

# DEAR RED

a film by Rongfei Guo

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FESTIVAL DE CANNES

### Rongfei Guo

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### Festival de Cannes

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Since 2000, the Festival Residence has provided each year accommodation and support to twelve selected young directors in order to help them prepare their first or second feature film. A jury sits twice a year, selecting these young filmmakers on the basis of their short films, or even first

feature film, and the merits of their feature film project. During their 4-and-a-half-month stay in Paris, they work on the writing of their feature film project, have meetings with professionals and try, with the support of the Cannes Film Festival, to bring their project to co-production status.

### Technical Information

**Working Title:** Dear Red

**Director:** Rongfei Guo

**Screenplay:** Rongfei Guo

**Nationality:** China

**Genre:** Musical

**Duration:** 100 min

**Shooting location:** China

**Production:** CKF Pictures

### Director's Information

Rongfei Guo is a Chinese award-winning director and scriptwriter who graduated from New York University. Her graduate thesis film, *Fairy Tales* (2016) has been selected into over 50 international film festivals and wins: Student Academy Award, Best Short Documentary Award at Melbourne International Film Festival and Asian American Film Festival.

Her first musical short film *Girl with a Thermal Gun* (2020) film wins Best Narrative Short Award at Tribeca Film Festival, Special Jury Award at FlickerFest International Film Festival, Best Foreign Film at Fire Island Film Festival, Best Live Action Film at Calgary International Film Festival and so on.



FESTIVAL DE CANNES

## Synopsis

Finding herself unable to love her newborn daughter, Fei (30) desperately wants to unlock her dormant maternal instincts. Realizing the root of the issue lies with her own long-missing birthmother, who left Fei at a young age, she sets off on a journey across China alone to find her and uncover the reason she was abandoned. Along the way, Fei begins to kindle the feelings of love she desperately wants for her daughter – but soon discovers that some questions are best left unanswered.

## Statement of Intent

This film takes its inspiration from personal experience. I never knew my biological mother until last year. She was the ultimate mystery, looming like a myth over my childhood. My family kept her a secret, only letting hints of her slip out during arguments, in words such as, “You’re acting just like that woman.” During the pandemic, I found her and we became pen pals. There is one sentence from her letters that stood out to me, one I keep thinking back on. She wrote: “Maybe we can meet in a movie.” *Dear Red* is a movie about confronting the pain brought on by our families and our childhoods, and our struggle to get to know ourselves. This film will be a rock musical with contemporary dance. I believe that musical genre captures larger-than-life emotions and provides an escape from reality. The main protagonist, and I, want to romanticize the trauma in order to cope with our feelings of estrangement and hurt.

## Synopsis

Fei (30 ans), qui n’arrive pas à aimer sa fille nouvellement née, souhaite désespérément libérer son instinct maternel endormi. Comprenant que le problème vient de sa propre mère biologique, disparue depuis longtemps et qui a quitté Fei lorsqu’elle était jeune, elle entreprend seule un voyage à travers la Chine pour la retrouver et découvrir la raison de son abandon. En cours de route, Fei commence à ressentir l’amour naissant qu’elle souhaite désespérément pour sa fille, mais elle découvre bientôt qu’il vaut mieux laisser certaines questions sans réponse.

## Note d’intention

Ce film s’inspire d’une expérience personnelle. Jusqu’à l’année dernière, je ne connaissais pas ma mère biologique. Elle était l’ultime mystère qui planait comme un mythe sur mon enfance. Ma famille l’a gardée secrète, ne laissant échapper des allusions à son sujet qu’au cours de disputes, par des mots tels que « Tu te comportes exactement comme cette femme ». Pendant la pandémie, je l’ai retrouvée et nous nous sommes écrit. Il y a une phrase de ses lettres qui m’a marqué et à laquelle je repense sans cesse. Elle a écrit : « Nous pourrions peut-être nous rencontrer dans un film. » *Dear Red* est un film sur la confrontation avec la douleur engendrée par nos familles et nos enfances, et sur notre lutte pour apprendre à nous connaître. Ce film sera une comédie musicale rock avec de la danse contemporaine. Je pense que ce genre musical capture des émotions plus grandes que nature et permet de s’évader de la réalité. Le protagoniste principal, et moi-même, voulons romancer le traumatisme afin de faire face à nos sentiments d’éloignement et de blessure.

