





LOST MAGIC OF THE SHANGHAI STUDIOS (The)

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At the end of the 1950's, the Shanghai Studio - with over 500 employees - was among the most important in the world. Its studio chief, Wang Laiming, the head of the studio, began working on the masterpiece of Asian animation "The Monkey King", a labour of love of 10 years, which he completed in 1965, at the dawn of the Cultural Revolution.
Wang Laiming and director Te Weï, were arrested by the red guards, many other designers imprisoned. The studio fell silent for ten years, its films forgotten... only some propaganda animated films hailing president Mao are being distributed...
In the mid-80's, however, the studio attempted to bring to life its former glory, but the whole scene has changed, the work is done by computers and the economy has changed to adapt to the small screen.... How can the magic survive for future generations?
Te Wei, 88 years old today and many of Wang Laiming's collaborators recall the golden age of the studio as well as the hard times they experienced during the Cultural Revolution. Numerous film extracts prove that the Shanghai studio's creative power would hold its own when compared to Disney in those days. A film that bears witness to an art, broken by politics and serial production methods.

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