



HOU HSIAO-HSIEN PRESENTS

# SMALL TALK

A FILM BY HUI-CHEN HUANG



## **ORIGINAL TITLE**

Ri Chang Dui Hua

## **ENGLISH TITLE**

Small Talk

## **LOG LINE**

A few simple questions spark a series of talks, which reveal some things that neither my mother nor I are sure we're ready to face.

## **CONTACT INFO**

Diana Chiawen Lee | Producer

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Small Talk Productions

New Taipei City, Taiwan 251

## **TECHNICAL INFO**

Theatrical length\*

TRT: 88 minutes

Exhibition format: DVD, Blu Ray, DCP

Aspect Ratio: 16:9

Shooting format: HD

Color | Taiwanese with English Subtitles | Stereo

(available in 54' broadcast length)

## **FESTIVALS AND AWARDS**

Winner, Best Documentary 31<sup>st</sup> Teddy Award Berlin

Official selection 67<sup>th</sup> Berlinale Panorama

Official selection 53<sup>rd</sup> Golden Horse Film Festival

Nominated, Best Documentary Film for 53<sup>rd</sup> Golden Horse Awards

Nominated, Best Editing for 53<sup>rd</sup> Golden Horse Awards



## SYNOPSIS 1

Every morning, my mother wakes up well before me, prepares my lunch, and takes off. Every evening, after eating out, my mom comes home, washes up, closes her bedroom door, and is asleep by 9PM.

We live in the same space, my mother and I. But for decades now, we are like strangers under one roof. The only exchanges are the meals she cooks and leaves for me on our dining room table. No hellos, no goodbyes, and no “I love you.”

Silence permeates our house as I watch her, knowing that beneath the deafening silence lies a secret that weighs heavily on her, keeping her from speaking; knowing that behind her tightly pursed lips is a shame so overbearing that it suffocates her.

One day, I finally summon up the courage to sit her down and make her talk. My camera becomes a gateway and a tool in prying open the Pandora’s box and capturing my mother’s secrets. But am I ready to hear what she has to say? Are we ready to face what’s been buried for so long?

## SYNOPSIS 2

Anu is a tomboy. Married off at a young age – as was customary in Taiwan in the 1970s – and had two children, Anu soon divorced her violent husband and raised her daughters alone. Since then her only romantic relationships have been with women whom, like her, earn a living as professional mourners at funerals.

It’s considered taboo in Taiwanese culture to question a mother’s love, but that’s exactly the topic of her daughter, Hui-chen Huang’s intimate portrait. Mother and daughter set off on a journey together into the past, during which Hui-chen confronts Anu with questions that have tormented Hui-chen for many years.

In a series of long shots the two women discuss loneliness, trust, and abuse, yet most of these discussions end in painful silence. Shifting focus in order to plumb the depths of their relationship, Hui-chen attempts to understand her mother by also talking to her mother’s siblings and ex-lovers. In doing so she paints a picture of the changing lives and conditions for three generations of women in Taiwan.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As a filmmaker, I've always told the stories of the marginalized, powerless, or underrepresented. I feel their pain, their suffering, their powerlessness, and their frustrations because those have also been my experiences.

When it comes to my own story, I haven't had the courage or strength to utter a sound, because exposing myself is hard, asking if I'm loved is harder, and facing the truth is the hardest.

But I can no longer use my fears as an excuse because my role has evolved. Now that I'm a mother myself, I see my mom with a different perspective. And that new perspective forces me to reckon with my past and face my fears. I hope that this process can help both myself and my mother walk out of the shadows and away from the pain that have plagued us for so long.

## THE TEAM

### Hui-chen HUANG | Director



Hui-chen is an activist, documentary filmmaker, and mother of a precocious little girl. Prior to embarking on her first feature doc, Hui-chen worked for NGOs such as the Taiwan International Workers Association and China Time's Trade Union, advocating for labor rights and social justice. It was during this time that she began documenting the plight of the disadvantaged and the voiceless. Her intimate profiles of the less fortunate and the exploited became tools used for social change.

Most recently, Hui-chen served as Secretary General of Taipei Documentary Union, and is currently working on her memoir to be published in 2017.

### Diana Chiawen LEE | Producer

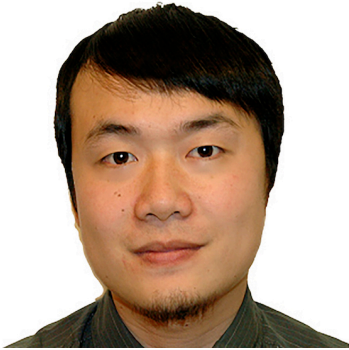


Diana is an independent documentary film producer who with films in various stages of production in Taiwan, US, and China. Her credits include *The Priestess Walks Alone* (2016, Taiwan), *Cinema AZN* (USA), and *Hollywood Chinese* (2009). Diana also consults for numerous Taiwanese documentary films.

Prior to producing, Diana worked for several leading media arts organizations in the US including Center for Asian American Media, Human Rights Watch Int'l Film Festival, Women Make Movies, Arts Engine, and Asian CineVision. Diana received her Masters in Media Studies from the New School.



## Che LIN | Cinematographer



Che is a media maker and activist. In addition to *Small Talk*, he produced and shot for Hong Kong's SunTV and Taiwan's Daai TV, and was a part of the award-winning documentary *Beyond Beauty: Taiwan From Above*. Lin received the Taiwan Labor Film Awards, and Golden Tripod Award for his cinematography and photography works. His works have shown on Voice of America, NHK, and several international outlets.

Lin is a dedicated environmentalist who represented Taiwan at the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen, as well as an active founding member behind the preservation movement around military dependent's village in Taipei, Taiwan. Born in Taiwan in 1981, Che has a BA in engineering and a Masters in Environmental Studies.

## Jessica WanYu LIN | Editor



Lin is an independent filmmaker born in 1984 in Taiwan. She's working on various documentaries and video art projects. She often collaborates with sound-art performers, choreographers, and theater troupes, including Shu-Yi And Dancers, Very Mainstream Studio, and Kandala Records. She is particularly interested in arts and culture of minority groups and of the marginalized, and about different values of living.

## CREDIT

Hui-chen HUANG | Director

HOU Hsiao-Hsien | Executive Producer

Diana Chiawen LEE | Producer

Che LIN | Director of Photography

Hui-chen HUANG | Camera

Jessica WanYu LIN | Editor

Chen-ching LEI | Editorial Consultant

### Composer

LIM Giong

Point

aspiration music productions

### Addition Camera

Hoho LIU

Miquel MIRO

Lan-chuan YEN

### Sound Mix & Design

Kiwi Inc.

### Post Production

Modern Cinema

### Camera Assistant

Yong-xin BAI

Wei-zhong YANG

Chao-yuan YOU

### Production Assistant

Wei-huan (Ryder) HSU

Wei-hua (Paula) TU

An-chi CHENG | Title Card Design

Diana Chiawen LEE | Subtitles

Zhi-hong ZHANG | Logger