

*Angel Films præsenterer*

# *The Farewell*



**Premiere:** 20. august 2020

**Længde:** 100 minutter

**Censur:** Tilladt for alle

**Instruktør:** Lulu Wang

## **Premierebiografer:**

Grand Teatret, Nordisk Film Biografer Dagmar, Nordisk Film Biografer Trøjborg, Empire Bio, Café Biografen Odense, Øst for Paradis, CinemaxX Aarhus, Bio Silkeborg, Kulturbio grafen Frysehuset A/S, Kosmorama 6100, Lido Biograferne, Kinorama Sønderborg, Gilleleje Bio, Vig Bio, Værløse Bio 1 & 2, Biffen Aalborg, Næstved Bio, Birkerød Bio, Klovborg Bio, Reprise Teatret, Albertslund Biograferne m.fl.

**Se fuld liste på side 2.**

## **Synopsis:**

*Modvilligt forlader Billi New York og rejser hjem til familien i Changchun, Kina. Anledningen er, at bedstemor Nai Nai kun har få uger tilbage at leve i, og familien skal samles for at sige farvel til hende. Familien har imidlertid besluttet ikke at fortælle Nai Nai sandheden om hendes tilstand, og bruger istedet et bryllup som påskud til at samles. Mens Billi navigerer i dette minefelt af hvide løgne og familieforventninger, begynder hun samtidig, at genopdage det land, hun forlod som barn. Ikke mindst genopdager hun sin store kærlighed til Nai Nai og de stærke bånd de deler selv efter mange års adskillelse. Så meget at det truer med at afsløre løgnen.*

*Awkwafina vandt prisen for BEDSTE KVINDELIGE HOVEDROLLE ved Golden Globes for hendes præstation i rollen som Billi.*

Trailer og pressemateriale kan hentes på: <https://www.angelfilms.dk/farewell>

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# Synopsis

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In this funny, uplifting tale based on an actual lie, Chinese-born, U.S.-raised Billi (Awkwafina) reluctantly returns to Changchun to find that, although the whole family knows their beloved matriarch, Nai-Nai (grandma), has been given mere weeks to live, everyone has decided not to tell Nai Nai herself.

To assure her happiness, they gather under the joyful guise of an expedited wedding, uniting family members scattered among new homes abroad. As Billi navigates a minefield of family expectations and proprieties, she finds there's a lot to celebrate: a chance to rediscover the country she left as a child, her grandmother's wondrous spirit, and the ties that keep on binding even when so much goes unspoken.

With *The Farewell*, writer/director Lulu Wang has created a heartfelt celebration of both the way we perform family and the way we live it, masterfully interweaving a gently humorous depiction of the good lie in action with a richly moving story of how family can unite and strengthen us, often in spite of ourselves.

# Production Notes

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### About the production

With *The Farewell*, writer/director Lulu Wang creates a vibrantly alive experience of family, inviting audiences into its rich world with a sly comic premise. At the story's core is a simple yet beguiling question: is it ever OK to falsify the truth with loved ones? In the case of Billi—played by rapper and rising star Awkwafina in her most serious and complex role to date—her world is upended when she's asked to tell an epic lie about her beloved grandma's impending death. But in telling it, Billi also unexpectedly sees through to the many subtle ways in which families reach out for each other's true selves.

It all starts when Billi, an aspiring New York artist who barely knows the China where she was born, joins her parents and relatives from across the globe on a trip to pay their last respects to the family's matriarch. Though they've secretly learned from doctors that their Nai Nai (Mandarin for grandmother) has mere months to live, Nai Nai herself knows nothing of her fate, and the family finagles to keep it that way. Instead of telling her, they conspire to pretend everything's perfectly fine, while they convince Nai Nai they're all reunited for a joyous, if strangely sudden, wedding—and most certainly not for a farewell.

For Billi, who is steeped in American culture and independence, the whole concept seems potentially unethical, and definitely non-sensical. Here she is, leaving New York at the worst possible moment because she needs to see Nai Nai one last time, only to be forbidden from mentioning the urgent reason for her visit. Billi's reluctant attempts to keep the lie in motion, while navigating a whole slew of cultural and generational divides, lead to comic

moments as crisp and dry as wedding champagne. But flowing beneath the buoyant surface of *The Farewell* is also a deeper current. For within Billi's entertaining journey is a keenly observed portrait of what we keep hidden and what is revealed in families, what family asks of us, and what we in turn receive.

Wang brings all of this to the fore with a distinctive mix of lightness and gravity that reflects the emotions evoked by those family gatherings you aren't sure you'll survive, but you never forget.

Says Wang: "A theme in a lot of movies about family lies or secrets is that there's a big catharsis that comes from telling the truth. I wanted to play against this in *The Farewell*. I didn't want the film to place judgement on any character or on the family's decision to hide the truth from their matriarch. Nobody's a bad guy in this family. To me, it's really a story about 'love languages,' about how we express love in different ways culturally and individually and how that can create a lot of miscommunication in modern families, especially families that find themselves between cultures. But that the things we're communicating are still based in love—just because people aren't expressing love in the way you want to hear it or expect to hear it doesn't mean they don't love you. Sometimes the most important things that happen in families are things that are unspoken."

### The original lie

As Lulu Wang openly warns at the start of her film, *The Farewell* is based on actual lie, one the writer-director was very much part of setting in motion.

It all unfolded in 2013, just as Wang was in the early stages

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of editing her first feature film, the art world comedy *Posthumous*. In the midst of what is one of the most fraught, pressurized and daunting challenges of any filmmaker's career, she suddenly learned that her own Nai Nai, far away in Changchun, China, had been diagnosed with a rapidly advancing terminal condition. Naturally, Wang's immediate instinct was to reach out. But, when Wang learned that her great-aunt (who received the diagnosis from Nai Nai's doctor) and her parents had decided to keep the truth of the situation from Nai Nai—and, more worryingly, that she was expected to do the same—things got complicated.

Wang appreciated that her family believed that sending Nai Nai out on a wave of happiness, surrounded by upbeat family but blissfully ignorant of the end, was the loving thing to do. But she was totally unconvinced. Was it really more compassionate to keep such a strong, savvy woman in the dark? Wasn't telling the truth the most important thing in relationships? Didn't we all have an inalienable right to leave the world in our own chosen way? And anyway, how was this lie even going to work? How on earth was Wang supposed to keep up a happy-go-lucky façade when she came face to face with a woman she loved and desperately didn't want to lose?

It all seemed very shaky. Nevertheless, to keep the family peace, Wang agreed to try to keep up the pretense. Jettisoning her misgivings and arriving in China, what happened next was so full of baffling and beautiful twists, Wang could not help but sense the seeds of her second feature film. "The whole time I was in China, I had more questions than answers," Wang reflects. "But I realized this was also exactly the kind of story I most like to tell—stories that mix pathos and absurdity. This situation was a true-life screwball setup, but there were bigger questions inside the comedy."

There were, for one, broad ideas of how any of us manage to forge our identities in modern families that pull us in so many directions. But there were also questions specific to Wang's experiences as a Chinese-American, which she had yet to explore cinematically. Much like the character of Billi, Wang was born in China but, after leaving Beijing at age 6, grew up in Miami, then followed the very American ritual of going to a Boston college.

It was only when she returned to Beijing for a semester abroad that it fully hit Wang how intricate her identity had become. Being in China felt like a homecoming in some ways, but it was also full of more discomfiting revelations: that the China she had preserved in her memory no longer existed, and that she was now an outsider, so culturally American she couldn't fully fit in. All of these feelings came rushing back again when Wang made the journey to visit Nai Nai. Not only was she caught between multiple versions of the truth and multiple versions of herself, she felt caught between traditional Chinese beliefs and modern rationalist Western views. While these tensions were tricky and anxiety-producing as a family member, they exhilarated her as a filmmaker.

Back home, Wang initially chose to tell the story of her family's elaborate lie in a popular *This American Life* episode entitled "What You Don't Know" on National Public Radio. An audio documentary proved a great way to start excavating the many comedic and revealing layers of the events. But Wang didn't feel done with the story. She still felt drawn to dive deeper into the experience's more mysterious side, which is why a screenplay continued to beckon.



### Truth from fabrication

The screenplay of *The Farewell* might have started with Lulu Wang's family's falsehood, but it became just as much about what make modern families tick—which Wang notes is just as often the things we don't, or can't, or struggle to tell one another as it is the things we chat about constantly. As she conjured up Billi, an alter ego who is close to but not quite herself, Wang found she was creating a woman determined to weather the vicissitudes of family life. As Billi struggles with how to lie to her grandmother, she becomes increasingly sensitive to the fact that everyone in the family has smaller secrets they are withholding, including Nai Nai, and even Billi herself. It all pushes Billi to surrender to the delicate but entrancing flow of joys, regrets, insecurities, conflicts, and awkward love that drive her crazy but also, she realizes, ground her in inseparable connections.

"With a screenplay, I was able to focus more on the raw emotions of the story and to capture this very specific tone, of being in a state where you don't know if you're going to be laughing or crying from one minute to the next," says Wang. "As I wrote, I had a lot of ideas in my mind about framing and visuals that could capture these juxtapositions between comedy and anguish, between hiding and exposing things."

Wang likes that Billi—who spends much of the film in a state of dismayed powerlessness—breaks all the standard rules for lead characters. "Lead characters are supposed to take action, but Billi's journey is actually about becoming inactive," she muses. "Billi wants to change the situation, but she can't change it, and she has to accept that. So, one of my biggest challenges was how to craft a constant dramatic tension around that, so that you really feel that pressure of what it's

like getting up every day desperately wanting to tell your grandmother the one thing you can't tell her."

Conflict also surrounds Billi as she tries to straddle some gaping chasms—between American and Chinese cultures, between who she is with her family and who she is in her personal life, and equally between the generations of her family. "I was very interested in exploring the clashing values that play out in every family, but especially in a family that emigrates," says Wang. "One thing I find really interesting is that immigrants often preserve traditions in their new country more than people do in the old country. Many Chinese immigrants in America adhere to certain traditions that people in China have entirely left behind. If you're a millennial living in Shanghai, your life is incredibly modern and high tech and you don't see any of the things there you'd see in a Chinatown of a U.S. city. So, for Billi there's a unique type of culture shock in returning to China, because it's not the same place that was in her memories or the stories she has heard."

Even for Billi's relatives who have remained in China, memories of tradition are so personal that no two people have the same view. This comes to the fore in the scene at the cemetery where no one in Billi's family can agree on the proper rituals. "This is something very real," notes Wang. "I saw it in my family, but even when we were shooting that scene, the entire crew was debating the right way to do the rituals. Everyone had their own personal recollection of how it should be done, and they were saying 'that's not how my family does it!'"

Much as the film is a rare portrait of the Chinese diaspora, and a compellingly personal snapshot of one family, Wang tapped into family dynamics that have a universal emotional

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charge. At the core of the story, she cultivated a fragile but deeply familiar balance between the black comedy of a family trying to cover up what really matters, and the earnest sweetness of how much they genuinely care. “Families can be so strange in how we relate to one another,” admits Wang. “But I hope what people take away is how much this family means to each other without them ever saying that out loud.”

The first draft of the screenplay was written entirely in English. But Wang always knew that she wanted Billi’s family in China to realistically speak their native Mandarin—in part to highlight that, in China, Billi faces obstacles to communicating with her loved ones at the most basic level, long before getting to philosophies of life and death. While she can speak Mandarin fluently, Wang doesn’t write it, so she brought in a translator to turn 60% of the dialogue she wrote back into Mandarin. There was just one problem with that: while the translation was entirely faithful, it was almost too accurate, and something ineffable got lost in the process.

“Because the translation was so literal, it didn’t match at all what I’d been hearing in my head,” Wang explains. “I turned to my parents to help me work with it and transform it back into something more conversational and authentic. They were of great help because they not only know the language, they also know all the real people involved and what they sound like in real life.”

If there was any qualm Wang had about the dangers of writing about one’s own family, it was not spilling secrets or offending anyone. Rather, it was having to leave so much out. “It was hard for me, because there’s so much more to my parents – for example, my father speaks fluent Russian and he was a diplomat and he’s really funny; and my mother’s a writer and she’s really, really smart. But none of those

characteristics factored into this story. The characters in the film are a more universal version of my parents.”

Even as Wang was fleshing out her draft, she was approached by producers Dani Melia and Peter Saraf of Big Beach and Chris Weitz of Depth of Field. They had independently heard the *This American Life* piece and had the same gut instinct Wang did: this was a movie. They were gratified to find Wang’s screenplay had brought out all the comedy of the situation, but added in her own tender humanism, giving the family a trenchant poignancy as recognizable as the funnier side of their dilemma.

Melia brought aboard Big Beach’s Marc Turtletaub, while Weitz brought aboard Depth of Field’s Andrew Miano. The filmmaking team then expanded globally to include Taiwanese producer Anita Gou of Kindred Spirit and China-based producer Jane Zheng of Seesaw Films.

Meanwhile, Wang was clear that casting the film was going to be the key to making what was on the page work. It wasn’t just that she wanted the family to feel connected under the skin as all real families do. And it wasn’t just that she would need to find actors capable of working in multiple languages. She realized she also needed actors who could tune into the subtle ways we “perform” for our families, presenting certain personas that we feel will meet approval, which is taken to a whole new degree as Billi’s family performs their happiness in the middle of grief. That became the crux of the production.

### **Awkwafina gets serious**

Every once in a while, an inexplicable synthesis occurs between a character and an actor that blurs the line between real-life and performance. That’s what happened the minute

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Awkwafina took on the role of Billi. Largely known as an underground rap sensation, Awkwafina suddenly broke out as a movie star in 2018 with charismatic turns in *Ocean's 8* and *Crazy Rich Asians*. Still, she had never played a dramatic lead before. Her public persona had a brash swagger that was quite different from Billi's more inward demeanor. And yet, Awkwafina seemed to know the character from the inside out—and was able to slide right into Billi's distinct mix of self-possessed confidence and flustered anxiety right from the beginning.

There were some basic parallels. Born Nora Lum in Queens, Awkwafina had been raised mainly by her own beloved grandmother, after her mother died when she was four. She had an innate understanding of both Billi's experience as a Chinese American and of her love for her Nai Nai. For Wang, as soon as she saw Awkwafina on tape (which happened well before her film career blew up), there was no question the role should be hers.

"I was searching for someone who could not only find that mix of lightness and drama but who could handle the language challenges of playing Billi," says the filmmaker. "Awkwafina felt definitively American, yet she knew some Mandarin. She's very funny, but she's also very attuned to subtle emotions. Most importantly, you could really feel that the love for a grandparent was so personally meaningful to her. There was also rawness to her sense of grief that felt truly authentic. I really didn't want someone to try to portray me directly as Billi, so I was very happy that Nora brought parts of herself to the role to create something original."

Awkwafina harbored that one thing that sometimes can spur the most delicate performances: intense trepidation.

"I'd never done anything like this and really did not know if I could," she admits. "At the same time, it was a challenge that meant more to me than any I could possibly imagine. Given that the story centers around an Asian-American woman who has a very special relationship with her grandmother, it felt like it was made for me. But to be honest, I was never entirely sure I could do it even when we were shooting. I'm just thankful that Lulu saw something in me and that, for some reason, she fully trusted me to find my way."

Wang's trust was instinctive. "I felt the only thing that could stop Nora was fear, so my main job in directing her was make her as comfortable as possible," the writer-director explains. "She often surprised me. When she came to China, she had stripped off her Awkwafina persona and become Billi in ways I had not foreseen. She developed this almost slumped posture that was so perfect. There was something iconic and cartoonish but also real and human about it. Her facial expressions had incredible nuances. And even those moments when Billi is silent, she just nailed."

Awkwafina says a lot of those precise telling details emerged simply from being able to imagine herself so completely in Billi's shoes. "I quite literally asked myself: what if my own grandmother was dying and I wasn't allowed to talk with her about it—how would I act? That's where all the subtleties of Billi come from. For me, Billi is always stuck trying to maneuver between two worlds: between being American and being Chinese, between grief and celebration, between saying what's on her mind and trying to let it all go. That's an interesting place to be."

It also felt like a natural place. "The first thing you learn as a kid in a Chinese family is guilt," laughs Awkwafina. "You learn

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the words 'filial piety' as a little kid, and that concept sticks with you, even though at times it can seem at odds with the world we live in."

While Awkwafina was drawn to this uncommon window into Chinese-American culture, she also began to see Billi as what she dubs "the Universal Girl." "She's girlish in all the best ways, in that she always tries her best to make her own way, she knows what she's good at and she refuses to give up her ambitions for something that isn't her," Awkwafina observes. "At the same time, she has this really weird role in her family, where she's constantly negotiating between their world and her own. I think a lot of people will relate to that. And in the year 2019, I think we need this kind of story that reflects both our cultural identities and our shared humanity."

Awkwafina continues: "Every family in every culture has to deal with identity and secrets. It's part of the human experience. This story introduces some Chinese cultural concepts that are rarely seen in American movies. But at the same time, no matter what culture you're from, I think you identify with the love and conflict in this family, you laugh with them and you are moved by them."

Most important to Awkwafina was underlining the strength Billi soaks up from Nai Nai and the wonders of grandmothers in general. "For me, one of the most beautiful themes in the movie is the love and cherishing of the family matriarch, the neck of the family. Those feelings of tenderness and care for the person who holds the family together are completely universal."

Awkwafina was thrilled to spend time with the real Nai Nai in China, who she says was every bit the character you meet in the film. "She would ride around the set in her electric wheelchair and I came to really love her. But it was a crazy

experience to be playing a character who thinks she is saying goodbye to this woman who was right there with us years later," she muses.

Language was another challenge. Though Awkwafina had been exposed to Mandarin and Cantonese (her mother was Korean, her grandmother from Beijing and her father's roots were in Southern China), she doesn't consider herself fluent. "I did spend a year in Beijing at 18 and took some language classes, but my grandma still never understood a word I was saying so that was a little depressing," she laughs. "I was literally terrified of doing a movie where I had to speak Chinese."

Nevertheless, she dove into study with language coaches and was able to evoke Billi's own passable but stilted language skills with authenticity. "The fact that Awkwafina was able to give such a deeply emotional performance in a bilingual role is incredible," producer Daniele Melia reflects.

Once she arrived in Changchun, Awkwafina says the effect was "magical." "When I lived in China years ago, I didn't really feel like I had any purpose to being there, but returning to China to make a movie about an experience I identified with so strongly was a very powerful thing. It became my own journey into my identity. I realized a lot of things about myself and my family."

As someone who has always mined the mixture of absurdity and reality, even in her raps, Awkwafina especially hopes audiences will respond to Wang's distinctive style of humanistic humor. "The humor of the film is so real that sometimes you can't draw the line between what's funny and what's sad. Lulu makes it a very subtle shift between those two," she describes. "And to me, that's a lot of what it's like to be sitting around your own dysfunctional family's table."

### Billi's far-flung family

While casting Billi was the linchpin of the production, it was equally vital to Wang to gather a family around her that could push all of her buttons, for better and for worse. Finding the film's Nai Nai was the toughest task, if only because the character was so incredibly close to Wang's own heart. Whoever she cast, that actor had to spark that same depth of feeling.

After an intensive but fruitless auditioning process, and with no time to spare before production began, Zhao Shuzhen suddenly came to Wang's attention. Though well-known for her television roles in China, she had never been seen before in a major international film.

"I felt so lucky to connect with Zhao," says Wang. "When our casting director sent her name across, I started looking at her previous work and I immediately knew she was the one. Her face and whole demeanor are just so quintessential grandmother. Also, she has a gentleness to her that I felt was very important because Nai Nai can be quite bossy, tough and surprising at times, but Zhao was able to balance that beautifully with a softer charm."

On the set, that decision seemed even more right. "As soon as Zhao met my real grandmother and great-aunt, they were calling her sister and going to breakfast holding hands," Wang recalls. "It all fell right into place. And then Zhao and Nora seemed to instantly have that grandmother-granddaughter kind of affection that is beyond words."

Awkwafina says her fondness for Zhao Shuzhen only raised the stakes. "My love and reverence for Teacher Zhao was so real that it became part of the performance," she explains. "I

developed a true attachment to her as a person that maybe you can feel on screen."

To play the vital role of Nai Nai's younger sister, Little Nai Nai—who makes the initial decision to keep the doctor's troubling prognosis a secret from her sibling—Wang found the right person closer to home, literally. She wound up recruiting her real-life great aunt, Lu Hong, to play the character she wrote based on her actions.

Having her own Little Nai Nai at her side as she directed the film proved invaluable. "I was always able to ask her questions, such as 'does the energy of the family dynamic feel real to you? Was this your experience of it?' It helped keep the reality of it always alive," says Wang.

For Little Nai Nai, the memories were the easy part. The bigger challenge was facing motion picture cameras for the first time in her life. "Little Nai Nai was intimidated at first," Wang recalls. "She said to me, 'How can you expect me to act with such an experienced actor as Zhao Shuzhen?' But it ended up working out so well. She brought so much authenticity to Little Nai Nai and she also brought a very grounding energy that the whole cast responded to."

Similar to Billi's family, the rest of the cast hails from a variety of international backgrounds. Chinese-American actor Tzi Ma—known for his work in the *Rush Hour* films, *Arrival* and "The Man in the High Castle"—plays Billi's kind-hearted father.

"When Tzi Ma and I first met to talk about the script, he started referring to me as 'daughter,' so it was pretty clear to both of us that he was meant to play this part," muses Wang. "He's so charming, with a dry sense of humor, and a love of



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what you might call 'dad jokes,' but there's also sadness in his eyes. I think of him as kind of like a Chinese-American Bill Murray."

Ma took advantage of spending time with Wang's real-life father in preparation. "Tzi got to know my Dad so well that by the end of production he knew stories about him that even I'd never heard before," Wang laughs.

Billi's outspoken mother Jian is played by Chinese-Australian actor Diana Lin (co-star of the Australian series "The Family Law"). Lin tapped into her own experience of emigrating to Australia as a young woman to create a sharp, stirring portrait of a woman determined keep things on track during a challenging time for her family. of what seems to be very bad family news.

Wang says: "I was looking for someone who had a natural wit and sarcasm, but who was also very insightful. I was so happy to find Diana because she even looks a bit like my mom. She has great comic timing and she really understood the character." For Awkwafina, this connection was also deep. "Diana became a kind of surrogate mom to me, that's how close it felt," she comments.

One of the most fun characters to cast was Billi's uncle, the father of the groom who gives one of those overwrought speeches that can make or break a wedding, played by Jiang Yongbo. "He made an audition tape of the wedding speech and it was so good that I immediately knew he was the one," says Wang. "He told me that he'd never been cast in a film without meeting the director in person. He said, 'You put your faith in me, and I will not let you down.' It was very moving."

For Wang, directing a cast speaking a range of languages

on and off camera was at times a dizzying experience. "I was constantly switching from one language to the next and sometimes the wrong language came out," she laughs.

But Wang's creative drive became a uniting force. "What kept everything together was Lulu's incredibly clear vision for the film," says Melia. "She was able to command an ensemble cast in two languages, some of whom could not fully communicate with each other. Despite all the complications, Lulu never lost sight of the importance of each individual character to the family."

### **Creating the look and feel of *The Farewell***

For a film set mainly in small, plain rooms—and one sprawling banquet hall—*The Farewell* creates a strong visual ambiance. It's a look that Lulu Wang first envisioned as soon as she started putting words to the page. "I knew even then a lot of the tone I wanted to create would be done with lighting," she notes. "I knew I wanted to use the fluorescent lighting that is so ubiquitous in China. It's this very harsh, uncomfortable lighting that a lot of homes use, because the concept is that lots of light is actually a sign of affluence. There is no romanticism to dim light in China. There is a desire for as much light as possible, which Americans might consider way too much lighting."

The effect of all that fluorescence was at once comedically off-kilter and exposing. "What I love about this lighting for the film is that while it is very cold and awkward, the family connections and emotions are all very warm and intimate," Wang continues. "Those juxtapositions interest me."

To hone the film's style, Wang collaborated closely with the female-led team of cinematographer Anna Franquesa

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Solano and production designer Yong Ok Lee—who both have their own experiences of emigration (Solano was born in Barcelona, Spain, and now lives in New York, and Lee is a Los Angeles-based native of Seoul, South Korea.)

“Anna is a really story-focused DP, which is what I love,” says Wang. “She’s such a cinephile that we were able to talk about everyone from Mike Leigh to Kore-eda to Ruben Ostlund, and I love that she has a very European aesthetic. She’d never really done a comedy before, which was exciting. We both had a lot of thoughts about how to create humor with the framing. We talked a lot about the performative nature of family and how everyone in this movie is performing their emotions—that’s what led to these really staged frames that have a kind of theatricality to them. It was a very specific stylistic choice to highlight that they’re all performing for grandma.”

Another idea Wang and Solano focused on was how to create a kinetic dynamism out of a plot woven, like any family reunion, out of one round-table meal after another. “One of the first things Anna and I did was to break down each meal in the film into their individual themes and emotions,” Wang explains. “So, for example, in the first family dinner in Changchun, we used a longer lens, so you get more of a sense of isolation and separation between the family members, because while grandma is excited about the wedding, everyone else is tense about trying to keep the secret. But that changes in later dining scenes.”

Ultimately, Wang and Solano chose to shoot largely with spherical wide lenses that allow the entire family to be seen at once without distortions. “Wide aspect ratios are commonly used for landscapes and I liked the idea of

portraying the landscape of a family, capturing all the faces of one family in a single frame. Also, by using such wide frames for the family scenes, when Billi is isolated in that frame, you really feel the absence of the family,” Wang notes.

Filming in the real Nai Nai’s home city of Changchun—an industrial center located in China’s Jilin province in the northeast, sandwiched between North Korea and Russia—added another level of verisimilitude. “We initially scouted Beijing and Shanghai—big international cities with serious production infrastructure for filmmaking,” says Melia. “But as a smaller, regional city, Changchun has a unique feel. To add to the authenticity, we were able to film the wedding scene in the actual banquet hall where Lulu’s cousin had his real-life celebration in 2013.”

One of the shooting locations most personal to Wang turned out to be her actual grandfather’s gravesite, used for the cemetery sequence. “I last saw my grandfather when I was 6,” Wang explains. “He died a few years after my parents left for the U.S., and I didn’t get to go back for his funeral, so this was incredibly meaningful for me. People who knew him said he’d wanted to be a writer all his life, and that I was carrying on his legacy by returning to Changchun to make this film.”

Wang returned to the U.S. to edit *The Farewell*, working with both Michael Taylor and Matt Friedman. “The edit was all about rhythm and pacing,” she says. “Michael did a wonderful initial cut which was exactly the way I had imagined it with all the longer takes. But then Matt came in and created a skeletal version that pared it all down to pure story. He questioned me on every single frame and the result was that it was still everything I wanted, but it all landed in a fresh way.”

## Production Notes

A final element brought more of the mix of the real, the funny and the beautiful to the fore: Alex Weston's choral and string-based score. The New York-based composer whose work has previously been featured on Showtime's "The Affair" and the acclaimed PBS documentary "The Emperor of All Maladies" created something that literally speaks to Billi's state of mind.

"I knew I wanted a score with voices—a score that functions a bit like a Greek chorus," Wang explains. "Those voices are both kind of a warning to Billi and the sound of community. I loved what Alex created from that idea. He used a male singer doing falsetto so that it had a very specific sound—it's a beautiful sound but it's also unexpected."

Elsewhere, for the family photo sequence, Weston revisited one of Beethoven's most haunting and textured melodies, that of "Piano Sonata No. 8 (Sonata Pathetique)," in an a capella rendition that gives it a whole new feel. "It was one of my favorite pieces to play growing up, so I have a personal connection to it. It's also just such a lovely, sad melody, but in this rendition there is equally a sense of playfulness that takes you by surprise," Wang describes.

*The Farewell* maintains that interplay of melancholy and mischief, laughter and a sense of the bittersweet throughout as it builds to its surprising climax—one in which the meaning of the title comes into question. Is the "farewell" that of Billi trying to say goodbye to her Nai Nai, or is it Billi leaving behind the clarity of her ideas of how things are supposed to be in family and life?

Given the outcome, Wang now wonders if the lie that seemed so dubious at first somehow aided, however paradoxically, her grandmother's healing. She notes that

in her family every person has his or her own explanation for Nai Nai's unanticipated survival, from the psychological to the mystical. "I do think humans will always find ways to justify the choices we make, and that would have equally been the case no matter how things had turned out," Wang says "But there is something mysterious about what happened, and I like that it remains a mystery that lingers."

"I'm not that concerned, though," with judging whether the lie was right or wrong," she continues, "For me, this is ultimately a story of acceptance and understanding, which are so important, particularly at a time when everything is so polarized. It's about having the strength to have your own opinions, but also having the grace to acknowledge that others have theirs."

Awkwafina is also of two minds about how things turn out in the end. "I feel split," she admits. "It raises a lot of questions about what really happened, and whose version of the story you trust. While I was playing Billi, I so strongly felt her anxiety to get out the truth that I still feel a bit loyal to that. But then maybe the lie worked in a certain sense, and there is something to the idea of 'what you don't know can't hurt you.' Whatever the explanation, and I'm sure everyone will have their own, it leaves you with a cherry on top."

# The Cast

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### **Awkwafina**

Awkwafina is an American actress, writer, rapper and musician from Queens, New York. Awkwafina, whose given name is Nora Lum, brings an impressive range of talent peppered with her signature flair, and has become a major breakout talent of summer 2018.

Lum can most recently be seen on the big screen as Peik Lin in Warner Bros' *Crazy Rich Asians* opposite Constance Wu, Michelle Yeoh, Henry Golding, and Ken Jeong. The film opened August 15, 2018 to rave reviews. She also hosted "Saturday Night Live" on October 6, 2018, in the show's 44th Season.

Additionally, last year Lum was seen in Warner Bros' box office hit *Ocean's 8* which was directed by Gary Ross and featured an ensemble cast including Sandra Bullock, Cate Blanchett, Anne Hathaway, Mindy Kaling, Sarah Paulson, Rihanna, and Helena Bonham Carter. Prior to that she starred in the indie comedy *Dude*, written and directed by Olivia Milch, which follows four best girlfriends in the last two weeks of their senior year in high school.

Upcoming, Lum will star in the indie dramas *Paradise Hills* opposite Emma Roberts, Eiza González, Milla Jovovich and Danielle Macdonald, as well as *The Farewell*, directed by Lulu Wang.

Lum made her feature film debut in the comedy *Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising*, with Seth Rogen, Zac Efron and Rose Byrne. She was also heard as the voice of Quail in the 2016 animated adventure *Storks*.

Noted for the satire of her hilarious original music, Awkwafina became an internet sensation in 2012 with her viral video "My Vag." Her 2014 debut album featured her acclaimed raps "NYC Bitche\$," "Mayor Bloomberg (Giant Margarita)," and the title track, "Yellow Ranger." Her first book, "Awkwafina's NYC," a travel guide to New York, was published by Penguin Random House in 2015.

Lum will next be seen in *Jumanji 2* and on her Comedy Central self-titled scripted series.



## The Cast

### **Tzi Ma**

Tzi Ma is an American/Canadian actor known for his roles in films like the Oscar-winning *Arrival*, *Rush Hour*, *Rush Hour 3*, *The Quiet American* opposite Michael Caine, and *The Ladykillers* for the Coen Brothers opposite Tom Hanks. On TV, he's most recognized for his regular roles on hit TV series like "24," "Hell on Wheels," "Martial Law," "The Man in the High Castle," and "Veep."

He plays the lead in his next feature, *Tigertail*, and can also be seen in the upcoming films *The Farewell* and Disney's *Mulan*.

### **Diana Lin (Xiaojie Lin)**

Diana Lin is a well-known Chinese actress who grew up in a very strict family in the 1960s. However due to her pretty face and nice voice, her parents took her to singing lessons. Naturally, being a very talented actress as well, she began her acting career when she was 14 years old, and underwent 5 years of intensive training with Harbin Peking Opera Company from 1975.

By the mid-1980s, after 4 years of professional studies she graduated from the top drama institutions Shanghai Theatre Academy with a Bachelor degree, which also included Traditional Chinese and Western singing and dancing. She played the lead in many movies, television series, and of course Chinese opera in which she played numerous famous characters. Her first lead in the feature film *Ren Sheng Mei You Dan Xing Dao* (1985) essentially kicked off her career.

In the early 1990s, Diana migrated to Australia and reinvented herself for a Western market in a similar fashion. She has worked in number of films, television series and theatre plays, and she continues to sporadically return to her homeland to work on local productions.

## The Cast

### **Zhao Shuzhen**

Zhao Shuzhen, a famous film and television actor in her native China, was born in Harbin and now living in Beijing. Since entering the Harbin Drama School at the age of 16, she has created numerous classic characters on the stage. With her warm, generous, and natural performances, she has successfully shaped an artistic image in many film and television dramas in China, where she is well known as the “classic screen mother.”

# The Crew

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## The Crew

### **Lulu Wang**

*Writer/ Director*

Lulu Wang is a classical pianist turned filmmaker. Her second feature *The Farewell*, starring Awkwafina, premiered at Sundance 2019 in U.S. Dramatic Competition. She was listed by Variety as one of Ten Directors To Watch in 2019.

Born in Beijing, raised in Miami and educated in Boston, Lulu is a recipient of the Chaz and Roger Ebert Directing Fellowship, which was awarded at the 2014 Film Independent Spirit Awards. Her first feature film, *Posthumous*, starring Jack Huston and Brit Marling was released by The Orchard. She is also a 2014 Film Independent Project Involve Directing Fellow and a 2017 Sundance Fellow invited to participate in the FilmTwo Initiative for second time feature filmmakers.

### **Yong Ok Lee**

*Production Designer*

Yong Ok Lee started her career as a fashion merchandiser for major apparel companies, then moved on to work as a fashion editor for magazines like Bazaar. Once she developed a passion for film while helping her friends' work, she knew she had finally found her calling. After working on numerous box office hits in South Korea, she moved to Los Angeles to study at AFI and has been working in the US ever since. Her work has screened at Cannes and Tribeca among many others.

### **Anna Franquesca Solano**

*Director of Photography*

Born in Barcelona, Anna is a New York based cinematographer who has worked extensively in film and documentary. Anna has benefited from her background in Art History and Theory, from which she still draws a great deal of influence.

Her most recent work, Lulu Wang's *The Farewell*, premiered in the Official Competition at Sundance 2019. Other feature film work includes *Buck Run* which premiered at Palm Springs International Film Festival 2019, and *Indiana* which was selected at Sitges International Film Festival, and Fantasia Film Festival among others. Anna's work has also played in festivals such as Oldenburg International Film Festival, Clermont-Ferrand Film Festival, Docs Barcelona, Hamptons International Film Festival.

## The Crew

### **Matthew Friedman**

*Editor*

Matthew Friedman has edited features around the world and has credits in numerous genres, including *Alvin And The Chipmunks: The Squeakquel*, the 3D dance movie *Step Up Revolution*, the comedy *What Happens In Vegas*, the Netflix original film *Step Sisters*, and several pilots, including the pilot for the series "The Loop." His most recent credits include *Posthumous*, starring Brit Marling and Jack Huston; *Some Kind Of Beautiful*, starring Pierce Brosnan, Salma Hayek, and Malcolm McDowell; *Life In A Year*, starring Jaden Smith and Cara Delevingne, and *Ashby*, which premiered at Tribeca and stars Mickey Rourke, Nat Wolff, Sarah Silverman and Emma Roberts. He edited the short film "Dog Food," which premiered at SXSW and won San Diego Comic-Con's Best Horror/Suspense Film Award. He has worked with directors and producers including Betty Thomas, Shawn Levy, Andrew Lazar, Adam Shankman, Karen Rosenfelt, Jenno Topping, and Charles Stone III. He is perhaps best known, however, as the voice of the talking bird in *Scary Movie 2*. Friedman has collaborated with Wang on both of her feature films, as well as her Award Winning short film "Touch."

### **Michael Taylor**

*Editor*

Michael Taylor is a film editor based in New York City.

His most recent feature, Lulu Wang's *The Farewell*, starring Awkwafina, Shuzhen Zhou, Tsi Ma, and Diana Lin, premiered in competition at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival, where it was bought by A24 for theatrical release this summer. The film has since screened at the Atlanta Film Festival, the San Francisco Film Festival, and BAM CinemaFest, among others.

He also edited Guy Nattiv's *Skin*, which stars Jamie Bell, Vera Farmiga, Bill Camp and Danielle McDonald. The film premiered at the 2018 Toronto International Film Festival, where it won the FIBRESCI prize and was acquired by A24 for theatrical release this summer as well. The film has since screened at the Berlin International Film Festival and the Tribeca Film Festival.



**Michael Taylor (cont.)**

Taylor's third collaboration with director Rick Alverson, *The Mountain*, premiered in competition at the 2018 Venice Film Festival, followed by festival screenings at Sundance, SXSW and BAM CinemaFest. The film stars Jeff Goldblum, Tye Sheridan, Hannah Gross and Denis Lavant, and will be distributed theatrically this summer by Kino Lorber.

Other recent credits include Silas Howard's *A Kid Like Jake*, starring Claire Danes, Jim Parsons and Octavia Spencer (Sundance 2018), IFC Films; Alex Smith and Andrew Smith's *Walking Out*, starring Matt Bomer, Josh Wiggins and Bill Pullman (Sundance 2017), IFC Films; Elizabeth Wood's *White Girl*, starring Morgan Saylor, Brian Marc and Chris Noth (Sundance 2016), FilmRise; Rick Alverson's *Entertainment*, starring Gregg Turkington and John C. Reilly (Sundance 2015), Magnolia Films, and Alverson's *The Comedy*, starring Tim Heidecker and Kate Lyn Sheil (Sundance 2012), Tribeca Film; and Ira Sachs' *Love Is Strange*, starring John Lithgow, Alfred Molina and Marisa Tomei (Sundance 2014), Sony Pictures Classics.

Other credits include Liza Johnson's *Elvis & Nixon*, starring Michael Shannon and Kevin Spacey (Tribeca Film Festival 2016), Amazon Studios, and Johnson's *Hateship Loveship*, starring Kristen Wiig and Guy Pearce (Toronto Film Festival 2013), IFC Films; Jake Mahaffy's *Free In Deed*, starring David Harewood and Edwina Findley Dickerson (winner Best Film, Orizzonti Section, Venice Film Festival 2015); and Julia Loktev's *The Loneliest Planet*, starring Gael Garcia Bernal (New York Film Festival 2011), IFC Films, and Loktev's *Day Night Day Night* (winner Prix de La Jeunesse, Cannes 2006), IFC Films.

Michael Taylor's documentary work includes Holly Morris and Anne Bogart's *THE Babushkas Of Chernobyl*, for which he won the James Lyon Award for Best Editing of a Documentary Feature at the Woodstock Film Festival, 2015. Taylor's other documentary credits include Margaret Brown's Peabody Award-winning *THE ORDER OF MYTHS* (Sundance 2008), Cinema Guild, and Brown's *Be Here To Love Me: A Film About Townes Van Zandt* (Toronto 2004), Palm Pictures; Mitch McCabe's *Youth Knows No Pain*, HBO Documentary Pictures; Vanessa Hope's *All Eyes & Ears* (Tribeca 2016); Josef Astor's *Lost Bohemia* (DOC NYC 2010), IFC Films.

**Michael Taylor (cont.)**

Taylor frequently mentors other editors and filmmakers. He has participated in mentorship programs at the Sundance Institute Directing Lab, the Independent Feature Project Narrative Lab, and the Saul Zaentz Innovation Fund at Johns Hopkins University. He has served on film juries at the Gotham Awards, the Cinema Eye Awards, the Indie Memphis Film Festival, and the Woodstock Film Festival, and has been a judge of news and documentary programs at the Emmy Awards.

**Athena Wang**

*Costume Designer*

Born in Taiwan and raised in Los Angeles of California, Athena Wang is a freelance stylist and costume designer who has all her heart in visual art. After her studies in Fashion Merchandising and Marketing in Canada, she has been working in marketing and advertising industry for a few years before she now fully devotes her time and energy to styling, where her heart truly belongs.

With her vast experience in commercial and fashion styling, Athena first made her transition to the film world as a costume designer on the Sundance award-winning feature film *Dead Pigs*. She immediately fell in love with the process of storytelling and character building through costumes and styles in film. With *The Farewell* being her second feature work as the costume designer, she continuously develops huge passion and aspires to take on more challenges in the film industry.

Strong in fashion editorial styling and art directing, Athena is not afraid of breaking rules and pushing the boundary. She likes to experiment with various visual concepts and ideas in styling and costume designing, to bring to life the innovative creativity, unique taste, and refined aesthetics.

Her advertising clients include Cartier, Lanvin, Pepsi, Nike, Adidas, Swarovski, Coach, Disneyland, Vivo, Corona Beer, Uniqlo, Badgley Mischka, etc. After having lived in LA, Vancouver, Tokyo and Taipei, she is currently based in Shanghai.

## The Crew

### **Alex Weston**

*Composer*

Alex Weston is a prolific composer whose film scores have premiered at festivals around the world including Sundance, the Berlinale, the Venice Biennale, Slamdance. His recent effort for Lulu Wang's *The Farewell*, which premiered at Sundance 2019 and was purchased by A24, was described as "gorgeously scored" by Vanity Fair. Weston's music has also been featured on "The Affair" (Showtime), "Jane Fonda in Five Acts" (HBO), the Ken Burns-produced documentary "The Emperor of All Maladies" (PBS), and various projects for NBC, Netflix and others.

After graduating from Carnegie Mellon University with a composition degree, Alex moved to New York and began working as music assistant to composer Philip Glass, helping Glass with various film and concert pieces, while also pursuing his own writing. Alex has had concert works commissioned by the Lyrica Chamber Music Ensemble, the Utah Wind Symphony, MADArt Creative, Ballet in the City, and more, including a recent performance at the John F. Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts. Alex's music encapsulates his wide-ranging influences, combining classical structures and orchestration along with more modern harmonic language, electronics, and textures.

### **Susan Jacobs**

*Music Supervisor*

In 2017, Susan Jacobs was the historic winner of the first ever Emmy Award for Outstanding Music Supervision for the HBO series "Big Little Lies," season finale episode, "You Get What You Need." She's recently received three nominations for the upcoming Guild of Music Supervisors Awards for her supervision work on "Sharp Objects," *I, Tonya* and "Big Little Lies" – an award she has won in the past for David O. Russell's film *American Hustle*, and has been nominated for two other times for the films *Wild* and *Silver Linings Playbook*. She also has two Grammy nominations under her belt for Best Compilation Soundtrack for *American Hustle* and *Little Miss Sunshine*, as well as an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Individual Achievement in a Craft: Music and Sound for the documentary film, *Pecados de mi Padre*.

**Susan Jacobs (cont.)**

With a career spanning over twenty years, Susan has built a distinguished resume. She started her career in music at Island Records as the assistant to founder Chris Blackwell and eventually transitioned into artist management. Later she met director Robert Altman, which started her down the path of Music Supervision.

**Dylan Neely**

*Music Supervisor*

Dylan Neely is a music supervisor and composer based in Brooklyn. He's worked in the music department on projects such as "Mozart in the Jungle"; "Jane Fonda in Five Acts"; *I, Tonya*; *Everybody Knows Elizabeth Murray*; and, *Demolition*. Dylan has performed at venues including The Museum of the Moving Image, Issue Project Room, Symphony Space, Lincoln Center, The Stone, MoMA PS1, and La MaMa, and written music for theater & opera projects presented at The Drawing Center, The Tank, Columbia University, and The Watermill Center. He holds an M.F.A. from Mills College and is a former Fulbright Fellow to Serbia. [www.dylanneely.com](http://www.dylanneely.com)

**Gene Park**

*Sound Designer*

Gene Park is a Brooklyn, NY based sound designer. A graduate of Columbia University's music program, Park transitioned to sound design after a decade of performing and recording music, and has since sound supervised and mixed over 40 feature films, including seventeen Sundance Film Festival premieres. His projects have also world premiered at the Venice, Berlinale, New York, and Toronto Film Festivals. Park's credits also include collaborations with Cory Finley (*Thoroughbreds*), Mark and Jay Duplass (*The One I Love*), Lena Dunham (*Tiny Furniture*), Patrick Brice (*The Overnight*), Rick Alverson (*The Mountain*), and Clea Duvall (*The Intervention*). Park founded Toneburst Audio after working as a mixer at The Criterion Collection, where he re-mixed repertory cinema audio ranging from *Modern Times* to *Rosemary's Baby*. Currently Park is working with director Ari Aster for A24's *Midsommar*, Aster's follow-up to the critically acclaimed *Hereditary*.

### **Leslie Woo**

*Casting Director*

Originally from the Chicago suburbs, Leslie Woo has worked on over 90 projects since moving to Los Angeles in 2006. She garnered her experience by working on such films as *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*, *Captain Fantastic* and *Solo: A Star Wars Story*. In 2017, she cast the Norwegian short film *To Plant a Flag* with Jason Schwartzman and Jake Johnson, which was nominated the following year for Best International Short Film at the Toronto International Film Festival. She is a three-time Primetime Emmy co-nominee for Outstanding Casting for a Comedy Series for the HBO series, "Silicon Valley." Past casting credits include DreamWorks' *Office Christmas Party*, Netflix's *Someone Great*, Disney's upcoming *Togo* and Paramount's *Sonic the Hedgehog* to be released in 2020. Most recently, she finished casting the new hit sketch-comedy show, "I Think You Should Leave with Tim Robinson" and co-casting the upcoming movie version of "Between Two Ferns" with Zach Galifianakis. *The Farewell* is her second time casting a US / China co-production.



### **Big Beach**

Founded in 2004 by Marc Turtletaub and Peter Saraf, Big Beach produces and finances independent films, television and theater. Daniele Melia, a long-standing executive at the company, opened the Los Angeles office in 2015. Since the company's founding Big Beach has produced over a dozen acclaimed independent films including Academy Award nominated *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Everything Is Illuminated* adapted from the novel by Jonathan Safran Foer, Colin Trevorrow's *Safety Not Guaranteed* and Jordan Vogt-Roberts *The Kings Of Summer*. Recently produced films include the academy award nominated *Loving*, directed by Jeff Nichols, starring Joel Edgerton and Ruth Negga, *Puzzle*, directed by Marc Turtletaub, starring Kelly Macdonald and Irrfan Khan and the animated feature based on Jack London's beloved best-selling novel *White Fang*, directed by Alexandre Espigares and voiced by Rashida Jones, Nick Offerman and Paul Giamatti. Big Beach is currently in post production on *A Beautiful Day In The Neighborhood*, directed by Marielle Heller and starring Tom Hanks. Big Beach recently launched a television division run by Robin Schwartz who is currently overseeing production of showrunner Tanya Saracho's half hour Latinx drama, "Vida," for Starz and "Sorry For Your Loss" starring Elizabeth Olsen, Kelly Marie Tran, Janet McTeer, Mamoudou Athie and Jovan Adepo, for Facebook.

### **Depth of Field**

Depth of Field was founded in 1999 following brothers Chris and Paul Weitz's breakout directorial debut, *American Pie*. The two teamed with producer Andrew Miano to create their own shingle and over the next two decades, along with development executive, Dan Balgoyen, have taken on various roles producing, directing and writing to expand the diversity of feature films and television on their slate.

Shortly after the success of their first film, the Weitz brothers co-directed *About A Boy*, which they adapted from Nick Hornby's novel of the same name, earning their first Academy Award nomination. Under the Depth of Field banner, Paul Weitz wrote and directed *In Good Company*, starring Dennis Quaid, Topher Grace and Scarlett

**Depth of Field (cont.)**

Johansson. Shortly thereafter, *The Golden Compass*, adapted and directed by Chris Weitz, starring Nicole Kidman and Daniel Craig, won the Academy Award for Best Visual Effects. Chris Weitz also directed *New Moon*, the highly successful second installment of the *Twilight* Saga films based on Stephenie Meyer's best-selling book series. The company also produced the indie hit *Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist* starring Michael Cera and Kat Dennings, and Tom Ford's *A Single Man*, which in addition to being cited as one of the Movies of the Year by the American Film Institute earned star Colin Firth an Academy Award nomination for Best Actor.

Depth of Field furthered their critical acclaim in 2011 with *A Better Life* directed by Chris Weitz which earned star Demian Bechir an Academy Award nomination, and 2012's *Being Flynn* starring Robert De Niro and Julianne Moore, directed by Paul Weitz as well as *Grandma*, directed by Paul Weitz starring Lily Tomlin, Julia Garner and Sam Elliot which garnered Tomlin a Golden Globe nomination.

In 2017, Depth of Field released writer/director Kogonada's critically acclaimed debut feature, *Columbus* starring John Cho and Haley Lu Richardson, garnering three Independent Spirit Award nominations including Best First Feature.

Paul most recently directed the film *Bel Canto* starring Julianne Moore and Ken Watanabe and premiered Season 4 of Amazon's Golden Globe-winning *Mozart in the Jungle* for which he is a writer, director, and showrunner. Chris wrote *Cinderella* and *Star Wars: Rogue One* for Disney and most recently directed *Finale*, starring Oscar Isaac and Ben Kingsley.

In 2018, Depth of Field premiered Zeek Earl & Chris Caldwell's directorial debut, *Prospect*, at SXSW starring Sophie Thatcher, Pedro Pascal and Jay Duplass. This year they also released *A Happening Of Monumental Proportions*, the directorial debut of Judy Greer, written by Gary Lundy, and starring Common, Allison Janney, and Bradley Whitford.

### **Kindred Spirit**

Founded by producer Anita Gou, Kindred Spirit curates high-quality content in film, television, and emerging media that showcases underrepresented voices and pushes boundaries. Aimed at a global audience, Kindred Spirit's upcoming films *The Farewell* (starring Awkwafina) and *Honey Boy* (starring Shia LaBeouf and Lucas Hedges) premiered in competition at Sundance 2019.

Gou's past works include *Assassination Nation* which NEON released (Sundance 2018), *Terminal 3* (Tribeca 2018), Netflix's *To the Bone* (Sundance 2017), and *The Assassin* (Cannes 2015).

### **Seesaw Productions**

Seesaw Productions is an experienced full-service production company based in Beijing. Founded in 2014 by producer Jane Zheng, Seesaw has rapidly become one of the most reliable and innovative independent production houses for creative content. Our goal is to produce effective, entertaining and high quality content both in China and around the world. We are passionate storytellers who understand the language of film and the importance of delivering a compelling message that connects with a worldwide audience.

Seesaw aims to work with both up-and-coming and seasoned filmmakers and is always involved from development and prep through production. We know that attention to detail is crucial and assemble a tight team of experienced professionals on each of our projects. From writers to directors, producers, cinematographers, animators, editors and VFX specialists, we find the right expert for each role. But most importantly, we understand the importance of conveying the creative message at the highest standard for every story.

Seesaw's recent work includes: TV Ads for V-Zug, Land Rover, Amway and Chrysler; viral films for Porsche, Intel's Visual Life campaign, and P&G. Feature Films: *Gasp*, *Red Light Revolution*, *King Of Peking*, *Dead Pigs*, and *The Farewell*.

# Credits

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## Credits

## Crew

<b>Writer/ Director</b>	Lulu Wang
<b>Producers</b>	Daniele Melia Marc Turtletaub Peter Saraf Andrew Miano Chris Weitz Jane Zheng Lulu Wang Anita Gou
<b>Executive Producers</b>	Eddie Rubin
<b>Co-Producers</b>	Josh Cohen Dan Balgoyen
<b>Director of Photography</b>	Anna Franquesa-Solano
<b>Production Designer</b>	Yong Ok Lee
<b>Editors</b>	Michael Taylor Matthew Friedman
<b>Costume Designer</b>	Athena Wang
<b>Music</b>	Alex Weston

## Credits

<b>Music Supervisors</b>	Susan Jacobs Dylan Neely
<b>Sound Designer</b>	Gene Park
<b>Casting</b>	Leslie Woo, CSA Anne Kang

## Cast

<b>Nai Nai</b>	Zhao Shuzhen
<b>Billi</b>	Awkwafina
<b>Suze</b>	X Mayo
<b>Little Nai Nai</b>	Lu Hong
<b>Doctor Wu</b>	Lin Hong
<b>Haiyan</b>	Tzi Ma
<b>Lu Jian</b>	Diana Lin
<b>Mr. Li</b>	Yang Xuejian
<b>Shirley</b>	Becca Khahil

## Credits

<b>Tony</b>	Gil Perez
<b>Uncle Haibin</b>	Jiang Yongbo
<b>Hao Hao</b>	Chen Han
<b>Aiko</b>	Aoi Mizuhara
<b>Aunty Ling</b>	Li Xiang
<b>Aunty Gao</b>	Liu Hongli
<b>Michael</b>	Zhang Shiming
<b>Gu Gu</b>	Zhang Jing
<b>Bao</b>	Liu Jinhang
<b>Wedding Coordinator</b>	Lin Xi
<b>Big Chef</b>	Shi Lichen
<b>Reception at Massage Parlor</b>	Wang Lin
<b>Masseuse #1</b>	Xin Yue
<b>Masseuse #2</b>	Sun Xiaoxiao
<b>Gu Fu</b>	Li Dong
<b>Little Gu Gu</b>	Qin Puxia

Credits

<b>Little Gu Fu</b>	Wang Ruiqi
<b>Doctor Song</b>	Liu Zhuying
<b>Funeral Cryer</b>	Geng Yuqiu
<b>Ye Ye</b>	Wang Yuzhuo
<b>General Ma</b>	Xiao Shouchang
<b>General Fu</b>	Zhao Yonghua
<b>General Zhu</b>	Jiang Zuohai
<b>Teenage Girl #1</b>	Lv Xinyang
<b>Teenage Girl #2</b>	Chen Jing
<b>Copy Center Boss</b>	Sun Weifeng





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