected in their grief.

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

The idea for this story started with my family. We were political refugees from Cambodia, arriving in England in the 1980s. My mother wanted to give her children the opportunities for a future. Being young, we were able to fully assimilate into a new life, culture and language. Regrettably, she wasn't able to integrate so easily and to this day, after 30 odd years is still unable to master the English language. I took this premise as an idea and ran with it. I imagined what it would be like if her lifeline to the outside world was gone – how would she cope?

So language became an integral motif in the story. I wanted to use it as an analogy to comment on communication, particularly the flip side of that. We all know communication brings about understanding and bridge cultural differences. What you also get is that it is equally destructive, with conflicts arising out of it.

I've always wanted to use 'the translator' as a narrative device, because I spent so much of my childhood translating TV shows for my mum. The concern was whether this technique would bear up throughout the film because of the repetition. In the workshop I felt it could work, if the scene was engaging then there was nothing to fear. What you get with this technique is at certain screenings where you have a mixed audience, with some people who are able to understand Mandarin. It creates this lovely dynamic in which a section of the audience react and responding earlier than others. I love it when this happens. It's so nice to see as I feel in some ways it places them in the shoes of the characters.

A big influence for me was John Sayles' film, Lone Star. I love his works; incredible filmmaker. I like the way he blurred the timelines in that film. I thought the tone was just impeccable and I remembered desperately wanting to emulate that in *Lilting*.

I remember precisely the moment I decided to write *Lilting*. 3 years ago, my short film was showing at Sundance (2011), I maxed out on all my credit cards in order to go. It turned out to be the most inspiring film festival I've been to. It really affected me, I remembered telling myself that I must make a film before turning 40. The journey getting here has been punishing and tremendous in every sense. I don't think I slept during filming. It now feels wonderfully fitting to have the world premier at Sundance – 3 years exactly to the day when I was there, which galvanised me to write *Lilting*.

### **DIRECTOR - HONG KHAOU**

Hong Khaou participated in various writers' attachment programs with The Royal Court, Polka Theatre, Dende Collective and Yellow Earth Theatre. He was part of the BBC / Royal Court New Writing Initiatives, where 50 emerging writers were chosen across the country to take part in in-house writing opportunities for various departments within the BBC and Royal Court Theatre.

Hong spent 7 years at an independent film distribution company, Peccadillo Pictures, managing their Home Entertainment department. He also regularly attended film festivals and film markets as part of the acquisitions team.

Hong has written and directed two short films, *Summer* and *Spring*. *Spring* (2011) had its World Premiere at the Sundance Film Festival and European Premiere at the Berlin Film Festival. *Summer* (2006), premiered at the Berlin Film Festival.

His debut feature, *Lilting* was produced through Film London's Microwave scheme.

In 2013 Hong Khaou was named as one of the Stars of Tomorrow in Screen International.

### **PRODUCER – DOMINIC BUCHANAN**

Selected as the only producer to appear in Screen Daily's 'Stars of Tomorrow 2012' and subsequently appearing in 2013 Screen Daily's 'Future Leader: Producer' list, Dominic has forged an in depth career in the UK film industry. He has worked in acquisitions and production at the London office of The Weinstein Company, Universal Pictures International in the co-productions and acquisitions department and

Qwerty Films, under UK film producer Michael Kuhn, amassing a quality slate. *Gimme The Loot* was his first feature as a producer (which won the Grand Jury Prize at SXSW, then had its International debut at Cannes in *Un Certain Regard*). His most recent feature *Lilting* has secured UK distribution via Artificial Eye. Buchanan is now working on a Film4.0 project commissioned by Anna Higgs. Dominic was appointed Head of Film at Stink in May 2012 and is committed to making films that audiences can enjoy and be challenged by.

## **CAST**

### **BEN WHISHAW**

Ben Whishaw trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, graduating spring 2003. In 1999, prior to drama school, Ben played important supporting roles in two films, *The Trench* (Arts Council/Studio Canal dir. William Boyd) and *Mauvaise Passé* (Pathe/Studio Canal dir. Michel Blanc). He also played the title role in *My Brother Tom* (Film Four dir. Dom Rotheroe). After graduation, he went on to appear in *Enduring Love*, a film adaptation of Ian McEwan's novel directed by Roger Michell, and *Layer Cake*, a feature directed by Matthew Vaughan.

Ben subsequently made his West End debut at the National Theatre in their stage adaptation of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* and starred as Hamlet in Trevor Nunn's electric 'youth' version of the play at the Old Vic, for which he has received tremendous critical acclaim and a Laurence Olivier nomination.

In 2006, Ben went on to play the lead character Grenouille in Tom Tykwer's highly acclaimed *Perfume*. In the same year he also shot *Stoned* and *I'm Not There*, Todd Haynes' film portrayal of Bob Dylan's life alongside the likes of Cate Blanchett, Richard Gere and Christian Bale.

Ben played Sebastian Flyte in the film version of *Brideshead Revisited* (2008), which was released to critical acclaim. Ben starred in the hugely popular BBC drama *Criminal Justice*, which saw him pick up the award for best actor at the 2009 Royal Television Society Awards, 'Best Actor' at the International Emmy Awards 2009 and was nominated for 'Best Actor' at the 2009 BAFTA Television Awards. He also played the lead role in *The Idiot* at the National Theatre. Ben starred as John Keats in *Bright Star* and took the lead role in Mike Bartlett's play, *Cock*, at The Royal Court Theatre. Ben then played Ariel opposite Helen Mirren and Russell Brand in *The Tempest*.

In 2012, Ben went on to star as Freddie Lyon in *The Hour* for the BBC opposite Dominic West and Romola Garai. This was followed by the

lead role in the BBC's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Richard II* and then as Q in the most recent Bond, *Skyfall*, alongside Daniel Craig. In the same year, Ben starred alongside an all-star cast including Tom Hanks and Halle Berry in *Cloud Atlas*. 2013 saw Ben return to the stage alongside *Skyfall* co-star Judi Dench in *Peter and Alice*. He then appeared in *The Zero Theorem* with Matt Dillon. In 2014 Ben will be seen in *Lilting* and Ron Howard's recent project *In the Heart of the Sea*.

### **CHENG PEI PEI**

Cheng Pei Pei is one of Asian cinema's martial arts legends and Hong Kong's first action heroine. A household name in Asia, and often quoted by Harvey Weinstein as his favourite Chinese actress, Pei Pei gained immense popularity when she starred in the Shaw Brothers highly influential *Come Drink With Me* (1966). Many other films followed establishing her as Hong Kong's 'Queen of Swords'.

Today, Western audiences remember her best for her role as the wicked Jade Fox in Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, for which she won a Best Supporting Actress Award at the 2001 Hong Kong Film Awards.

Peipei's other recent credits include *House of Harmony* and *Naked Weapon* opposite Maggie Q; *Streetfighter*, *The Legend of Chun Li* for 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, and numerous Chinese films like *Yang Sisters*, *Speed Angels* and *Here Comes Fortune* opposite Alan Tam and Miriam Yeung for China Film Group.

Peipei has also starred in several Chinese television series including *Mulan* for CCTV, and the epic series *The Patriot Yue Fei* opposite Huang Xiaoming, which became the first Chinese series to be broadcast on HBO.

### **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY - ULA PONTIKOS**

As a Cinematography graduate of the NFTS, Ula has gone on to photograph numerous award-winning films, promos and documentaries. Her films have been screened at the Berlin Film Festival, Sundance and Camerimage. Her recent feature *Weekend* won many awards including two BIFAs. Ula's other credits are *The Minor Character* starring David Tennant for Sky Arts Playhouse as well as *Run*, starring Olivia Colman for Channel 4 with director Charles Martin.

Earlier this year Ula shot Debbie Tucker Green's *Second Coming* and the Cold War spy drama series *The Game* for the BBC.

### **LILTING AND FILM LONDON MICROWAVE**

The 5th round of Film London Microwave opened in 2011 and received 93 applications. 12 film-making teams were short-listed to participate in Microschool, a four day intensive programme of seminars and workshops. This was followed by four months of development support, ending with a final pitching session where the successful projects were greenlit – *Lifting* was one of three. The development period then continued to polish scripts, work on budgets, schedules, locations and casting. The Microwave scheme provides support and professional mentoring from the initial conception all the way through to the project's release.

Adrian Wootton, Chief Executive of Film London and the British Film Commission:

"*Lifting* is a beautifully moving, cinematic achievement and I am extremely proud of what Hong and Dominic have delivered. The scheme exists to discover and nurture London's film-making talent and I believe the success of *Lifting*, and our previous films, is in part testament to Microwave's innovative approach, via Microschool and providing access to the expertise of respected industry professionals and of course our fantastic team."

*Lifting* was a stand out from the start, as Mia Bays, Film London Microwave's Creative Producer explains:

"Film London had supported Hong Khaou from the start of his career, funding two shorts he made prior to his debut feature, so he was on my radar. As soon as I read the script and saw his reel, I knew this was a special proposition, and the team felt the same. All the way through Microschool the buzz from the mentoring team Clio Barnard, Peter Ettedgui and Colin Pons was also strong.

"The film progressed even further with our development programme, and the greenlight was unanimous decision. Hong has a very special take on the material, and it was vital to back him all the way along with producer Dominic Buchanan, whose star is rising as deserved too. This was one of the most rewarding development experiences of my career, and all the way, through production and the edit, it's been a real joy to work on, because it has such depth. I'm very proud of what we all achieved."

Microwave provides mentoring throughout the process, with director Clio Barnard (*The Selfish Giant*, *The Arbor*) and producer Peter Ettedgui (*Unmade Beds*, *Kinky Boots*) on hand to offer advice to Hong during Microschool and through to picture lock.

Hong Khaou, writer/director *Lifting*:

"It was important to have Film London's support and infrastructure to help make *Lilting*. We certainly benefited from their care and influence. I loved having Clio Bernard and Peter Ettedgui at hand to examine the script and advised how best to further strengthen it. I really cherish the time at Microschool, and feel that was when the script found its feet. There was a lot of love and protection from everyone, the mentors, Mia Bays and Film London all helped us through that process."

Producer Dominic Buchanan was mentored by producer Ken Marshall (*Filth, London to Brighton*).

Dominic Buchanan, producer *Lilting*:

"Film London's Microschool allowed Hong to flourish, his help from directing mentor Clio Barnard, in conjunction with Peter Ettedgui, his writing mentor, truly afforded Hong the correct environment – set up by Film London Microwave – to hone in on what made the script work."

"Ken Marshall proved to be a great producing mentor for me, and ultimately this production. He was a great soundboard and furthered my thinking and ability to handle all sorts of crisis. *Lilting* has been the perfect project which has given me the opportunity to prove myself as a producer. This film tested both Hong and my skills, patience and creativity as film-makers on a daily basis."

Clio Barnard, writer/director mentor:

"I was very impressed by the complexity of the themes in *Lilting* when I read the first draft of the screenplay. Then when I saw Hong's short films I knew that he was an incredibly talented film-maker who would realise it brilliantly. My next encounter with *Lilting* was when I saw the fine cut just before Hong locked picture – and I think I cried pretty much all the way through. It's a very beautiful film and Hong is an incredibly talented film-maker."

Ken Marshall, producer mentor:

"My involvement in *Lilting* was an easy choice once I had met Dominic and Hong. Not only are they both good, talented people but they possessed a beautiful script that moved me to tears. A script I was jealous wasn't my own! I knew that *Lilting* would be an important film to bring to life, and therefore I knew it would be important for me to do what I could to support Dom in any way possible as a mentor and fellow producer. Producing can sometimes be a lonely job and I'm very pleased that Dom and I got a chance to work together. My role as mentor was one of sharing the common goal: helping get *Lilting* closed, into production and realised. As I suspected, the film has done the script justice and it is now getting the attention and success it deserves."

## **ABOUT FILM LONDON MICROWAVE**

Launched in 2006, Film London Microwave has established itself as the premier talent development scheme for emerging feature film-making talent based in London.

Set up by Film London with BBC Films and support from Creative Skillset, Film London Microwave is committed to discovering and investing in ambitious London-based film-makers. It backs talented teams with fresh voices and strong stories. A unique 'apprenticeship' scheme, it provides an intensive approach to film-making with the emphasis on original ideas, tightly focussed scripts and short production schedules. Film-makers are supported by an extensive training and mentoring programme from development, through production, all the way to the film's release in the UK and internationally.

The Microwave slate offers a diverse range of features in terms of content, style and genre. To date, 100% of completed Microwave features have secured theatrical distribution in the UK, including BAFTA®-nominated *Shifty* and *iLL Manors*, as well as *Borrowed Time*, *Mum and Dad*, *The British Guide to Showing Off*, *Freestyle* and *Strawberry Fields*. Two further features are in pre-production, due to shoot in 2014.

Film London, as the capital's film and media agency, aims to ensure London has a thriving film sector that enriches the city's businesses and its people. The agency works with all the screen industries to sustain, promote and develop London as a major international production and film cultural capital, and it supports the development of the city's new and emerging film-making talent. Film London is funded by the Mayor of London, the National Lottery through the BFI, and receives significant support from Arts Council England and Creative Skillset.

[www.filmlondon.org.uk](http://www.filmlondon.org.uk)



## **ABOUT STINK FILMS**

Stink is a leading international producer of audiovisual content in the commercial, digital and music sectors with offices in London, USA, France, Germany, Russia, Brazil and China.

Stink has established a niche for itself by placing a relentless focus on artistic quality at the heart of everything they do. From live action to animation, through digital and experiential projects, Stink constantly look to explore, lead and shape emerging media and artistic trends while maintaining a competitive edge. Stink's roster includes award winning names such as; Nicolas Winding Refn, John Hillcoat, Adam Berg, Yann Demange and Tom Green to name but a few.

Stink Films was created in 2010 by Stink and similar to its sister company the ethic and ethos of the company is very much focused on talent, new and established. Stink Films has an active slate of US and European feature films in various stages of development, their first feature LILTING has been selected for Sundance 2014 in World Dramatic Competition.

LILTING, a feature written & directed by Hong Khaou, starring Ben Whishaw and produced by Dominic Buchanan. This project has been a significant step towards Stink Films desire to produce quality films with new and recognized talent for widespread audiences.

## **ABOUT SUMS FILM & MEDIA**

SUMS Film & Media specialises in narrative digital films for new platforms, traditional theatrical releases, and the integration of the two.

Run by producer Andy Brunskill and exec producer Bob Benton, SUMS development projects include; a teen gang war epic based on the non-fiction book Teenage by Jon Savage, to be directed by Nima Nourizadeh (PROJECT X); GULLY, a psychedelic LA ghetto drama written by Marcus Guillory, to be directed by Michael Rapaport; and PHONE BOOK, a multi-stranded narrative film series for tablets, smart phones/TV's, created by Steven Hall, writer of novel The Raw Shark Texts and games CRYISIS 3 and RYSE, written by Hall and Mark O'Rowe (BROKEN, BOY A), and financed by the British Film Institute.

SUMS feature JET TRASH, a backpacker thriller starring Robert Sheehan, begins shooting in Goa, India, February 2014.

## **ABOUT BOB & CO**

Created in 2010, Bob & Co is a vehicle to connect media content to finance, under the expertise of Bob Benton. The Company has three parts; an advisory function, its own portfolio of media rights and development investments - which includes children's, entertainment feature film, television, and theatre projects - and a capital raising division focused on media companies and content.

## **FULL CREDITS**

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY  
Hong Khaou

PRODUCED BY  
Dominic Buchanan

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY  
Ula Pontikos

EDITOR  
Mark Towns

PRODUCTION DESIGN  
Miren Maranon

MUSIC COMPOSED BY  
Stuart Earl

CASTING DIRECTOR  
Kharmel Cochrane

LINE PRODUCER  
Donna Mabey

COSTUME DESIGNER  
Camille Benda

MAKE UP & HAIR DESIGNER  
Annette Field

ART DIRECTOR  
Augusta Akerman

1ST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
Jon Midlane

SOUND RECORDIST  
Pete Cowasji

PRODUCTION MANAGER  
Hazel Falck

## CAST

Richard  
Junn  
Kai  
Margaret  
Vann  
Alan

Ben Wishaw  
Cheng Pei Pei  
Andrew Leung  
Morven Christie  
Naomi Christie  
Peter Bowles

## CREW

Acting Coach  
2nd Assistant Director  
3rd Assistant Director  
Script Supervisor  
Focus Puller  
D.I.T  
Clapper Loader  
Camera Trainee  
Grips

Boom Operator  
Location Manager

Location Scouts

Gaffer  
Lighting Technician

Best Boy  
Generator Operator  
Lighting Trainee  
Assistant Editor  
Cutting Room Assistant  
Costume Supervisor  
Costume Standby  
Prop Buyer  
Property Master  
Art Department

Set Dresser  
Painter  
Illustrator  
Construction Manager  
Carpenter  
Construction Company

Giles Foreman  
Emlyn Pool  
Jeannette Sutton  
Zara Carnagie  
Karl Hui  
James Ian Gray  
Anca Badita  
Jonathan Tomlin  
Frederico Lopez  
Tom Pittman  
David Turnbull  
Lex Donovan  
Ross Monaghan  
Owen Twort  
Lorna Ford  
Andy Ross  
Bernie Rostoski  
John Harris  
Salvador Gomez-Lopez  
Paul Starkey  
Mel Hayward  
Anna Gritsch  
Philip Michael  
Funda Hassan  
Laura Venables  
Frances Scott  
Jerry Bland  
Nikola Wake  
Francesca Massariol  
Freddy dos Santos  
Evannia Paine  
Emily Jayne Armitage  
Ben Reynolds  
rene Fuga  
Michael Mulligan  
David Rigley Williamson  
Setsupermarket Film Construction

Mak Up & Hair Artist  
Production Assistant  
Runners

Executive Sound Editor  
Supervising Sound Editor  
Sound Re-Recording Mixer  
Assistant Sound Re-Recording  
Mixer  
Music Supervisor  
Mandarin Translator  
Pinyin Translator  
Dance Choreographer  
Title Designer

Stills Photographer  
Editing Facilities

Foleystudio  
Foley Artist  
Foley Recordist  
Picture Post Production by  
Post producer  
Head of DI  
Senior Online Editor  
Colourist

Technical Support

For Film London  
Head of Production and Talent  
Development  
Creative Producer, Microwave  
Business & Finance Producer,  
Microwave  
Development & Production  
Officer  
Talent Development  
Manager  
Stills Photographer

For BBC Films  
Executive Producer  
Marketing Executive

For Stink  
Executive Producer

Katie Lee  
Pascal Le Comte  
Hayleigh Roberts  
Ryan Delahunty  
Joakim Sundström  
Anna Bertmark  
Howard Bargroff

Matt Johns  
Connie Farr / Thinksync Music  
Lillian Chia  
Jon Oiartzun  
Raymond Chai  
Christian Morhring  
Frauke Stegmann  
Stuart Hendry  
Mimic Media Ltd  
and Will Grayburn @ The Station.  
Europa Foley AB  
Ulf Olausson  
Lotta Nilsson  
LipSync Post  
Aileen McIntosh  
James Clarke  
Connan McStay  
Scott Goulding  
Lee Clappison  
Rick White

Maggie Ellis  
Mia Bays

Mike Kelly

Tessa Inkelaar

Kevin Dolan  
James Dewar

Steve Jenkins  
Jacqui Barr

Robert Herman

Daniel Bergmann

For SUMS

Executive Producer

Andy Brunskill  
Robert Benton  
Simon Flamenk

Film London Microwave

Mentors

Producer Mentor

Writer Mentor

Director Mentor

Ken Marshall  
Peter Ettedgui  
Clio Barnard

Legal Services

Production Accountant

Production Insurance

Camera Equipment Hire

Lighting Hire

Olswang  
Lynne Samuelson  
Stone House Conseillers  
Arri Media  
Panalux

## SONGS

"Ye Lai Xiang" performed by Xiang Lan Li

Licensed courtesy of EMI Records Ltd

Published by EMI Music Publishing Ltd

"Don't Blame Me" Performed by Timi Yuro

Composed by Dorothy Fields and Jimmy McHugh

Courtesy of Capitol Records Inc.

Under licence from Universal Music Operations Ltd

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"Sway" ("Yao Yao Bai Bai") performed by Yi Min

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Words and Music by Pablo Beltran Ruiz/Luis Demetrio Traconis Molina

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John Griffin Alexander Lea Richard Tay Michael Kuhn Clare Wise  
Diego Fuga & Ombra Signe Sorensen & Brent Chase  
Joakim Sundström Adrian Wootton David Parfitt Christian Hodell  
Christopher Farrar Jeremy Conway Andrew Oi Giles Foreman

THANKS

Lindsay Towns Will Grayburn Leigh Emmerson Kat Turner Jenny Field  
Elliot Goldner Mu-Lan Theatre Colin Pons Shaheen Baig  
Tom Abel & Kahloon Loke  
Sam Ashby Jackson Lai Jonny Capps Johann Knobel Angela Sinden  
Richard Lonsdale Nadia Lachmansingh Lindell Buchanan  
Gillian Ashun Afo Kuti  
Carley Dewey William DeWitt Alice Nutt Christopher Morrish  
Josic Cadoret David Charlaff

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Film London Microwave

FILM LONDON / BFI / BBC FILMS

STINK / SUMS FILM & MEDIA / DOMINIC BUCHANAN PRODUCTIONS  
THINKSYNC MUSIC / GILES FOREMAN STUDIO / LOCATIONWORKS /  
ARRI / PANALUX

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L I L T I N G - ■ ■ ■ 晃

**Technical Specs:**

Running time: 86mins  
Aspect Ratio: 2:35  
Format: HD Digital  
Sound: 5.1 Surround  
Language: English / Mandarin  
Subtitles: English

