



Mr. Lu's Blues (Germany)

Director: Maria von Heland

Producer: Oliver Damian

Company: 27 Films Production

Screenplay: Maria von Heland

Genre: Romance Shooting Material: 35mm Duration: 100min

Stage of Script: Draft

Production Budget: 7,000,000 USD

Finance in Place: 100,000 USD

Partner Involved by Now: MDM: Public Film Fund Germany

Seeking: Co-producer, Territory Buyer, Advertising Sponsor

Synopsis:

MOSCOW,2000.The American-Chinese journalist PETER LEE finds jazz legend OLEG LUNDSTREM (Mr. Lu) 84, alone in an old dance hall, mourning his wife of many years. Lee wants to interview Mr. Lu for a Jazz journal, because of his old orchestra's entry into Guinness Book of Records. But Lee's real mission is personal: Oleg Lundstrem was his mother's big love.

The meeting becomes a clash of cultures, the present is debated while travelling in the past – to a freezing cold day in Harbin, China, 1930, where Oleg first meets Lee's beautiful mother DAIYU. A love story grows between the two, living so close, in worlds far apart. Daiyu hopes to break free from tradition. Oleg shares her dreams. Their hearts grow fonder until the Japanese invasion of Manchuria forces everything to end.

At the darkest of times, a Duke Ellington record lands in Oleg's hands. Convinced he'll never see Daiyu again, black people's jazz becomes the reason to live for this Russian boy in China.

Oleg moves to Shanghai, working his way up from dirty dives, where girls sell their bodies for cheap dance tickets, to grand Paramount, where Daiyu reappears, now a self-assured young woman in western clothing.

As if there was no tomorrow, the two embark on a glorious mission to live; discovering passion, opium and sensuality. But when the dancehalls close and the music stops, both are forced to return to their destinies.

Daiyu marries the man her father paid dowry to. Oleg goes to the USSR to find his parents killed by Stalin. His secret to survival: Keep your mouth shut and forget the past!

Fifty years of silence broken, Mr. Lu has given Lee an answer to his childhood question: Why couldn't mother love father? Not everyone is blessed with the ability to love twice.

Before going on stage to perform with his derelict musicians, Mr. Lu smiles and whispers to Lee: Listen carefully, because I will play you a love story. I always play a love story.

Creation statement:

We have a multitude of cultural, political and religious systems, and many conflicts occur because of our limited capacity to understand one another. In this film, I am telling the story of a Swedish-Russian, falling in love with a Chinese woman, while playing American music in China. It takes us to a buzzing time in history, where change knocked on the door, without anyone knowing the outcome. Today, we have answers: We know who came to power, who lived and who died. We blame some and call others heroes. It is my belief, that if we look close enough at an individual, what we see is just a human being. Cultural, religious or political difference only count when judging the surface. In that sense, Mr. Lu's Blues, is a universal love story, hoping to teach us how important it is to take care of the only thing we have got: Life itself.

Director's Biography:

Maria von Heland's works included: 2010 *Mr. Lu's Blues* (Writer/Director); 2009 *Frank Schmidt is Born* (Writer/Director); 2009 *Hectors Journey* (Writer); 2008 *Hilde* (Writer); 2007 TV-Movie *Suddenly Gina* (Director/Co-Writer); 2006 *Sök (aka Search)* (Writer/Director), *Those Who Whisper* (Writer/Director); 2005 *The Rainbowmaker* (Contributing Writer); 2004 *Orka! Orka!* (Co-writer/Director); 2002 *Big Girls Don't Cry* (Writer/Director); 2000 *England!* (Co-Writer); 1999 *Recycled* (Co-Writer/Director); 1998 *Real Men Eat Meat* (Co-Writer); 1997 *Chainsmoker* (Writer/Director).

Company Profile:

27 Films Production is run by producer Oliver Damian, who works now for more than 13 years in the film business. We have produced *Zwartboek* by Paul Verhoeven, *The Rainbowmaker* by Nana Djordjadze, *Laube du Monde* by Abbas Fahdel and *Le Pere*



de mes enfants by Mia Hansen-Love. Projects in development are besides *Mr. Lu's Blues: Francuski* a drama by Goran Rebic, *Whirrrrrrr* a comedy by Phedon Papamichael and the science fiction co-production *Iron Sky* by Timo Vuorensola.

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