



# Li Fang and His Film Dream

## 方励和他的电影梦

—— Interview with Mr. Li Fang,  
the President of Laurel Industrial and Laurel Films

—— 访劳雷工业公司总裁、劳雷影业公司总裁方励先生

□本刊记者：刘新洁

### 方励简历

- 1953年 出生于四川成都
- 1982年 毕业于中国东华理工大学应用地球物理专业
- 1989年 获美国维克森林大学(Wake Forest University) MBA 学位
- 1991年 创建劳雷工业公司(地球科学海洋科学技术领域)
- 2000年 创建劳雷影业公司

### 制片作品列表:

- 2001年 《安阳婴儿》(王超导演)
- 2004年 《日日夜夜》(王超导演)
- 2005年 《红颜》(李玉导演)
- 2006年 《颐和园》(娄烨导演)  
注:后撤项
- 2007年 《苹果》(李玉导演)
- 2010年 《观音山》(李玉导演)

### Resume of Li Fang

- Born in Chendu, Sichuan in 1953
- Graduated from applied geophysics major of East China Institute of Technology in 1982
- Obtained MBA degree of Wake Forest University in 1989
- Established Laurel Industrial (geoscience and ocean science technology fields) in 1991
- Established Laurel Films in 2000

### List of production works:

- 2001 "The Orphan Of Anyang" directed by Wang Chao
- 2004 "Day & Nigh" directed by Wang Chao
- 2005 "Dam Street" Directed by Li Yu
- 2006 "Summer Palace" directed by Lou Ye
- 2007 "Lost In Beijing" directed by Li Yu
- 2010 "Buddha Mountain" Directed by Li Yu

2008年,当中国改革开放进行到第30个年头的时候,我们采访了方励,这是一个10年后的回访,方励和记者畅谈了这10年中国以及他的劳雷工业公司发生的巨大变化。激情、梦想、生命、活力、永无止境的探索和发现,伴随着中国发展步伐稳健前行的方励让我们看到了一个与众不同的跨国公司的老总。

如今再见方励已是4年以后。

### 《观音山》是我第一部赚钱的电影

2011年3月的中国银幕,一部叫《观音山》的电影搅热了电影市场,这本是电影的淡季,但是《观音山》却出奇制胜,一部文艺片7800万票房的大卖成就了很多人梦,这其中就包括方励。《观音山》是方励投资和制作的第六部电影,是方励和年轻导演李玉以及与著名影星范冰冰二度合作的电影,范冰冰更是凭此片在东京电影节封后,电影同时获得东京电影节最佳艺术贡献奖。这是一部讲述着青春与梦想、爱与被爱、迷失与寻找的电影。当然这部电影也是方励制作和投资电影11年来第一部赚钱的电影。

伴随着中国加入世贸10周年大型回访活动,伴随着方励的第一部大卖的影片《观音山》的热映,我们再次回访了方励先生,我们试图让读者看到一个有趣的跨国公司的老总,看到一个执着追梦的企业家,看到一个永远追求生命激情的“年轻人”。在细细听方励讲述他的电影梦之前,我们再回顾一下方励一手



总裁方励先生 Mr. Li Fang, President

创办的劳雷是怎样一家成绩卓越的公司。

劳雷公司1991年成立,主营四大领域,一是地球物理勘探调查仪器设备;二是海洋调查测量仪器设备;三是油田专业测试分析仪器设备;四是专业工业设备。经过10年的发展,公司现在集中精力致力于地球科学和海洋科学这两大领域的应用科学和技术手段,在方励的带领下,取得了丰硕的成果,为中国在地球和海洋科研领域,实现了多个“零”的突破。



方励先生与《苹果》主创人员出席柏林电影节  
Li Fang and the lead designer of "Lost in Beijing" attended Berlin Film Festival

### 我是花钱做电影,不叫投资

在方励的劳雷影业公司,我们见到了风尘仆仆刚从外地赶回来的方励,他太忙了,日本东京、法国、香港、中国上海、广州、大连……,随着《观音山》的上映,方励带着他的主创团队,马不停蹄奔波于世界各地为影片宣传造势。我们的话题自然从《观音山》谈起。

只要稍微了解方励的电影从业经历,就不难理解为什么他会说,“我是花钱做电影,不叫投资电影。”方励是独立电影制片人,劳雷工业公司花去了他70%的精力,剩下的30%就给了电影。不过就从目前的势头来看,未来电影是否会成为他的主业也不好说,因为他太喜欢这个行当,不光做投资人,制片人,同时也做策划人和编剧,虽然电影之路走的并不顺利,可以说磕磕绊绊,但是他从来都无怨无悔,赔钱也做。方励2000年入行,拍了6部电影,其中3部被禁,1部放弃上映,破了圈内记录。《安阳婴儿》、《日日夜夜》、《颐和园》、《苹果》,这些没有上映的电影,都是由“方励制造”。

不过这次方励与《苹果》老搭档李玉、范冰冰,以及香港演员张艾嘉合作的《观音山》,替他平反昭雪。影片3月上映以来,不仅获得了影院的排片支持,还被文艺片的爱好者大家赞赏,更是被当代年轻人的偶像——韩寒称为“艺术品般的商品”。

不过方励并不这么认为前几部片子的失败就是失败,而《观音山》票房的成功就是打了一个翻身仗。方励对记者说:“我从来没把做电影当作我赚钱的行业,我做电影的目的是有话要说,有情感要表达,你对世界的感慨,你一生不能忘怀的感动,拍出来和大家分享,试图感染每一个人从而让观众产生

### 人和自然是相通的,地球物理和电影并不矛盾

方励先生是四川人,1982年毕业于中国东华理工大学应用地球物理专业,1989年又在美国Wake Forest大学获得了MBA学位。1991年他在美国创建了劳雷工业公司,在地球和海洋科技领域都获得了极大的商业成功。他是传统意义上的科研工作者和技术型企业家。大学专业是应用地球物理,留学美国后干的是海洋事业,他的名字出现在科技新闻里时,别人称呼他为“海洋技术和地球探测技术专家”;出现在教育新闻里时,他是在国内多所高校设立劳雷奖学金的地质专业学长和客座教授。很多人都非常好奇,研究地球海洋

共鸣,也就是说个人情怀占很大比重。当然我并不希望我做的影片总是不能上映,只是恰巧前几部影片没有一定的经验,不了解政策底线和导演的沟通也出现过失误,种种原因导致一些影片未能公映。回顾我的电影之路,我并不后悔,每一部影片都是有话要说,有故事要讲。”

和方励聊电影,你时时刻刻都会感受到他对电影的诚意。心诚就会有原创力,关心观众要看什么,希望达到怎样的心灵共鸣,这都是方励在拍一部电影之前认真考量的。他说,追求艺术本身和追求商业是一样的,艺术本身和观众达到共鸣被观众认同自然也会有商业回报。正是这一点感悟让方励在中国电影界独树一帜。追求艺术放在第一位,而商业利润则是水到渠成,比如下一些单纯追求商业票房但电影内容空洞的电影制作人和导演,无疑,方励给这样的电影人上了一课。



方励先生在《观音山》中饰演身份为火车司机的“父亲”  
Li Fang acted as the "father" of a train driver in "Buddha Mountain"



方励先生与李玉导演在东京电影节获奖  
Li Fang and Director Li Yu were awarded in Tokyo Film Festival

和拍电影，这两个看似两个完全不同领域为什么能吸引方励先生呢？一名科技专家，为何如此“不务正业”，痴迷电影？方励的解答很耐人寻味：“科学其实是很浪漫的，和电影一样，也是一门艺术。你们看，我们人与人之间以及人和自然之间都是相通的。大千世界的自然现象以及内在规律和人的情感以及人与社会的关系都是关联的。我对自然的奥秘天生敏感，为什么会有这样的自然现象，它的规律是什么，这些都是我喜欢探寻的。那么我对作为大自然的一份子的人群，也喜欢琢磨，这些都是好奇感兴趣的领域。”

方励认为科学其实是很浪漫的，科学家们关心海洋，关心地球，关心地球上的万物，以及各种万物之间的关系，需要很浪漫横跨时空的想象力和创造力。而对方励来说，这个地球上最重要的物种就是人，方励拍电影，就是在关注和呈现人与人之间，人与自然之间的关系和人的内在层次。

听方励解读他的电影梦听起来那么自然，没有转行、没有跳行一说，有的只是无处不在的人与自然的和谐。正因为这份相通，让方励在他热爱的地球物理以及电影事业里尽情创造着属于他的世界。

### 对中国电影的几点希望

方励在电影圈里已经摸爬滚打了10多年，对于中国电影的现状以及未来的发展，他有太多的话要说。方励是美籍华人，在美国生活多年，每天当国内的人们熟睡的时间就是他和美国同事交流的时



方励先生与演员在《观音山》拍摄现场工作照 Working photos of Li Fang and other actors at the filming sites of "Buddha Mountain"

间。凭借着对美国好莱坞影业市场的了解，方励对中国电影的思考远比其它电影人深刻的多。

“目前中国电影还没有形成产业机制。比如在国外，有专业的银行和保险公司参与电影产业，银行为电影放贷融资，保险公司为投资担保，就跟建筑工程一样，银行会按照工期进度来监管，它也会评估贷款风险，是否能收回成本。有了银行和保险业的介入，资金的支持，风险有控制，就会有更多的人投入到这个产业中。目前中国电影市场还有巨大的成长空间，到千亿票房的时候，就会是成熟产业了。目前还只是初级阶段。”方励的观点总是令人耳目一新。

方励认为，随着近年中国房地产市场的膨胀，购物中心和电影院线也随之快速增多，这为中国电影市场做大创造了硬件条件。而中国经济的崛起，让中国人自己更有了自信心，看本土电影、支持本土电影的民族自豪感从软件条件蓬勃了中国电影市场。总体来讲，中国电影呈现上升趋势是不可逆转的。那么如何在上升中的市场找到一条良性发展道路这就是方励一直在思考的问题。



方励先生与《观音山》主创人员出席东京电影节 Li Fang and the lead designer of "Buddha Mountain" attended Tokyo Film Festival

方励分析说：“关注中小成本的电影应是未来中国电影的发展之路。中国可以有一些上亿投资的大片投入市场，但更应该是一大堆1000—2000万中等投资电影占主导，即便是500万以下的小投资电影也会有自己的空间。这样会培养出一大批年轻的编剧和导演，有利于电影产业的成长，也有利于观众看到百花齐放的电影。中国的历史太漫长，有太多的故事可以讲，中国人讲自己的故事就讲不完，不需要用好莱坞高投入的特技手段去营造一个电影。这样就可以在成本上控制，中小成本电影一定应成为中国电影未来的主流发展方向。”

方励聊电影会聊几天几夜都没有问题，他太热爱这个行业了，因为他对人生有思考有感悟，而这份感悟他想和观众分享，而电影成就了这份表达的欲望。“《观音山》是我第六部电影，我已经57岁，还至少可以再干15年，人这一生太短暂，无法不抓紧时间，我的目标是做20部好电影，肯定会超过20部，这是我的计划，一定会实现。用自由、激情、梦想去构筑你的人生。在《观音山》里，我们那一段“扒火车”的戏就是诠释以上六个字，而这六个字也正是我自己的追求。”

不论是4年前还是4年后，每次和方励先生聊天，你都会感受到他的激情以及对人生的深刻思考。可能是缘于他对地球的了解，他本身已经参透了生命的本质。钱对他来讲永远都是他去创造他所喜爱的生活的介质。搞科技研发和电影创作都是他热爱的。方励先生的人生信条就是用自由、激情、梦想去构筑属于自己的人生！



方励先生与《苹果》主创人员出席柏林电影节  
Li Fang and the lead designer of "Lost in Beijing" attended Berlin Film Festival

In 2008, Li Fang was with Multinationals in China when the reform and opening-up in China has experienced 30 years, which was a 10-year return visit and he told the dramatic changes of China and his Laurel Industrial in the recent 10 years. Li Fang, with passion, dream, life, vitality, endless exploration and discovery as well as accompanied by steady China development step impressed a distinctive multinational president for us.

Now, it has been 4 years since the last time we met.

### "Buddha Mountain" is my first profitable film

In April 2011, a film named as "Buddha Mountain" in China screen grew the film market; it is the slack season of the film, but "Buddha Mountain" defeats by a surprise action, and the good ticket sales as RMB 78 million for this artistic film accomplishes a few people's dream, including Li Fang. "Buddha Mountain" is the sixth film invested and produced by Li Fang and is the film of the third cooperation with young director Li Yu and famous film star Fan Bingbing, further more, Fan Bingbing is awarded as Best Actress in Tokyo Film Festival by virtue of this film, and the film wins the prize of Best Artistic Contribution. This is a film telling youth and dream, love and to be loved, losing and search. This film, of course, is also the first profitable film in the recent 11-year film investment for Li Fang.

With the large return visit activity for 10th anniversary of China's entry into WTO and the hot showing of "Buddha Mountain" as the first well-sold film of Li Fang, Mr. Li Fang attends the return visit; we try to impress an interesting multinational president, a persistent dream pursuance enterpriser and a perpetual life passion pursuance "youngster" for readers. Before carefully listening Li Fang to tell his film dream, we review how Laurel which is alone created by Li Fang is a preminent company.

Laurel Industrial, established in 1991, has been engaged in four business categories, the first is geophysical exploration instrument and equipment; the second is marine survey and oceanographic instrument and equipment; the third is oil field lab analytical instrument and testing equipment; and

the fourth is industrial equipment. After experienced 10-year development, the company now concentrates to be dedicated to applied science and technical means in geoscience and ocean science fields and obtains plentiful and substantial achievements under the leadership of Li Fang, which realizes multiple "zero" breakthroughs for China in earth and ocean research field.

### I am spending money in making film, not investment

In Laurel Films, we saw Li Fang who endured the hardships of a long journey from other places; he is too busy; since the releasing of "Buddha Mountain", Li Fang, with his creative team, has rushed over the world to promote the film without a stop dashing through Tokyo, France, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Dalian and other cities of China. Naturally, our conservation starts from "Buddha Mountain".

So long as slightly understanding the film work experience of Li Fang, it is not difficult to understand why he says, "I am spending money in making film, not investment". Li Fang is the independent film producer, whose 70% energy is occupied by Laurel Industrial and the rest 30% is given to the film. However, with the view of the current tendency, it is difficult to say whether the future film may become his main work; he is too fond of this industry, not only investor, producer, but also planner and scriptwriter; even though his film road is not smooth as it is bumpy, he has neither enmity nor repentance all the time and still does even out of pocket. Entered into this industry in 2000, Li Fang filmed 6 films in total, in which, 3 were forbidden, 1 was abandoned to show, and he broken the record in the circle. "The Orphan Of Anyang", "Day and Night", "Summer Palace" and "Lost In Beijing" which were not shown in China are "produced by Li Fang".

However, "Buddha Mountain" with cooperation of old partners in "Lost In Beijing" such as Li Yu, Fan Bingbing and Hong Kong actress Sylvia Chang rehabilitated for him. Since the releasing in March, the film has not only gained support in the film arrangement from the cinema but also has been appreciated by artistic film lovers, further more, it is reputed as "Artwork-like Commodity" by the contemporary youngster's fetish-Han Han.



方励先生与主创人员出席《观音山》关机发布仪式 Li Fang and the lead designer attended the shutdown ceremony of "Buddha Mountain"



方励先生与李玉导演在拍摄现场工作照  
Working photos of Li Fang and Director Li Yu at the filming sites

However, Li Fang does not think the market failure of other films is really a failure, but the ticket sales success of "Buddha Mountain" is a better turn. Li Fang says, "I never take film making as my profitable business; my motivation is to say something and tell stories, share the sentiment for the world and unforgettable emotion in life to every body and infect everyone so as to reach resonance for audience; in other words, the personal feelings accounts for a very large proportion. Of course, I produce films for screening to audience in China and the world all the time, only that I run into problems with censor several times and lost control of directors twice, all of which result in film not being able to shown in China. I do not regret when reviewing my film production path; each film is what I like and have feeling attached with".

Talking about film with Li Fang, you will feel his sincerity for the film all the time. If you have the sincere heart, you may possess the original creativity and concern what audience to watch and hope to reach how soul resonance, which is earnestly considered before filming by Li Fang. He says the art pursuance and commercial pursuance are the same; if the art reaches resonance with audience, the commercial profit is

naturally obtained. It is just this gnosis to let Li Fang create a new school in China filmdom. The art pursuance is the first, and the commercial profit is secondary with effort; compared with those directors pursuing commercial ticket sales but the film expression is aimless, there is no doubt that Li Fang gives a lesson for such people.

**Human and nature are connected; geophysics and film are not contradicted**

Mr. Li Fang, born in Sichuan, graduated from applied geophysics major of East China Institute of Technology in 1982, and obtained MBA degree in Wake Forest University in 1989. In 1991, he established Laurel Industrial in America and obtained great commercial success in earth and ocean technology fields. He is a scientist and also a businessman. He was trained in applied geophysics and business management, but he has been engaged in many different technologies and market places; when his name appears in the technology news, people calls him as "expert of marine and geophysical technology"; when his name appears in the education news, he is guest professor in several Chinese universities also with Laurel scholarship established in several universities. A lot of people are very curious how science and technology and filmmaking, the totally two different fields can attract Mr. Li Fang and be managed well.

How could a technology expert or scientist get involved so deeply in the creative work of film making? Li Fang's answer is very deep, "science is in fact as romantic as the film art. We can see human being and nature are connected, and the natural law related to the nature and inherent law related to human are connected; I am always interested in finding connections between natural phenomenon and human behavior. Sometimes I find answers from nature on social problems."

Li Fang thinks that science is very romantic in fact, and not only it explains ocean, earth, everything in this planet but provides us with all kinds of imagination and dream about our future. However, as for Li Fang, the most important species in this celestial world are the human beings; the filming is concerning about human, society, and their relationship in between.



《观音山》拍摄现场  
The filming sites of "Buddha Mountain"



方励先生与《观音山》主创人员在火车顶上拍摄现场  
Li Fang and the lead designer of "Buddha Mountain" at the filming site of top train



方励先生与《观音山》导演及主创们在东京电影节  
Li Fang, Director of "Buddha Mountain" and the lead designer at Tokyo Film Festival

It sounds so natural to listen to Li Fang to tell his film dream without change and skipping but omnipresent human and nature harmony. Li Fang creates his world as much as he likes in his loved geophysics and film career just by virtue of this connection.

**Several hopes for China film**

Li Fang has experienced numerous hardships for more than 10 years in filmdom, and he has too many words to say for the current state and the future development of China film. Li Fang is a Chinese American and lives in America for many years, and the time the domestic people sleeping is his communication time with American workmates. Be virtue of the understanding for America Hollywood film market, Li Fang's consideration for China film is quite profounder than other film people.

"At present, China film has not yet been brought into the industry mechanism. In a mature film industry, commercial banks and insurance companies get involved in the film financing and insurance practice. Bank loans funds for film productions and supervises according to the schedule like construction project, and it also evaluates the project risks to make sure safe recovery of the loan and interests. Insurance is also critical to minimize any unexpected risks. With bank intervention and capital support, more business will be set and more films will be produced to boom the industry. At present, Chinese film market has large room to grow; when the ticket sales revenue reaches a hundred billion, we will have a real film industry. And now it is just at the primary stage". Li Fang's view always presents a new perspective.

Li Fang thinks that the shopping centers and cinema limes are increasing accompanied by the expansion of China real estate market in recent years, which creates the hardware condition for the expansion of China film market. The growing Chinese economy lets Chinese filmmakers find their confidence, and coming up with more high quality Chinese films will be key driving force to grow China film market. In a whole, it is irreversible that China film takes on uptrend.

How to find a sound business development path to follow the growing market is the focus thinking for Li Fang at all time.

Li Fang analyzes, "the future film market in China will give best chances for medium-small budgeted films. The audience need more good film stories instead of those huge budgeted commercial films with only empty content. We can have a few high budgeted films with investment of more than hundred million RMB yuan, but a large batch of 10-20 million RMB yuan budgeted films fit market needs better, and the financial risks for investment recovery are much lower, even the low budgeted films with 5 million RMB yuan investment also have their places. In this way, more young scriptwriters and film directors will be cultivated, which is in favor of the growth of film industry and is also in favor of audience watching flourishing films. The long history of China have so many stories to be told yet, and there is no need to use Hollywood high-investment trick means to create a film. In this way, the cost may be controlled, and the medium-small budgeted films shall become the future development focus of China film".

There is no problem for Li Fang to talk about film for several days and nights and he is too fond of this industry, because he has thinking and gnosis for the life and he is eager to share this gnosis with audience, and the film accomplishes the desire of this expression. "Buddha Mountain" is my sixth film; I am 57 years old and I can work for at the least 15 more years; the human life is too short, I am incapable of not grasping the time; my target is to produce 20 good films but I believe I can exceed 20 films; this is my plan and I believe I can realize. Construct your life with freedom, passion and dream. In "Buddha Mountain", the part of "scrabble train" is explaining above six words, and these six words are my own pursuance".

You can feel his passion and deep thinking for life when talking with Mr. Li Fang every time. He has penetrated the life essence owing to his understand for the earth. The money is always the medium for him to create his fond living. Science and film are his enthusiasm. The life credo of Mr. Li Fang is to construct his own life with free, passion and dream!



方励先生与李玉导演在东京电影节获奖后与评委们合影  
A group photo of Li Fang, Director Li Yu and judges after winning awards in Tokyo Film Festival