

根 据 刘 震 云 同 名 小 说 改 编

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY LIU ZHENYUN



I Am Not Madame Bovary

我 潘金莲

冯小刚
作品影

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Present

Director FENG XIAOGANG
Screenplay by LIU ZHENYUN
Executive Producer WANG ZHONGLEI
Executive Producer JERRY YE
Producer HU XIAOFENG
Director of Photography LUO PAN
Production Designer HAN ZHONG
Sound Supervisor WU JIANG
Composer DU WEI
Editor WILLIAM CHANG SUK PING

Starring

FAN BINGBING as Li Xuelian
GUO TAO as Zhao Datou
DA PENG as Wang Gongdao

CONTEXT



Li Xuelian is an ordinary Chinese woman living in a village. Because of her insistence in redressing an accusation against her, she has to negotiate with many people at various levels of society. She never imagined that, over the course of these confrontations, a single incident would snowball into another and later become something else entirely. After ten years, she has failed to set things right, only to learn a new lesson about the fickleness of human nature.

Li sets out to redress an accusation made by her ex-husband who said: "Your name is Lian? Why do I think it's Pan Jinlian?" to which Li replied: "I'm no Pan Jinlian!"¹

The film examines the conflicts that arise when a society evolves from one dependent on a system of grace and favors to one subject to a systemized rule of law. The female protagonist handles the conflicts with her ex-husband using every means in her power only to reveal the importance of the rule of law in a modern society.

Whilst the Chinese original title is "I am not Pan Jinlian", in reference to the fabled character, the international one is "I am Not Madame Bovary" - a name came to symbolize in the West the archetype of the "bad woman and wife".

¹ Pan Jinlian is a Chinese mythical character who conspired with her lover to murder her husband. Nowadays, people still refer to "promiscuous" women as Pan Jinlian.

SYNOPSIS



Ten years ago, Li Xuelian and her husband Qin Yuhe staged a fake divorce to secure a second apartment reserved by the government for single people. Six months later, Qin remarried - as agreed - but to a different woman. Furious, Li filed a lawsuit with the County Court. But she lost the case because Judge Wang Gongdao was convinced that the divorce papers were in order.

Refusing to accept the court's findings, Li appeals to the Chief Justice, the County Chief, and even the Mayor, but fails at every turn. She decides that only Qin can give her peace of mind, if he will just acknowledge that the divorce was fake. Instead, he publicly accuses her of being a "promiscuous woman" because she was not a virgin on their wedding night, an accusation that drives Li back to the courts to redeem her reputation.

From county to city, she goes through one trial after another, until deciding to make her appeal in far-off Beijing. In the capital, she is looked after by Zhao Datou, a chef who had a crush on her when they were students. Braving resistance, Li makes her way to the leaders in Beijing who take action - by firing the Chief Justice, County Chief and Mayor who mishandled her case.

Ten years go by and the cases of Li's divorce and her ruined reputation have not been resolved. Li has continued to travel to Beijing every year, but this time Zhao - now a widower - urges her to stay away. Li is furious when she discovers that he has been instructed by county leaders to stop her from pursuing her lawsuit.

Meanwhile, Judge Wang - from the original court case ten years ago - has since been promoted to Chief Justice. He is tasked with ensuring that Li's case does not disrupt the annual National People's Congress. While Li is on her journey to Beijing, Wang has been monitoring her every step.

Years later, by chance Li meets the County Chief who was fired because of her. He asks her why she fought so hard for her case. She reveals that when her husband remarried, she was pregnant. She was fighting not only for herself, but for her unborn child.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION



When Feng Xiaogang read Liu Zhenyun's novel "I Am Not Pan Jinlian" four years ago, his first thought was: "This is a great subject for a film!" Liu tells the satirical story of Li Xuelian, a village woman accused of being an adulterer. After a ruling is made against her in her divorce case, she begins an annual 'journey of petition' to Beijing in order to prove that her divorce was a sham, and to redeem her reputation.

Feng believes that literary works should never stray far from reality, but should reflect it. "I've always enjoyed Liu Zhenyun's books. Many people write about China in a pessimistic way, but Liu always treats the subject with humour, which I believe gets closer to the truth." Liu always claimed "I Am Not Pan Jinlian" is a novel that explores the absurdity in a person's everyday life. His subject was not just the court case, but also the logic behind it.

Feng: "There's the humour of language, the humour of the story, and the humour that underlines the moral of a story. My adaptation, 'I Am Not Madame Bovary', is the third kind."

Feng always wants his films to be of value to society, to provoke thought after the laughter. In spite of its new form of narrative, the film is highly critical, reflecting Feng's observational style of revealing truth beneath the surface of all things. The film's aesthetics are no less innovative: "I Am Not Madame Bovary" is presented within a circular frame, creating a sense of distance and alienation. The audience is forced to view the action more objectively, experiencing the pain of reality beneath the absurdity and sarcastic humour of the film itself.

The original idea of the circular frame was Feng's. "Literati paintings during the Song Dynasty were most often landscapes depicted on scrolls. With such a powerfully Chinese story, we needed to tell it in a very Chinese way." When Feng went scouting for locations, the places he found often lacked

character: "The composition of many places was just messy, poorly-arranged with no divisions. As a director and a former painter, it bothered me." By framing each scene in a circle, he could excise many unwanted elements from each shot, and make the audience focus on the characters. When he first explained his idea to Luo Pan, the cinematographer became really excited. "If you make a film like this, cinematographers will love you to death!"

To prove the feasibility of his radical approach, Feng's team shot ten minutes of sample footage with stand-ins, experimenting with day, night, interior and exterior scenes, and confirming the feasibility of the circular frame. Writer Liu Zhenyun was initially against the idea, believing the tension within the story of his novel was strong enough by itself without resorting to such visual innovation. Feng: "'I Am Not Pan Jinlian' is of course a wonderful novel; otherwise I would not have adapted it. But I need to find my own way to present it." After lengthy negotiation, Feng agreed to shoot the film in two aspect ratios, circular and 1:1.66. But shooting was difficult because the mindset required for a circular frame is completely different.

Firstly, high-contrast scenes couldn't be lit, they had to remain grayish, to appear like a Song Dynasty painting. When a high-contrast scene is lit, dark objects inside the circle can alter its shape. Secondly, the composition is not suitable for close-ups, which suddenly take on the appearances of faces seen through a telescope. Also, no hand-held shots are possible. The composition must be centered on the bottom of the frame, with the subject centered in the lower half of the circular frame. This forces a completely new aesthetic. Feng and Luo only used 50mm, 35mm and 25mm lenses for the film. They even considered using just a single lens during the whole shoot. And since jump cuts are disorientating, there aren't many shots in each scene.

The circular frame not only reflects the composition of traditional Chinese paintings, it also provides a peep hole for the audience. Since something is clearly happening within the circle, something must also be happening out of sight. This opens up many creative possibilities. Both the characters and the audience become lost, with incomplete information, much like Li Xuelian herself.

ABOUT THE CAST

FAN BINGBING AS LI XUELIAN



One of China's leading actresses, Fan Bingbing launched her career with her performance in the TV drama, *"My Fair Princess"*. In 2004, she won Best Actress at the Hundred Flowers Awards for Feng Xiaogang *"Cell Phone"* (2003), after which she began to be recognized for her acting. She has since been awarded at Taiwan's Golden Horse Awards for Teng Huatao's *"The Matrimony"* (2007) and at the Tokyo International Film Festival for Li Yu's *"Buddha Mountain"* (2010). Now one of China's biggest box office draws, she has also worked with Hollywood directors Bryan Singer on *"X-Men: Days of Future Past"* (2014), and Renny Harlin on *"Skiptrace"* (2016).

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

Skiptrace (2016)

X-Men: Days of Future Past (2014)

Double Xposure (2012)

Buddha Mountain (2010)

Winner - Best Actress, 23rd Tokyo International Film Festival

Bodyguards and Assassins (2009)

Nominated - Best Supporting Actress, 29th Hong Kong Film Awards

Nominated - Best Actress, 30th Hundred Flowers Awards

The Matrimony (2007)

Winner - Best Supporting Actress, 44th Golden Horse Awards

Cell Phone (2003)

Winner - Best Actress, 27th Hundred Flowers Awards

Nominated - Best Supporting Actress, 24th Golden Rooster Awards

Nominated - Best Supporting Actress, 4th Chinese Film Media Awards

Nominated - Audiences' Choice of Most Outstanding Actress, 4th Chinese Film Media Awards

Li Xuelian

Li and her husband Qin Yuhe agree to stage their divorce in order to get an apartment in the city. The sham divorce becomes real when Qin marries another woman. Unable to swallow her wounded pride, Li pleads with Wang Gongdao, a judge at the county court. After losing the case, she goes to the Chief Justice, the county chief and the City Mayor... Finally, she decides to lodge an appeal in Beijing during the National People's Congress.



GUO TAO AS ZHAO DATOU



Although best known for his comedic talent, Guo Tao is also one of China's most highly regarded dramatic actors. Following the breakthrough success of Ning Hao's black comedy "*Crazy Stone*" (2006), for which he received nominations for Best Actor at the Chinese Film Media Awards and the Hundred Flowers Awards, he starred in a number of films by leading directors, including Wang Qunan's "*White Deer Plain*" (2012), Johnnie To's "*Drug War*" (2013) and Ning's "*Guns and Roses*" (2012). In 2015, Guo shared the Golden Goblet Best Actor Award with his co-stars on Cao Baoping's thriller "*The Dead End*" (2015) at the Shanghai International Film Festival.

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

The Dead End (2015) Winner - Golden Goblet Best Actor Award, 18th Shanghai International Film Festival

Coming Home (2014)

Dad, Where Are We Going? (2014)

Blind Detective (2013)

Drug War (2013)

Guns and Roses (2012) Winner - Best Supporting Actor, 11th Changchun Film Festival

Million Dollar Crocodile (2012) Nominated - Best Actor, 4th Macau International Movie Festival

White Deer Plain (2012)

Getting Home (2007)

Crazy Stone (2006) Nominated - Best Actor, 29th Hundred Flowers Awards

Nominated - Best Actor, 7th Chinese Film Media Awards



Zhao Datou

Zhao has been secretly in love with Li Xuelian since high school. When she first travels to Beijing, he takes good care of her, letting her stay in his lodgings and giving her a tour of the capital, unaware that she plans to petition the central government. Zhao, whose wife has passed away, is keen to start a belated romantic relationship with Li that may eventually lead to marriage.

DA PENG AS WANG GONGDAO



Da Peng (a.k.a. Dong Chengpeng) is the protégé of legendary Chinese actor Zhao Benshan. Best known for supporting roles in comedies, Da Peng moved behind the camera in 2010 for *"Diors Man"*, which he starred in and directed. In 2015, he directed and starred in the anarchic superhero comedy *"Jian Bing Man"* (2015). The film was a surprise hit that scored more than one billion RMB and secured him Best New Actor and Best New Director at the CCTV6 Movie Channel Media Award at the 2015 Shanghai International Film Festival.

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

Impossible (2015)

Jian Bing Man (2015)

Winner - Best New Actor, CCTV6 Movie Channel Media Award,

18th Shanghai International Film Festival

Winner - Best New Director, CCTV6 Movie Channel Media Award,

18th Shanghai International Film Festival

Nominated - Best Screenplay, CCTV6 Movie Channel Media Award,

18th Shanghai International Film Festival

Nominated - Best Directorial Debut, 23rd Beijing College Student Film Festival

Crazy New Year's Eve (2015)

My Geeky Nerdy Buddies (2014)

Hello Babies (2014)

Wang Gongdao

With the divorce papers in order, local court judge Wang feels that he has no choice but to treat Li's separation as legal and binding. During the decade in which Li travels to Beijing annually to lodge appeals, Wang is promoted to Chief Justice. However, he still sends people to stop Li from traveling to Beijing each spring when the National People's Congress is held.



ZHANG JIAYI AS MAYOR MA



Zhang Jiayi is one of China's finest dramatic actors, known for Wang Xiaoshuai's *"In Love We Trust"* (2007), Yang Qing's *"One Night in Supermarket"* (2009), Teng Huatao's *"Love is Not Blind"* (2011), Jia Zhangke's *"A Touch of Sin"* (2013), Ann Hui's *"The Golden Era"* (2014) and Zhang Yimou's *"Coming Home"* (2014). He previously worked with Feng Xiaogang on the war epic *"Back to 1942"* (2012), in which he played Colonel Dong Jiayao. He was nominated for Best Supporting Actor at the Hundred Flowers Awards for *"Beginning of the Great Revival"* (2011), in which he played Chinese Communist Party founder Li Dazhao.

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

Wild City (2015)

The Golden Era (2014)

Coming Home (2014)

A Touch of Sin (2013)

Back to 1942 (2012)

Love Is Not Blind (2011)

Beginning of the Great Revival (2011)

Nominated - Best Supporting Actor, 31st Hundred Flowers Awards

Mayor Ma

The new mayor who arrives ten years after Li began her annual trips to Beijing. A liberal-minded pragmatist, Ma tries to solve the government's problems by helping Li to solve her own.



YU HEWEI AS ZHENG ZHONG



A graduate of the Shanghai Theatre Academy, Yu Hewei had roles in Guan Hu's "*Mr. Six*" (2015), and recent comedies "*Royal Treasure*" (2016) and "*The New Year's Eve of Old Lee*" (2016).

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

The New Year's Eve of Old Lee (2016)

Royal Treasure (2016)

Mr. Six (2015)



Zheng Zhong

The county chief ten years after Li lost her court case. Zheng pretends that he does not care about any promotion in his career, but secretly works flat out with Jia Congming to foil Li's annual petitioning trip to Beijing.

ABOUT THE CREW



Born in 1958, Beijing. Feng Xiaogang emerged as one of Asia's most commercially successful directors, with his searing black comedies that mapped the lives of ordinary people in a rapidly changing China. His films became more ambitious - and were at the forefront of pushing the boundaries of China cinema - in the 2000s, with action caper "*A World Without Thieves*" (2004), luscious period fantasy "*The Banquet*" (2006), gritty war epic "*Assembly*" (2007), romantic comedy "*If You Are The One*" (2008) and earthquake drama "*Aftershock*" (2010). His divorce drama "*A Sigh*" (2000) and historical drama "*Back to 1942*" (2012) won Best Film prizes at the Cairo and Beijing International Film Festivals respectively. He has also won Best Director three times at China's prestigious Hundred Flowers Awards. In 2016, Feng once again reinvents genre forms with his darkly comic "*I Am Not Madame Bovary*".

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

Back to 1942 (2012) Best Film From Mainland And Taiwan, 32nd Hong Kong Film Awards
Outstanding Director, Outstanding Film, 15th Huabiao Awards
Golden Butterfly Award, 6th International Rome Film Festival
Best Picture, 3rd Beijing International Film Festival

Aftershock (2010) Outstanding Film, 14th Huabiao Film Awards
Best Director, 31st Hundred Flowers Awards

If You Are The One (2008) Best Director, 30th Hundred Flowers Awards

Assembly (2007) Best Asian Film, 28th Hong Kong Film Awards
Best Director, 27th Golden Roosters Awards
Best Director, 29th Hundred Flowers Awards

The Banquet (2006)

A World Without Thieves (2004) Favourite Director, 12th Beijing College Student Film Festival



WRITER
LIU ZHENYUN

One of China's most renowned contemporary writers, Liu Zhenyun won the 2011 Mao Dun Literature Prize in 2011. His works have been translated into several languages and received numerous awards. His writing is known for its black humor and neorealism, and he has found a fitting collaborator in Feng Xiaogang. "*Back to 1942*" (2012), Feng's recent adaptation of Liu's wartime famine epic "*Remembering 1942*", won numerous awards, including Best Screenplay at the Chinese Film Media Awards, Best Adapted Screenplay at the Golden Rooster Awards, Outstanding Screenplay at the Huabiao Awards and a nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay at the Golden Horse Awards. "*I Am Not Madame Bovary*" marks Liu's fourth collaboration with Feng in twenty years.

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

Back to 1942 (2012)

Winner - Best Adapted Screenplay, 29th Golden Rooster Awards

Winner - Best Screenplay, 13th Chinese Film Media Awards

Winner - Outstanding Screenplay(Adapted screenplay), 15th Huabiao Awards

Nominated - Best Adapted Screenplay, 50th Golden Horse Awards

Lost and Found (2008)

Cell Phone (2003)

Nominated - Best Adapted Screenplay, 4th Chinese Film Media Awards



William Chang Suk Ping started his career in 1981, as art director on Patrick Tam's *"Love Massacre"* (1981), Tsui Hark's *"Zu: Warriors from the Magic Mountain"* (1983) and Stanley Kwan's *"Love Unto Waste"* (1986). In 1988, he worked as production designer on Wong Kar-wai's film debut *"As Tears Go By"* (1988), marking the beginning of one of the most important creative partnerships in Chinese-language cinema. Chang has since also worked as art director and editor on films by Taiwan's Sylvia Chang and Stan Lai, Hong Kong's Johnnie To and Jeff Lau, and China's Zhang Yimou and Jiang Wen. He has been repeatedly recognized at the Hong Kong Film Awards and Taiwan's Golden Horse Awards.

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

Port of Call (theatrical cut) (2015)

The Grandmaster (2013)

Winner - Best Film Editing, 33rd Hong Kong Film Awards

Nominated - Best Film Editing, 50th Golden Horse Awards

2046 (2004)

Nominated - Best Film Editing, 24th Hong Kong Film Awards

Lan Yu (2001)

Winner - Best Film Editing, 38th Golden Horse Awards

Nominated - Best Film Editing, 21st Hong Kong Film Awards

In the Mood for Love (2000)

Winner - Best Film Editing, 20th Hong Kong Film Awards

Technical Grand Prize, 53rd Cannes Film Festival

Happy Together (1997)

Nominated - Best Film Editing, 17th Hong Kong Film Awards

Nominated - Best Film Editing, 34th Golden Horse Awards

Fallen Angels (1995)

Winner - Best Film Editing, 32nd Golden Horse Awards

Nominated - Best Film Editing, 15th Hong Kong Film Awards

Chungking Express (1994)

Winner - Best Film Editing, 14th Hong Kong Film Awards

Nominated - Best Film Editing, 31st Golden Horse Awards



DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY LUO PAN

A graduate of the Beijing Film Academy, Luo Pan came to the film industry's attention for his naturalistic work on Gao Qunshu's *"Old Fish"* in 2008. He has since worked with several of China's most trailblazing directors, including Cao Baoping on *"Einstein and Einstein"* (2013) and *"The Dead End"* (2015), Pema Tsenden on *"The Sacred Arrow"* (2014), and Guan Hu on *"Mr. Six"* (2015). *"Mr. Six"*, which stars Feng Xiaogang in the lead, recently secured nominations at the Asian Film Awards and Macau International Movie Festival.

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

Mr. Six (2015)

Nominated - Best Cinematography, 10th Asian Film Awards

Nominated - Best Cinematography, 7th Macau International Movie Festival

The Dead End (2015)

The Sacred Arrow (2014)

Winner - Best Cinematography, 17th Shanghai International Film Festival

Einstein and Einstein (2013)

You and Me (2012)

The New Guard Under Neon Lights (2008)

Old Fish (2008)

Ganglamedo (2006)

My Early Days in France (2004)

PRODUCTION DESIGNER - HAN ZHONG

A graduate of the Fine Art School at the Beijing Film Academy, Han Zhong has demonstrated his versatility in a range of films from Li Dawei's naturalistic "*A Tale of Two Donkeys*" (2009) to Zhang Yimou's fantastical "*A Woman, a Gun and a Noodle Shop*" (2009). He recently worked on Chen Kaige's hugely ambitious VFX extravaganza "*Monk Comes Down the Mountain*" (2015).

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

Monk Comes Down the Mountain (2015)

A Woman, A Gun And A Noodle Shop (2009)

A Tale of Two Donkeys (2009)

House of Flying Daggers (2004)

Hero (2002)

SOUND SUPERVISOR - WU JIANG

A frequent collaborator of Feng Xiaogang, Wu Jiang is one of China's most in-demand sound designers. He has worked with Lu Chuan on "*The Missing Gun*" (2002), Li Shaohong on "*Baober in Love*" (2004), Hu Mei on "*Confucius*" (2010) and Li Weiran on "*Love Will Tear Us Apart*" (2013). He won Best Sound Design at the 2010 Hong Kong Film Awards for "*Red Cliff II*" (2009) and Best Sound for "*Back to 1942*" (2012) at the 2013 Golden Rooster Awards.

Selected Filmography:

I Am Not Madame Bovary (2016)

Lost and Love (2015)

Personal Tailor (2013)

Love Will Tear Us Apart (2013)

Back to 1942 (2012)

Winner - Best Sound, 29th Golden Roosters Awards

If You Are The One 2 (2010)

Aftershock (2010)

Confucius (2010)

Red Cliff II (2009)

Winner - Best Sound Design, 28th Hong Kong Film Awards

The Sun Also Rises (2007)



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