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A Window to the Nation A Welcome to the World

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by Li Cungen/Xinhua

### China Pledges Stability & Reform in 2017

December 14, Qidong, Jiangsu Province: A 4,000-ton floating crane vessel for offshore wind turbine installation has begun operation. Thanks to the government's strong reform efforts in 2016, an innovation-driven economic development model has been established.

From December 14 to 16, 2016, Chinese leaders and officials gathered for the Central Economic Work Conference to map out priorities for 2017, after which a statement confirmed that supply-side structural reform will continue unabated in 2017, and that "seeking progress while maintaining stability" will be the guiding principle in governance and economic work.

China expects substantial reform progress in five key areas in 2017, including cutting overcapacity, eliminating stocking, de-leveraging, lowering costs and improving weaknesses. Efforts to reduce steel, iron and coal capacity will continue in 2017, with a focus on "zombie enterprises," declared the statement.



IC

### Remembering the Nanjing Massacre

December 13, Nanjing, Jiangsu Province: People pay homage to victims at the Memorial Hall of the Nanjing Massacre. The Chinese people hope that their commemoration will inspire the rest of the world to remember the estimated 300,000 victims killed by the invading Japanese Imperial Army in Nanjing 79 years ago. They call for world peace and elimination of hatred across borders.

Recounting the Nanjing Massacre is about morality and historical justice. The world has developed a deeper understanding of the Nanjing Massacre over the past few years thanks to a series of events. China has designated a National Memorial Day, historical documents related to the Nanjing Massacre have been included in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register, and a series of exhibitions has been held around the world.





IC

### Solar Cultural Heritage

Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province: Farmers pick tea leaves a few days before the Qingming Festival, which falls on the 5th of 24 solar terms in the Chinese lunar calendar. China's Twenty-four Solar Terms are often considered the country's fifth great invention. They were added to UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage on November 30, 2016.

The announcement was made during the 11th session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The meeting considered 37 nominations for the 2016 Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. China's Twenty-four Solar Terms are part of a knowledge system and social practice formed by observing the sun's annual motion as well as the year's changes in season, climate and phenology.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage has inscribed 336 items onto the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity across its 10 years of service.



IC

### Ice & Snow Economy

December 15, Harbin, Heilongjiang Province: Ice sculptors carve a large snow sculpture named "Love Song" for the 29th Harbin Sun Island International Snow Sculpture Art Expo. The headlining snow sculpture, which measures 103 meters long and 31 meters high, has just been completed.

To promote winter tourism and ignite its sluggish economy, the provincial legislature of Heilongjiang recently made the decision to hold an "Ice and Snow Day" on December 20 annually. State-owned winter sports facilities are open free of charge on that day.

The province's brutal winter, which lasts about 120 days, was once an obstacle impeding the development of the local economy. However, Heilongjiang has taken measures to transform the cold, snowy season into a resource to boost its economy, which has slowed in recent years amid the country's economic restructuring.



# China Deserves Market Economy Status

Text by Shi Xiaoli

**WTO members are obligated to stop using the “analogue country method” with regard to China when the agreed deadline arrives.**

December 11, 2016 marked the 15th anniversary of China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), a deadline for WTO members to recognize China's market economy status in relation to anti-dumping investigations. However, some countries have expressed on various occasions that they would not grant China market economy status. Although the European Commission ordered an amendment to the European Union (EU) anti-dumping regulations on November 9, 2016, relevant procedures have yet to be enacted.

Item (a), Article 15 of the *Protocol on the Accession of the People's Republic of China* outlines how WTO members should determine price comparability of Chinese products in anti-dumping investigations.

Sub-item (i) of Item (a), Article 15 stipulates that if investigated producers can clearly show that market economy conditions are driving the production and sale of their product, the importing WTO member should use Chinese prices to determine price comparability of the industry.

According to sub-item (ii), the importing WTO member may use a methodology not based on a strict comparison of domestic prices or costs in China if the producers under investigation cannot clearly show that market economy conditions prevail with regard to the manufacturing, production and sale of that product. This methodology refers to the “analogue country method.” The regulation is intended to allow investigating nations to choose to use data from a country at a similar development level to determine price comparability of products from China. If prices of similar products in the analogue country are comparatively lower, the normal value of products from China will drop accordingly, exacerbating the dumping situation. A direct result of the analogue country approach is that dumping imported products and anti-dumping duty rates will be manipulated to



October 15, 2016: Foreign clients examine Chinese-made auto accessories at the 120th China Import and Export Fair (also known as the Canton Fair). Thanks to its admission into the WTO, China has developed into the world's second largest economy. by Lu Hanxin/Xinhua

impact sales of China's exports abroad.

When negotiating China's entry into the WTO, all WTO members agreed that the analogue country method should only be applicable during a 15-year transition period. Item (d), Article 15 of the Protocol stipulates that in any event, the provisions of subparagraph (a) (ii) shall expire 15 years after the date of accession. Despite the fact that the Protocol doesn't clearly define the deadline for the provisions of subparagraph (a) (i), they shall expire accordingly in view of the two subparagraphs' indivisible logical relationship.

The analogue country method mentioned in subparagraph (a) (ii) of Article 15 of the Protocol is merely a technical caveat concerning anti-

dumping investigations, not an indicator of a market economy. Therefore, the influence of its expiration should not be confused or exaggerated. As part of WTO rules, the Protocol stipulates the rights and obligations of other WTO members, as well as China. WTO members are obligated to stop using the “analogue country method” with regard to China when the agreed deadline arrives. China is entitled to lodge charges against those who violate the Protocol at the WTO Dispute Settlement Body. As an international organization operating according to defined rules, the WTO Dispute Settlement Body will surely produce a fair judgment. 

The author is a professor at the School of International Law, China University of Political Science and Law.

## 河长制 River Chief System

Edited by Li Zhuoxi

On December 11, 2016, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the General Office of the State Council jointly issued a document on implementing a national river management system that will cover every river and lake in the country by the end of 2018. China will establish provincial, municipal, and county and township-level river management systems operated by local governments at various levels to oversee pollution control and improve water quality and the overall environment around these bodies of water, according to the document. While the heads of provincial-level regions will be general river chiefs, responsible for every river and lake in their respective regions, other top officials at city, county and township

levels will act as river chiefs and take responsibility for the bodies of water under their care.


River chiefs at various levels will bear direct responsibility for the management and protection of rivers and lakes. Major tasks will include water resource protection, management and protection of riverbanks and lakeshores, water pollution prevention and control, ecological restoration and law enforcement monitoring. Their performances will be evaluated, and they will be held accountable for environmental damage that occurs in the water bodies under their supervision.

The management and protection of rivers and lakes involve different usages and facets of the waters, and span various administrative regions and industries, which make it a complicated issue. Unsound industrial structures in some regions present a major obstacle for



To date, eight provincial-level regions have fully implemented the river management system and 16 have partially implemented it. The system will cover all rivers and lakes in China by the end of 2018. CFP

the prevention and control of water pollution. With local Party chiefs and government heads taking the lead to govern the water bodies in their regions, it will enable better coordination of economic and social development with environmental protection in each of their unique,

respective situations. The issue demands an upgrade of industrial structures as well as direct action. The river management system will not change the distribution of responsibility but help to build a platform for various government departments to work together. 

## 智能投顾 Robo-Advisor


Edited by Li Zhuoxi

China is to become the world's largest robo-advisor market thanks to its growing middle class and the popularity of the mobile internet, according to a report released by CreditEase Corp and Bloomberg LP.

Robo-advisors first appeared in the United States as an online wealth management service providing automated, algorithm-based portfolio advice without input from a human financial planner. With the help of the internet, a robo-advisor can serve more people for lower rates. It works 24 hours a day free of emotion and more efficiently than human consultants.

“With fast-paced urbanization and widespread higher

education, China's new middle class is growing quickly, which has been a key factor in China becoming the largest robo-advisor market in the near future,” remarked Wang Fuxing, managing director at CreditEase Wealth Management Co Ltd.

In contrast with older definitions, the “new middle class” in China refers to those who are familiar with the internet and good at improving their abilities using various high-tech products. This group, mostly well-educated and residing in big cities, is more likely than others to learn about asset allocation. China will be home to 300-500 million middle-class people in the next five to 10 years, the report predicts. 



The market for robo-advisors will see compounded growth of 68 percent over the next five years, according to a forecast by international consultancy AT Kearney. By 2020, global assets under management by robo-advisors will exceed US\$2.2 trillion. CFP





# Fuzhou to Quanzhou

Text and photographs by Cecile Zehnacker

Last October, I was lucky enough to be invited to participate in the 2nd Maritime Silk Road International Tourism Festival in Fujian Province, which was meant to promote Fujian Province and help it become more popular among Chinese and foreign tourists. This event took me from Fuzhou to Quanzhou and gave me a new glimpse of southern China, which I had discovered a year and a half ago when I traveled to Guangdong Province. Fujian is most famous for “tulou”, round buildings typical of the Hakka ethnic minority. But the coastal and mountainous areas of Fujian Province have much more to offer.

The first thing that struck me about Fujian mirrored my feelings upon arrival in Guangdong and Guizhou provinces: Southern Chinese culture starkly contrasts that of the North. As we shuttled through different cities, we caught sight of beautiful typical southern Chinese architecture and temples from the highway as well as countless crop fields with amazing vegetation thanks to the tropical climate of southern China.

Upon arrival in Fuzhou, the capital of Fujian Province, which is known as the City of Banyans for its beautiful trees, our first destination was the charming “Three Lanes and Seven Alleys”, or “Sanfang Qixiang” in Chinese. The traditional architectural complex is composed of small traditional alleys similar to the *hutongs* of Beijing. Often referred to as a “museum of ancient architecture of the Ming and Qing dynasties,” construction started in the Jin Dynasty (265-420), took shape in the late Tang Dynasty (618-907) and culminated in the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911). The area has also been inhabited by very influen-



Two men talk on the doorstep of a restaurant with traditional wooden architecture in the Three Lanes and Seven Alleys area.



Two elderly women of the Hui'an community in Quanzhou clean and prepare shells.

tial figures in Chinese history and remains iconic of Fuzhou's long history and strong culture. The ancient buildings have been well preserved and restored, and many small restaurants and shops where tourists and locals enjoy the flavors of Fuzhou now flank them. Just discovering the place was a joyful experience in and of itself. Although the main lanes are crowded and quite commer-

cial, small peripheral alleys invite visitors to stroll these narrow peaceful streets and their many residential buildings. Some are now museums welcoming visitors.

An attractive Fuzhou characteristic that has nothing to do with culture is its hot springs. At the same time as the Maritime Silk Road tourism festival was held in 2016, the 7th Fuzhou Hot Spring International



An oil-paper umbrella shop in the Three Lanes and Seven Alleys area. Paper umbrellas are an age-old tradition that originated in Fuzhou and later expanded across China and even to some other Asian countries.



Local villagers perform a traditional opera in the ancient town of Songkou.

Tourism Festival was also held. While attending this festival we found the opportunity to take a dip in the warm waters of Xishan Hot Spring Resort, which proved a wonderful experience. The resort features over 50 different outdoor pools at various temperatures. The water is heated by volcanic activity under Fujian Province. Some pools overlook a river below, making the



Bamboo cabins shelter some of the numerous pools of Xishan Hot Spring Resort.

experience really magical.

The next day we took the bus to Songkou Ancient Town in Yongtai County of Fuzhou for the 1st Folk Custom Tourism Cultural Festival. The ancient town has a history of over 1,000 years, and just like the Three Lanes and Seven Alleys, it is notable for a wealth of well-preserved old buildings from the Ming and Qing dynasties. Al-

though several cultural activities organized as part of the festival led my group deeper into the traditional folk culture of Songkou and Fuzhou, the city isn't yet a year-round major tourist destination, which keeps it tranquil. It was especially pleasant to witness the lives of the local people, some of whom were probably witnessing foreign faces for the first time.

The ancient town of Songkou is along the way to Quanzhou, our next destination and a former important port city on the Maritime Silk Road. The biggest tourist draw of Quanzhou is the Kaiyuan Temple, an ancient structure built in 686 during the Tang Dynasty and the largest Buddhist temple of Fujian Province. Interestingly, it houses fragments of a Hindu temple built in Quanzhou in the 13th century by the Tamil community. But perhaps the most impressive structure in the town is the beautiful Reshou Pagoda in the garden of the temple complex. It includes several courtyards.

My favorite stop on the trip was the Hui'an women's community in Chongwu ancient fishing village. The village is particularly notable because they used seashells to construct many of its walls, but its other peculiarity is a community of Hui'an women who maintain a traditional shellfish farm. Hui'an women are a community of Han women with roots in Hui'an County, Quanzhou, known for their hard work and unique customs. They wear colorful traditional costumes and welcomed us with traditional dances. However, modern times have been overpowering tradition, and the community's average age is quite high. Many of the women we met were over 80 years old. I felt tremendously honored for the chance to visit the amazing women of the community and their beautiful village.

Too soon I had to leave sunny Fujian and return to cold Beijing. I really wished I could have extended my trip with the final touch of the province's beautiful beaches.



# Farewell 2016 & A Brighter 2017

Concept by China Pictorial

In 2017, China will face even more complicated and faster-changing domestic and international situations, with increasing uncertainty. Against this backdrop, whether China can maintain its comparatively high economic growth rate of more than 6.5 percent has become a question of global interest.

In this issue, *China Pictorial* looks back at China in 2016 through the stories of those who influenced the nation and even the world, as well as the most creative technologies, art trends, and ideas that emerged in the past year, so as to showcase China's social transformation.

Last year brought a heavy increase in the popularity of mobile transactions.

Webcast platforms could possibly be the most popular internet product of 2016.

Some low-budget domestic films deeply moved and pleasantly surprised Chinese spectators in 2016.

Looking back at 2016, China witnessed many significant events in global science and technology circles and launched numerous new products.

In 2016, China's President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang paid dozens of visits to foreign countries and attended many international conferences, during which they expressed China's views and promoted the Belt and Road Initiative, which was designed to achieve win-win cooperation with other countries.

Three features will likely characterize the future development of AI in China.



# Timeline of Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang's Foreign Visits in 2016

Edited by Zhou Xin

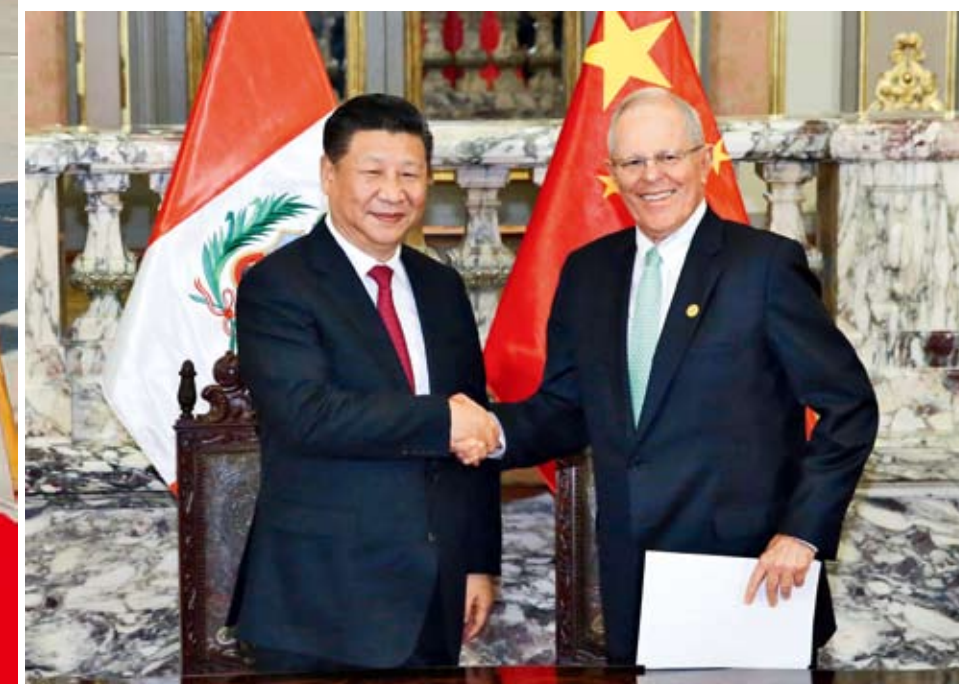
In 2016, China's President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang paid dozens of visits to foreign countries and attended many international conferences, during which they expressed China's views and promoted the Belt and Road Initiative that was designed to achieve win-win cooperation with other countries. Major progress has been made during bilateral talks and international meetings.



November 17: President Xi Jinping arrives in Quito, capital of Ecuador, for a state visit to the South American country. by Ju Peng/Xinhua



November 18: Chinese President Xi Jinping and Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa jointly inaugurate the Coca Codo Sinclair (CCS) hydroelectric plant built by a Chinese company. by Ma Zhancheng/Xinhua

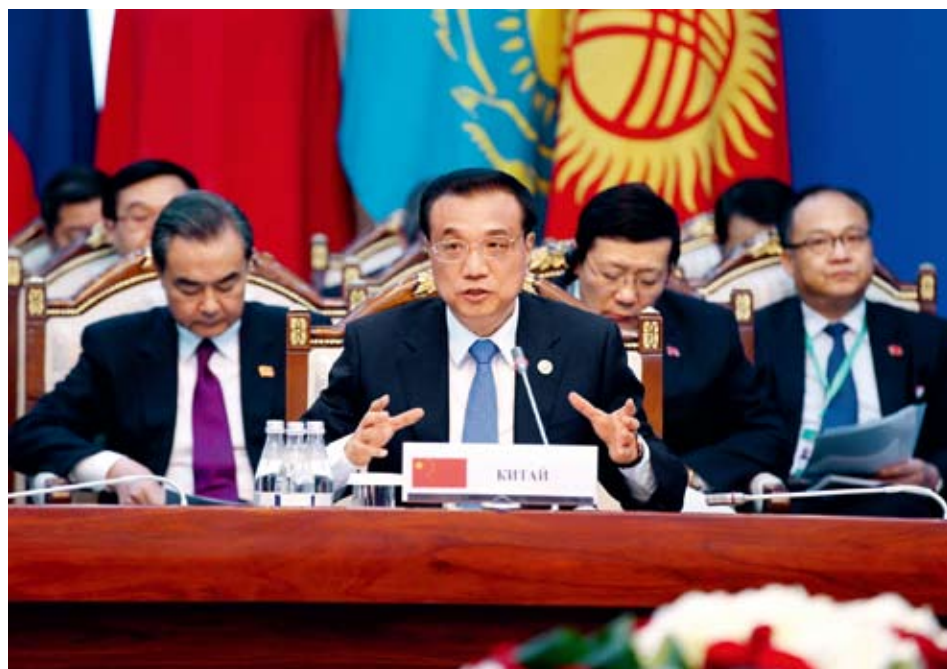


November 21: Chinese President Xi Jinping holds talks with Peruvian President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski in Lima. by Pang Xinglei/Xinhua





November 2: Premier Li Keqiang arrives in Bishkek for an official visit to Kyrgyzstan and the 15th prime ministers' meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). by Zhuang Duo/Xinhua



November 3: Premier Li Keqiang speaks at the 15th prime ministers' meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). by Liu Zhen/China News Service



November 4: Premier Li Keqiang at a welcoming ceremony before talks with Latvian Prime Minister Maris Kucinskis. by Liu Zhen/China News Service





January 19: President Xi Jinping holds talks with Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud in Riyadh, capital of Saudi Arabia. by Ju Peng/Xinhua

On November 3, during a meeting with Li Keqiang, Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev expressed his country's gratitude to China, saying that as a genuine friend, China offered Kyrgyzstan help without political strings, solely to promote stability and development. A joint communiqué between the two countries was released, and several cooperation documents on many fields were signed.

On November 5, Li Keqiang attended the 5th Summit of China and Central and Eastern European Countries in Riga, Latvia. Li announced four principles that serve as pillars of the "16+1" plan as well as five propositions on pragmatic cooperation. After the summit, participants signed many cooperation documents.

From November 16 to 25, Xi Jinping visited Ecuador, Peru, and Chile and attended the 24th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting. After talks between Xi and his Peruvian counterpart, those two countries signed an inter-governmental joint action plan for cooperation in 2016-2021. China and Chile agreed to lift bilateral ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership.

At the APEC summit on November 20, Xi Jinping delivered a keynote speech, highlighting open economics, inter-connectivity and global growth.

DEC. 2017



October 15: Chinese President Xi Jinping, Brazilian President Michel Temer, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and South African President Jacob Zuma have a group photo with the captains of football teams participating in the 2016 BRICS U-17 Football Cup in Goa, India. by Yao Dawei/Xinhua

On November 6, Li Keqiang co-chaired the 21st Regular Meeting between the Chinese Premier and the Russian Prime Minister with Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev of Russia in St. Petersburg. Premier Li and Prime Minister Medvedev heard a work report from the four bilateral cooperation mechanisms including the China-Russia Committee on Humanities Cooperation, the Committee on Regular Meetings between the Chinese Premier and the Russian Prime Minister, the China-Russia Investment Cooperation Committee and the China-Russia Energy Cooperation Committee, exchanging in-depth views on future cooperation.

From October 15 to 17, Xi Jinping attended the BRICS Summit held in Goa, India. Xi called for the alignment of the Belt and Road Initiative and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) to advance infrastructure construction and strive for common development.

From September 25 to 27, Li Keqiang visited Cuba, the first official visit to the country by a Chinese premier. He held talks with Cuban President Raul Castro and also met with Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro.

From September 23 to 24, Li Keqiang visited Canada, where he met with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and attended the 6th China-Canada Business Forum.

From September 19 to 22, Li Keqiang attended several high-level meetings of the United Nations General Assembly and delivered a speech at the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly.



July 13: Chinese Premier Li Keqiang arrives in Ulaanbaatar for an official visit to Mongolia and to attend the 11th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit. by Pang Xinglei/Xinhua

From October 13 to 14, Xi Jinping visited Cambodia and Bangladesh. China and Cambodia agreed to align the Belt and Road Initiative with Cambodia's Rectangular Strategy. China and Bangladesh vowed to promote connectivity through the Belt and Road Initiative and the Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor.

From September 6 to 9, Li Keqiang visited Laos and attended the 19th ASEAN-China Summit. The year 2016 marked the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Laos. A total of 20 documents on cooperation in many sectors were signed and a joint communiqué was issued.

On the morning of September 7, Li Keqiang attended the 19th ASEAN-China Summit, during which he expounded China's stance on the South China Sea issue. Li also attended the 19th ASEAN Plus China, Japan and ROK Summit. He underlined the importance of pragmatic cooperation under this framework and of safeguarding regional peace and stability.

Li Keqiang attended the 11th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit from July 15 to 16 and delivered a speech. The summit concluded with the Ulaanbaatar Declaration and the Chair's Statement, marking the culmination of 20 years of work on Eurasian cooperation with a vow of even deeper pragmatic cooperation.

From July 13 to 14, Premier Li Keqiang visited Mongolia. The two countries signed 15 documents on cooperation in many sectors.

President Xi visited Serbia, Poland and Uzbekistan on a trip that started on June 17. China established a comprehensive strategic partnership with those three countries, marking more progress on the Belt and Road Initiative.

On June 24, Xi Jinping attended the 16th meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). This gathering examined the major outcomes of the SCO since its establishment 15 years ago. Participants exchanged views on the development of the SCO and major international and regional issues, reaching a broad consensus.

From November 2 to 9, Li Keqiang visited Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, and Russia. During the trip, he attended several international meetings including the 15th SCO prime ministers' meeting.

Xi Jinping visited the Czech Republic from March 28 to 30, the first visit by a Chinese head of state in the 67 years since the two countries established diplomatic ties. It was also Xi's first visit to Central and Eastern Europe.

On January 19, Xi Jinping visited Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Iran. This was his first trip of 2016 and first visit to the Middle East since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Touring four cities in five days, Xi elaborated the core of China's Middle East policies and signed 52 documents on cooperation.

On March 31, Xi Jinping met with his U.S. counterpart Barack Obama at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. A joint statement on nuclear security cooperation and a joint presidential statement on climate change were released.

From March 31 to April 1, President Xi attended the 4th Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington D.C., where he elaborated China's policies, introduced China's progress on nuclear security and announced China's upgraded nuclear security in its own facilities and progress on international cooperation.



## TITANS: SHAPING CHINA'S FUTURE



July 13, 2015: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi arrives at the Palais Coburg Hotel, the venue for nuclear talks in Vienna, Austria. CFP

## Wang Yi: Diplomatic Savvy

In 2016, Chinese foreign policies became more active, confident and mature. China hosted the G20 Summit in Hangzhou, which promoted global economic governance and reforms. China enhanced the establishment of a Free Trade Area in the Asia-Pacific region during the 2016 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Lima. China is also shouldering more responsibility to address global climate change. Relations between China and the Philippines made a positive breakthrough and the issue of the South China Sea has merged back onto a healthier dialogue track. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has received much of the credit.

***“Hawaii is far from the U.S. mainland, but it is still the country’s territory. Sovereignty over land does not depend on distance.”***



Zhou Xiaochuan, head of the People's Bank of China, delivers a speech at the Michel Camdessus Central Banking Lecture. CFP

## Zhou Xiaochuan: The People's Banker

To meet the demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for Special Drawing Rights (SDR), the People's Bank of China implemented intense and high-quality reforms. On October 1, 2016, the IMF announced its inclusion of China's RMB in the benchmark SDR currency basket, which already included the U.S. dollar, Euro, Yen and Pound. Zhou Xiaochuan, head of the People's Bank of China, believes the RMB will become a stabilizing force in the international monetary system and promote reform of global economic governance.

***“Balance the flexibility and stability of the exchange rate and firmly continue market-oriented reform of the exchange rate of the RMB.”***





Jin Liqun attends the signing ceremony of the Memorandum on the Establishment of the AIIB. CFP

## Jin Liqun: Development Banker

*Time* magazine listed Jin Liqun, president of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), as one of its “100 Most Influential People” in 2016. After 27 months of preparation, the AIIB was launched in Beijing on January 16, 2016. Since its establishment, the AIIB has adopted international standards and created a transparent management system to promote win-win ideas, proving it is not a “pawn” of China, and it will not weaken the World Bank. Jin Liqun has been largely credited for many of its successes. The AIIB Board has approved loans totaling **US\$509 million** to develop energy, transportation and urban infrastructure in countries like Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and Tajikistan.

*“Global crises can only be addressed with international cooperation.”*



Chinese Vice Minister of Public Security Meng Hongwei visits police officers who will be sent on a peacekeeping mission to Liberia. CFP

## Meng Hongwei: President of Interpol

On November 11, 2016, the 85th Interpol General Assembly elected Chinese Vice Minister of Public Security Meng Hongwei as president of the organization. Founded in 1914, Interpol is the world’s second largest international organization after only the United Nations. Interpol is headquartered in Lyons, France, and has 190 member countries.

Chinese police have cooperated with **113** countries and participated in **82** international organizations and multilateral mechanisms.





March 23, 2016: Jack Ma, chairman of Alibaba Group attends Boao Forum for Asia held in Qionghai City, Hainan Province. CFP

## Jack Ma: Mr. Taobao

On the 2016 Singles' Day (an online shopping holiday created by Taobao), sales volume at Alibaba retail websites Tmall and Taobao reached **120.7 billion yuan (US\$17.73 billion)** in just 24 hours. Purchases made with mobile devices accounted for **81.87 percent** of the total sales, which were shipped to **235** countries and regions. Alibaba again set a new world record for the largest one-day turnover on one e-commerce platform. China's Singles' Day has become the world's largest online shopping day, far eclipsing "Cyber Monday" in the United States.

*"The first technical revolution liberated humans from manual labor and made coal the productive material. The second technical revolution shortened distances with oil as the driving resource. The internet-based technical revolution freed minds with data as the core resource. In the future, data will be the production material and computing will be the productive force."*



Wang Jianlin, chairman of Wanda Group, poses for pictures after an interview in Beijing. CFP

## Wang Jianlin: China's Wealthiest

Wang Jianlin appeared in *Time* as one of its "100 Most Influential People" in 2016. U.S.-based business magazine *Forbes* noted that Wang, chairman of Wanda Group, has surpassed Li Ka-shing to become the richest Chinese person in the world with a net worth of **US\$28.7 billion**, ranking him in the **top 20** globally.

*"Wanda has invested US\$10 billion and employs 20,000 people in the United States. If policies hurt our operations, Wanda will be forced to cut jobs."*





Ren Zhengfei, president of Huawei Technologies Co., gestures as he speaks during a session of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. CFP

## Ren Zhengfei: Electronics Tsar

Ren Zhengfei started the tech company Huawei at the age of 43 and has evolved from manager of a humble firm to tycoon. Ren launched advanced enterprise management in China and maintains a sharp insight into the market.

In 1987, Ren amassed **21,000 yuan** (now **US\$3,021**) to launch Huawei Company. In 2011, Ren first made the *Forbes* list with a net worth of **US\$1.1 billion**.



Ma Guoqiang, then president of Baosteel Group, speaks at a news conference in Shanghai, China. CFP

## Ma Guoqiang: Man of Steel

On December 1, 2016, Baosteel and Wuhan Iron and Steel (Group) Corp. formally merged to form China Baowu Steel Group. The merger was meant to cut excessive capacity. China's steel industry is an important sector in which capacity needs to be reduced. An expert in finance and investment, Ma Guoqiang is positioned to lead the group, which indicates that reform is the priority of China's state-owned enterprises. The focus has switched from "managing the business" to "managing the capital."

China Baowu Steel Group employs **228,000** people and holds assets totaling **730 billion yuan** (about **US\$105 billion**). Its sales volume is expected to reach **330 billion yuan** (about **US\$47.5 billion**) in 2017. Its annual output of crude steel ranks first in China and second in the world.





January 2008: Yuan Geng visits Shekou Industrial Zone of Shenzhen City. by Chen Yihuai/Southern Metropolis Daily/CFP

## Yuan Geng: Reform Pioneer

In 1979, Yuan Geng (1917-2016) established the Shekou Industrial Zone, the first of its kind on the Chinese mainland, which earned him the status of the first practitioner of China's reform and opening-up policy. In 2003, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region awarded him the Gold Bauhinia Star for his efforts to promote relations between Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland, particularly in the realms of economic development and Hong Kong's shipping industry. On January 31, 2016, Yuan Geng succumbed to illness in Shekou District, Shenzhen, at the age of 99.

***"If China wants to climb onto the world stage, it must first be more open to the world, especially welcoming positive foreign influence. China should not confine itself to a narrow mindset."***



November 16, 2015: Wu Jianmin gives a lecture at a senior high school. by Mi Ni/CFP

## Wu Jianmin: Witness of Chinese Diplomacy

Wu Jianmin (1939-2016) became a diplomat soon after graduating from Beijing Foreign Studies University in 1959. He served as an interpreter for Chinese leaders including Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Chen Yi. He was one of the earliest Chinese diplomats to work in the United Nations after the People's Republic of China regained its lawful seat in the international organization. On June 18, 2016, Wu died in a car accident at the age of 77. His funeral was held in Beijing's Babaoshan Cemetery, and Chinese top leaders paid tributes.

***"The present world no longer follows the laws of the jungle. Peace and development have become themes of the times—a major change for international relations."***



## China's Concerns: Ten Biggest International Events

Edited by Xu Shuyuan

### Most "Amusing" Campaign in History

On November 8, 2016, voting for the United States' quadrennial Electoral College began. Donald J. Trump, a real estate tycoon and the Republican nominee, bested Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton and will be sworn in as the 45th president of the United States this month.



November 8, Virginia, USA: A man studies his ballot on election day. Xinhua

### Failed Turkish Coup

On the evening of July 15, 2016, Turkey's armed forces staged a military coup. At least 265 people were killed and more than 1,400 wounded. However, after just 24 hours, the country's president Recep Tayyip Erdogan declared the coup attempt had failed.



July 18, 2016, Istanbul, Turkey: Pro-Erdogan supporters wave Turkish national flags during a rally in Taksim square following the failed coup attempt. CFP

### Having Their Cake

On June 24, British citizens voted on a referendum on whether to leave the European Union. When the final results were tallied, the "leave" camp defeated "remain", making "Brexit" a reality.

### War on Zika

The first case of Zika was discovered in South America in 2014, and by early 2016, the mosquito-borne virus had spread worldwide. The situation prompted the World Health Organization to declare an international public health emergency. The agency later lifted the nine-month emergency in November but vowed to continue to monitor the virus, which can result in severe birth defects.



September 14, Bangkok, Thailand: A staffer sprays anti-mosquito products at a temple. Xinhua

### Bastille Day Horror

A truck rammed into a crowd of people celebrating Bastille Day in Nice, France on July 14. IS (Islamic State) militants claimed responsibility for the attack.

### All's Well that Ends Well

An EgyptAir flight from Alexandria to Cairo was hijacked on March 29. The hijacker ordered the pilot to divert to Larnaca, Cyprus. Seven hours later, the hijacker emerged from the aircraft with his hands in the air. No one was harmed during the incident.

### Confidante Scandal Erupts

In October, South Korean TV station JTBC reported that Choi Soon-sil had privately edited speeches of President Park Geun-hye before they were delivered, triggering intense speculation on the relationship between the two. On December 9, South Korea's parliament overwhelmingly voted to impeach the country's first female president.



December 16, Seoul, South Korea: South Korean lawmakers in the parliamentary investigation team visit the presidential Blue House to inquire about Park's scandal. CFP

### Shaking the World

On January 6, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) announced that it had successfully carried out its first hydrogen bomb test, which was its fourth nuclear test in recent years. On March 2, the United Nations (UN) Security Council adopted a resolution to impose new sanctions on the DPRK to curb the country's nuclear and missile programs. On September 9, the DPRK announced the success of its fifth nuclear test in defiance of the UN sanctions.



November 30, New York, USA: The UN Security Council adopts a resolution to impose new sanctions on the DPRK in response to the country's fifth nuclear test on September 9, 2016. CFP

### "Imperfect" Olympic Games

The 2016 Olympic Games in Rio, Brazil were held from August 5 to 21. The Games had experienced ups and downs due to disputes over venues, the outbreak of Zika virus and the superbacteria found off Rio's beaches where Olympic swimming events would be held. However, those worries didn't prevent the Games being a successful global event.



August 5, Rio, Brazil: Fireworks light up the sky during the Olympic opening ceremony. IC

### Beyond EU Power

Since the summer of 2015, large numbers of refugees fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East and Africa have been pouring into Europe. The sharp rise in migration exceeded Europe's resettlement capacity, prompting protests by local people. How to solve the refugee crisis remains one of the top concerns in Europe.



October 11, Rome, Italy: Hundreds of migrants join volunteers from Baobab Experience and other humanitarian organizations to demonstrate solidarity with refugees seeking asylum in Europe and protest Italy's shrinking capacity to admit refugees, which was slashed with the closure of the Baobab immigrant center. IC



# China's 2017 Economic Prospects

Text by Huang Hanquan

Last year marked the beginning of China's 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020). Amidst domestic worries in various sectors, the Chinese economy made a solid start and continued to contribute positively to world economic growth. In 2017, China will face even more complicated and faster-changing domestic and international situations, with increasing uncertainty. Against this backdrop, whether China can maintain its comparatively high economic growth rate of more than 6.5 percent has become a question of global interest.

## 2016 Economic Performance

To address the serious issues and domestic problems plaguing China's economy, the government adapted to the new normal of economic development in 2016, committed to a new innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development model, and pushed supply-side structural reform to successfully meet major projected goals for economic growth and set a solid foundation for accomplishing the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

The economy operated within an appropriate range, as manifested in "four stabilities and one decline." The first stability was growth. China's GDP growth rate in the first three quarters of 2016 averaged 6.7 percent, as did the projected annual growth rate. The figure landed right in the middle of the economic goal of 6.5 to 7 percent set in early 2016, indicating that China's economy will now grow in an L-shaped path. The second stability was employment. The first three quarters of 2016 witnessed the creation of 10.67 million urban jobs, which met the annual goal of 10 million ahead of schedule. This figure was expected to surpass 13 million by the end of 2016. The third was stability of commodities prices. In 2016, China's commodities prices rose around the start and end of the year, but stayed low at other times. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) from January to November increased 2.2 percent on a year-on-year basis, lower than the control objective of 3 percent. The fourth was the stability in consumption. The country's total retail sales of consumer products from January to November 2016 increased 10.4 percent year-on-year, slightly lower than the growth rate of the same period in 2015. China has become the world's

second-largest consumer market and facilitates the greatest total volume of e-commerce in the world. The one decline refers to both exports and imports. From January to November 2016, China's total volume of imports and exports dropped 1.2 percent year-on-year, with exports falling by 1.8 percent and imports by 0.3 percent. The drop tended to narrow month by month.

Economic quality and efficacy improved, as well as corporate performance. From January to November in 2016, the added value of industrial enterprises above a designated size increased by 6.2 percent on a year-on-year basis. The coal industry saw profits double in 2016. The iron and steel industry reaped profits of more than 30 billion yuan in 2016 after a deficit of over 50 billion yuan in 2015. In September 2016, the Producer Price Index for Industrial Products (PPI) turned positive and has since increased month by month, reaching 3.3 percent in November. With PPI turning positive for the first time in 54 months, the Chinese economy has avoided deflation.

The economic structure has been upgraded. Since 2010, the growth rate of China's service sector has surpassed that of industry. In 2013, the service sector's share of China's national economy first surpassed that of the secondary industry, promoting the transformation of the economic structure from investment and export-driven to consumption-driven, and of the industrial structure from industry-dominated to service-sector-dominated. In the first three quarters of 2016, final consumption contributed 71 percent of economic growth, up 13.3 percent over the same period of 2015. After structural adjustment, the proportions of the three industries in relation to the total economy are 8.5, 39 and 51.5, respectively.

The pace of change of economic growth engines is accelerating. In 2016, traditional industries, including iron and steel, coal, nonferrous metal, building materials and petrochemicals, continued to see declining growth rates. Emerging industries such as high-end equipment, robotics, energy conservation, environmental protection, new energy automobiles, and new internet operational models and service industries such as healthcare, senior care, tourism, culture and sports are developing at breakneck speed. In the first three quarters of 2016, the added value of strategic emerging industries as well as new and high technology industries increased

by more than 10 percent, four percentage points higher than the industrial growth rate. More than 4 million enterprises were registered in the first three quarters of 2016, an increase of 27 percent on a year-on-year basis. The majority of these enterprises are in service industries such as data delivery, software, information services, finance, culture, sports, entertainment, education, health, and social work.

## China's Economic Outlook for 2017

In 2017, the international environment and its relation to China's economy are bound to become more complicated as uncertainty increases. The most glaring uncertainty lies with foreign and domestic policy adjustments to come from U.S. President-elect Donald Trump after he formally takes office. Actually, Trump's policy adjustments present both pros and cons for China. On the positive side, Trump promised to increase infrastructure investment and cut taxes during his campaign, which will increase U.S. demand, stimulate investment, and promote imports, further stimulating the economic growth of the U.S. and the world while improving China's environment for international demand.

Although the Chinese economy is facing challenges and risks domestically, its comparatively high growth rate creates many advantages. First, China's deepened reforms will create a more favorable environment for entrepreneurship and innovation, releasing the reform dividend. Second, China's further implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative will promote a heavier volume of imports at advanced levels as well as exports through various channels, re-shaping the opening-up dividend. Third, the comprehensive implementation of China's innovation-driven development strategy will kindle enthusiasm from the world's largest group of engineers and university students, cultivating a new professional dividend. Fourth, the implementation of regional development strategies such as the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei integration initiative and the Yangtze River Economic Belt initiative will reinforce cooperation between more developed and less developed areas in China, building up the regional development dividend. Fifth, progress in new urbanization will effectively enhance the labor productivity of around 100 million people with rural household registration living in China's urban areas, enlarging the urbanization dividend. Based on the five dividends, the Chinese economy will maintain comparatively high growth in 2017 with an expected rate of 6.5 percent or greater.

Promoting supply-side structural reform is a key point in China's 13th Five-Year Plan. The new year will bring deepened

supply-side structural reform. The 2016 Central Economic Work Conference, which concluded in December, mandated deep supply-side structural reform in 2017, which means that reform will be further intensified in the coming year.


In terms of solving overcapacity, China has already issued two general documents on the steel and coal industries, and eight supporting documents on rewards and subsidies, taxation, finance, employee resettlement, land resources, environmental protection, quality, and security. The key work for 2017 remains policy implementation, especially employee resettlement.

In terms of reducing the number of unsold homes, instead of relying on administrative measures and rapidly changing regulatory policies as in 2016, in 2017, China will focus on exploring a long-term mechanism to boost the healthy development of the real estate industry.

In terms of reducing leverage, China will transform banks' non-performing loans to enterprises into equity held by asset management institutions through debt-for-equity swaps.

In terms of reducing costs, China will improve its practice of replacing business tax with value-added tax (VAT) and at the same time further reduce taxes and fees, especially reducing the VAT rate on the manufacturing industry.

In terms of improving weak links, China will increase its investment in agriculture, poverty alleviation, improving public livelihood, ecological protection and innovation in 2017.

In terms of the country's macroeconomic policy in 2017, China will continue to adhere to a proactive fiscal policy and a prudent monetary policy, but with different intensity. Fiscal policy will be even more proactive. The Chinese government will raise spending by increasing its budget deficit, but at the same time reduce the cost of the real economy and promote upgrades to the industrial structure through structural tax cuts. China's monetary policy will remain prudent and neutral in 2017. Since expectations about the country's inflation in 2017 are on the rise, the country's broad measure of money supply (M2) needs to avoid being too loose or too tight to keep commodity prices within a reasonable range. It is expected that the M2 growth rate in China will stay at 12 percent in 2017, the same as 2016. Prudent monetary policy fosters stable exchange rates, and the Chinese government will keep the RMB stable in 2017 to maintain the balance of increased exports and capital flow. 

The author, Huang Hanquan, serves as director of the Institute of Industrial and Technological Economics under the Chinese Academy of Macroeconomic Research.



## ICONS: CHINA'S CULTURAL HEROES



April 4, 2016, Italy: Cao Wenxuan presents his work at the 53rd Bologna Children's Book Fair. Xinhua

## Cao Wenxuan: Respecting Young Readers

Cao Wenxuan, a famous Chinese children's fiction writer, took the Hans Christian Andersen Award at the 53rd Bologna Children's Book Fair in Italy in 2016. This was the first time a Chinese author had ever won the award. As the jury chair commented, "The book's narrative surrounding a bitter childhood sets a good example for children to face tough challenges in life, which won wide favor with young readers."

*In 2015, the ratio between domestic original works for children and imported works for children measured 1:1. Ten years ago, it was 3:7.*



July 3, 2016, Paris, France: Chinese designer Guo Pei receives applause from the audience along with her models. She was the only Chinese designer to show there. IC

## Guo Pei: Embroidery En Vogue

In 2016, *Time* magazine listed Guo Pei, a Chinese fashion designer, as one of the "100 Most Influential People" in the world, honoring her couture work highlighted by traditional Chinese embroidery and national costumes in her line, *Chinese Wedding Dresses*. She shot to international stardom when American R&B superstar Rihanna wore her design to the Met Gala in 2015.

*"I'm a native Chinese designer. All my work is themed around Chinese culture."*





Jia Zhangke on October 13, 2015. CFP

## Jia Zhangke: Copyright Protector

Jia Zhangke, a well-known Chinese film director, has won many international awards for films including *Still Life* and *A Touch of Sin*. On June 3, 2016, Jia was tapped to serve as vice president of the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers, the first Chinese person to hold the office.

*"I hope that copyright owners become more aware of their rights and how to protect themselves. Still, I want to arouse consciousness in regard to respecting intellectual property rights in all relevant companies as well as consumers."*



September 17, 2016: Lang Ping and her team visit Guangya High School in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. IC

## Lang Ping: Miracle Maker

At the 2016 Rio Olympic Games, the Chinese Women's Volleyball Team under head coach Lang Ping took the gold after 12 years of coming up short. Her nickname "Iron Hammer" has been synonymous with women's volleyball miracles from the moment she emerged as the ace spiker of the national team that won five successive world titles in the 1980s to the day she became head coach of the national team. The Chinese Women's Volleyball Team became the first to obtain five consecutive world titles: 1981 and 1985 World Cups, 1982 and 1986 World Championships and gold at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. Since then, the team has gone on to win several world championships including the 2003 and 2015 World Cups and the 2004 and 2016 Olympics.

*"We've always carried on the spirit of the Chinese Women's Volleyball Team, but that's not enough. We can't win with spirit alone; we must be competitive enough to beat others technically."*





November 11, 2014: Wang Anyi's lecture draws a crowd of students at Huazhong University of Science and Technology. CFP

## Wang Anyi: Shanghai Litterateur

On September 21, 2016, Chinese writer Wang Anyi won the 5th Newman Prize for Chinese Literature, greatly enhancing the strength and influence of Chinese literature in European and North American countries. Her most notable works include *The Song of Everlasting Sorrow* and *Documentary and Fiction*, both historical narratives of Shanghai. Professor David Der-wei Wang of the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University called her "the other inheritor of the Shanghai Literature after Eileen Chang."

*"Writing a novel is of simple fun; otherwise, why have I been engaged in writing for over 30 years? Breakthroughs and changes must be made, or work will become meaningless and lack creativity."*



August 8, 2016, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Chinese swimmer Fu Yuanhui at the Olympic Aquatics Stadium during the 2016 Olympic Games. CFP

## Fu Yuanhui: Viral Athlete

Chinese swimmer Fu Yuanhui took the bronze in the Women's 100-meter Backstroke at the Rio Olympics. She became an overnight sensation when her reference to her "prehistoric power" in an interview after advancing to the finals went viral on the internet. In October 2016, she was voted one of the "Most Influential People Born in the 1990s in China" by Chinese netizens.

*"I have used all my prehistoric powers to swim."*



ICONS



April 16, 2015: Famous Peking Opera artist Mei Baojiu at the opening ceremony of the Fifth Beijing International Film Festival. CFP

## Mei Baojiu: Mei School Inheritor

Mei Baojiu (1934-2016), the ninth child of Mei Lanfang, was a master performer of Peking Opera. He began performing with his father at the age of 18 and became committed to the inheritance and development of the Mei School of Peking Opera. Despite the waning popularity of Peking Opera, he insisted on passing the authentic art to future generations while innovating a modern performing art pattern by absorbing various expressive methods and different means of dissemination. He died on April 25, 2016, at age 82.

*"Not only should we worship and enshrine Peking Opera as a national treasure and a quintessential piece of Chinese culture, but we must mine its great potential and carry it forward."*



November 4, 2014: Chen Zhongshi at the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the founding of Shanxi Writers Association. IC

## Chen Zhongshi: A Novel Record of China

Chen Zhongshi (1942-2016) was a renowned Chinese writer who became known for *White Deer Plain*, a modern classic of Chinese literature. In 1998, Chen was awarded the Mao Dun Literature Prize, the highest honor in Chinese literature. His novel, *White Deer Plain*, has been translated into many languages. The book was hailed as the "best and most influential grand narration of the Chinese nation over the last 30 years." Chen died on April 29, 2016, at the age of 73.

*"I want to use my book as the pillow in my coffin."*



ICONS



## Yang Jiang: Centenarian Talent

Yang Jiang (1911-2016) was a Chinese playwright, translator, and researcher of foreign literature. Her most representative works include *Baptism* and *Six Chapters from My Life* "Down Under." She was well-versed in English and French, and her translation of *Don Quixote* from Spanish into Chinese won her the Civil Order of Alfonso X, awarded by Spanish King Juan Carlos in 1986. She married Qian Zhongshu, a great Chinese writer and historian, who called her the "most talented woman and worthiest wife." Yang died on May 25, 2016, at age 105.

September 7, 2001: Yang Jiang (right) receives a thank-you souvenir from Tsinghua University after signing an agreement to donate 720,000 yuan as part of a scholarship. She also donated the compensatory rights of her publications, as well as those of her husband, to the school. by Wang Chengxuan/Xinhua

***"Marriage or career is like a fortress besieged: Those who are outside want to get in, and those who are inside want to get out. It happens to most of us."***

— Foreword to *Fortress Besieged*, the magnum opus of Qian Zhongshu



Lu Gusun on May 23, 2005. by Jin Liwang/CFP

## Lu Gusun: English-Chinese Lexicographer

Throughout his life, Lu Gusun (1940-2016) was committed to teaching, researching and translating British and American language and literature and won widespread fame for his *English-Chinese Dictionary*. Composed of 15 million words, the influential reference book was the first comprehensive English-Chinese dictionary compiled by Chinese scholars. Lu passed away on July 28, 2016, at the age of 76.

***"Compiling dictionaries is an art of regret."***



# Top 10 Foreign Stars On Chinese Minds

Edited by Li Yiqi

## Song Joongki

In early 2016, the South Korean television drama *Descendants of the Sun* was broadcast in China through an online streaming service at the same time as it was shown in South Korea. After four episodes, video views surpassed 300 million. Song Joongki shot to fame for his lead role as Yoo Sijin and became one of the most-discussed topics and top search terms in China.



## Mohammad Ali

Legendary American boxer Mohammad Ali succumbed to illness on June 4, 2016. Chinese athletes expressed their condolences. "Ali organized many training classes for boxers and referees in China, tremendously assisting the development of boxing in China," remarked Chinese boxer Yang Lianhui. "Almost all of our growth must be at least partially attributed to him."



## Kobe Bryant

On April 4, 2016, Kobe Bryant scored 60 points in his final NBA game with a 101-96 win over the Utah Jazz. To pay respect to Bryant, some Chinese companies gave their employees the day off to watch the game. That morning, Bryant posted a thank-you video on Sina Weibo (a Chinese version of Twitter), and by the afternoon it had amassed 90,000 likes and over 20,000 comments.



## Bob Dylan

American singer and songwriter Bob Dylan won the Nobel Prize in Literature last year. Chinese musicians such as rocker Wang Feng and folk singer Li Jian posted congratulations on social media platforms as soon as the news broke. For Chinese musicians, Bob Dylan is more than a legend; he represents the culture of an era.



## Makoto Shinkai

In December 2016, *Your Name*, the latest film by Makoto Shinkai, hit cinemas on the Chinese mainland. After earning box office revenues of 540 million yuan, it became the highest-grossing Japanese film in China of all time.



## Leonardo DiCaprio

Leonardo DiCaprio has been widely known in China since the film *Titanic* was released in 1997. In February 2016, he finally won an Oscar for Best Actor for his role in *The Revenant*. Virtually everyone felt that the statuette was deserved, and Chinese fans were excited for him. Many thanked the Oscar voters for making his career wish finally come true in his forties.



## Angelina Jolie

American actress Angelina Jolie, who has performed impeccably in a wide variety of roles, is very popular in China. Moviegoers are consistently raving about her work, and of course her marriage to and divorce from Brad Pitt always attracted Chinese fans' attention.



## Emma Watson

The recent trend of "books on the underground" promoted by British actress Emma Watson has caused widespread discussion and made news all over the world. Many Chinese stars and ordinary people joined in the activity.



## Keigo Higashino

Recently, Amazon released its bestseller list for the Chinese market. Keigo Higashino's *Miracles of the Namiya General Store* sold strongly in China and finished in the top three on the list. Higashino won dual bestselling honors in 2016, in both paperback sales and Kindle e-books.





## PIONEERS: PUSHING BOUNDARIES



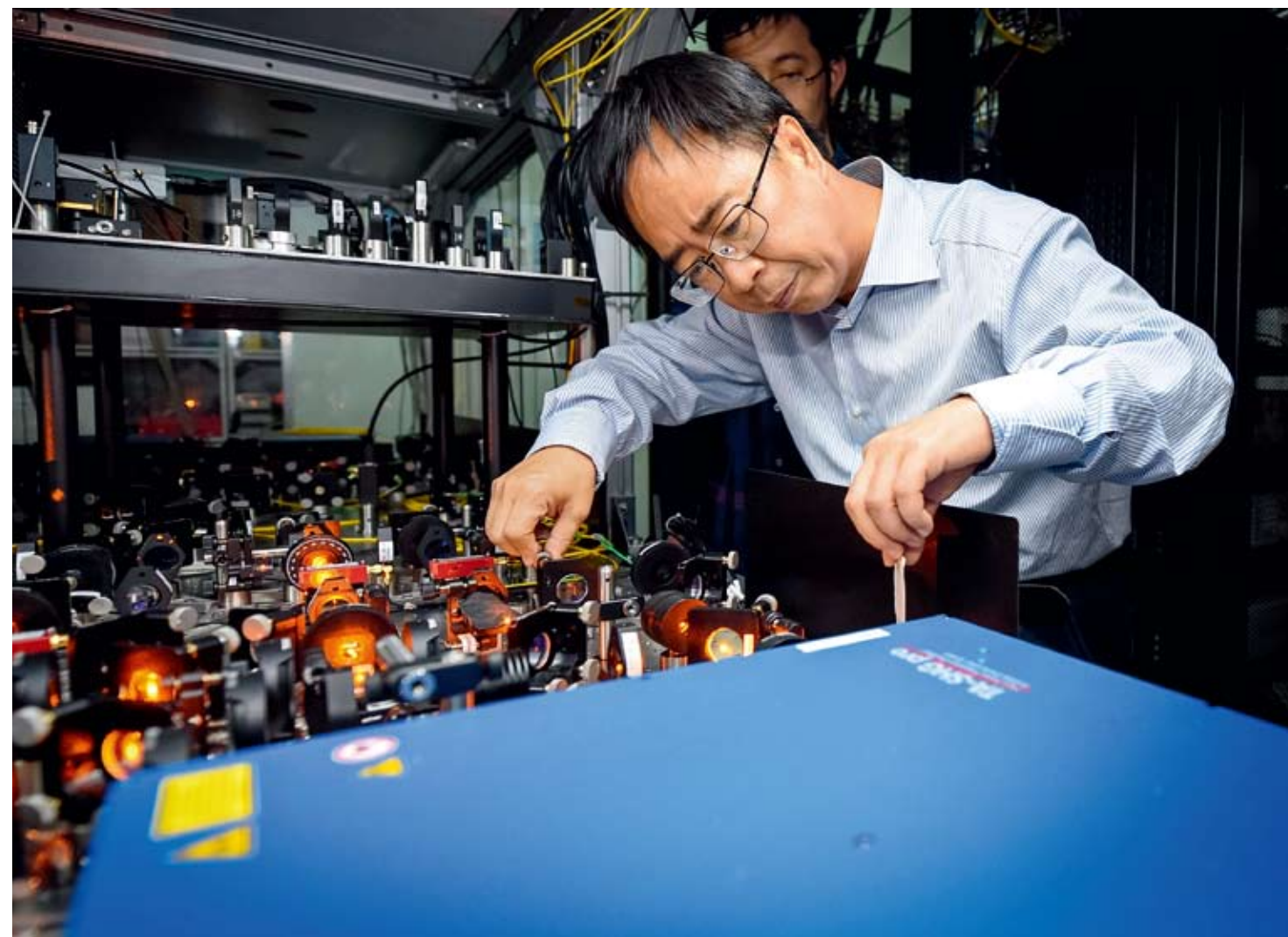
Jing takes part in a group interview after returning to Earth from his space mission, Beijing. CFP

## Jing Haipeng: Space Hero

Chinese astronaut Jing Haipeng and his crew mate Chen Dong returned to Earth safely on November 18 after more than a month in space, marking the successful conclusion of China's longest-ever manned space mission with Tiangong-2 and Shenzhou-11.

The core module of China's permanent manned space station is expected to be launched around **2018**, and the space station will begin full service around **2022**, with an initial designed life of more than **10 years**.

*"We wished the mission could have been a bit longer because we had so much fun in space. It was a very memorable journey."*



Pan adjusts equipment in his Shanghai-based lab. by Zhang Duan/Xinhua

## Pan Jianwei: Quantum Leap

On August 16, China launched the world's first quantum satellite. Named after ancient Chinese philosopher and scientist Micius, the satellite project, headed by chief scientist Pan Jianwei, was regarded as a big step for China's construction of a space-based quantum communication network that is virtually uncrackable.

At a height of **500 kilometers**, the quantum satellite sends individual photons to ground stations as it sweeps past. The precision required to hit the receivers has been compared to "throwing successive coins from **10,000 meters** above the ground into a rotating piggy bank."

*"We will definitely see more scientific quantum satellites in the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) aiming to solve problems that Micius couldn't have imagined."*





Wang in the Daya Bay neutrino reactor experiment lab, Shenzhen. by Wang Shen/Xinhua

## Wang Yifang: Particle Physicist

In February, the Institute of High Energy Physics under the Chinese Academy of Sciences published its findings from the Daya Bay neutrino reactor experiment, which was headed by Wang Yifang. Wang reported the most precise measurement on the neutrino energy spectrum so far and detected two deviations between reality and theoretical expectations, producing important data for future experiments. Wang Yifang, director of the Institute of High Energy Physics, reiterated his proposal in 2016 publications to build a **50 to 100-km** circular particle collider to succeed the **27-km-circumference** Large Hadron Collider (LHC) of the European Organization for Nuclear Research, a plan that would catapult China to the forefront of particle-physics research.

*"I am stubborn, in a sense, and I want to do my job the best I can. After I finish a project, if someone shows me how I could have done it better another way, I feel like I didn't work hard enough."*



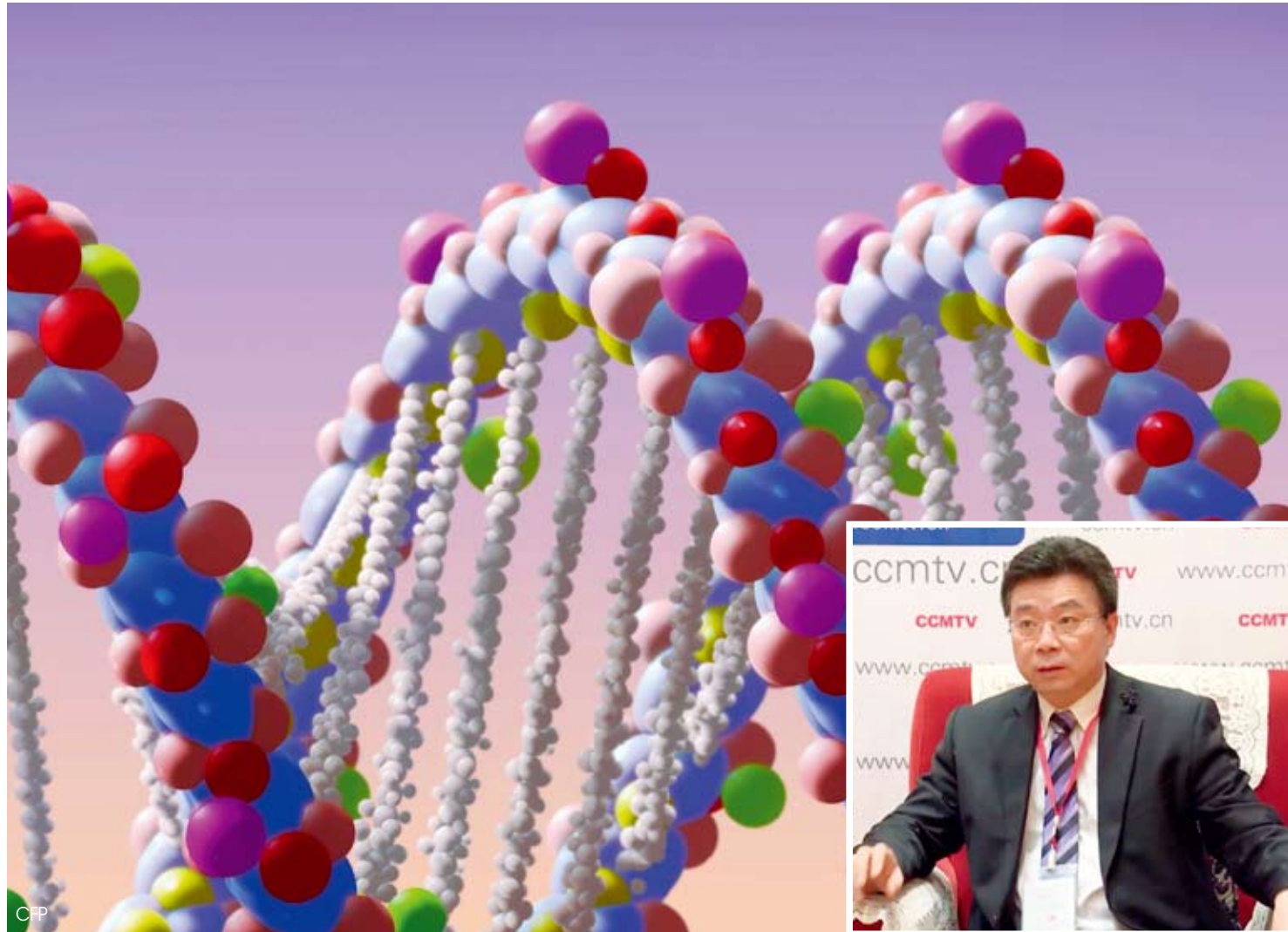
Li stands next to a Hanergy Solar R solar-powered car at the launch event, Beijing. IC

## Li Hejun: Clean Energy Pioneer

China's leading private clean energy provider, Hanergy Holding Group, founded and chaired by Li Hejun, launched a range of concept solar cars on July 2, marking a significant step for China's auto industry. By tapping into the solar car market, Hanergy hopes to spark a revolution in China's new energy vehicle industry.

China has been actively developing clean energy vehicles to curb air pollution in recent years. New energy vehicle ownership, though less than **1 million** now, is projected to exceed **5 million** by 2020.





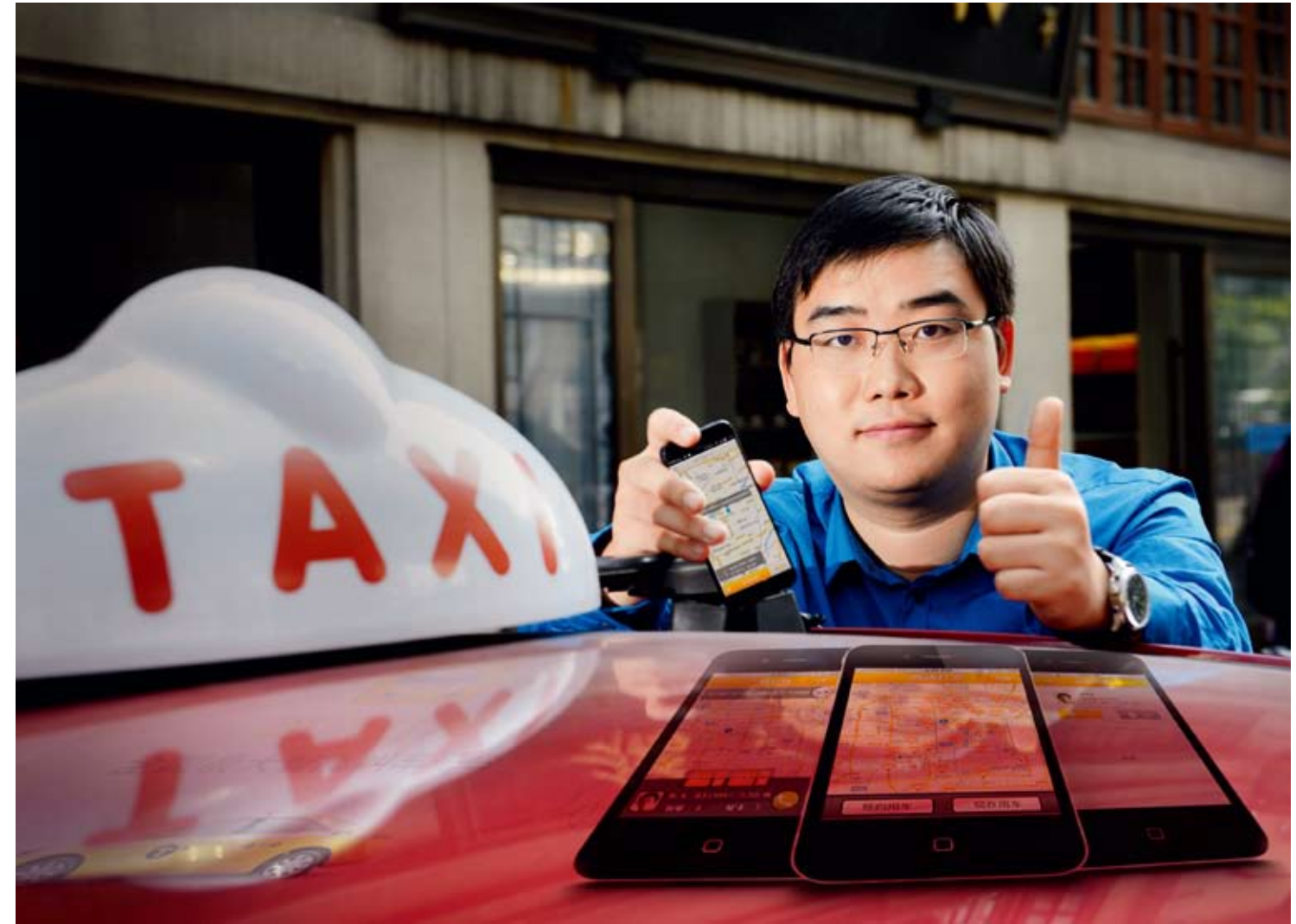
Lu has led his team to stand at the frontline of the world's gene technology.

## Lu You: Gene Splicer

In late October, the world's first clinical test of CRISPR (Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats, a genetic editing technology) was conducted at West China Hospital of Sichuan University in Chengdu by project head Professor Lu You and a team of scientists. Gene editing is the technology of inserting or deleting a segment to "edit" certain genes, and CRISPR is the most attractive related technology because it facilitates the synthesis of the compound of crRNA/tracrRNA.

China faces huge challenges from cancer amid a marked increase in new cases and deaths from the disease in recent years. Statistics show that more than **2.8 million** Chinese people died from cancer in 2015, over **7,500** cancer deaths per day.

*"Treatment options are very limited. This new technique has shown tremendous promise in bringing benefits to patients, especially the cancer patients we treat every day."*



Cheng, who is believed to have a cool head and a keen strategic eye, bagged Uber's China business in 2016. CFP

## Cheng Wei: Uber Defeater

China's dominant ride-hailing service Didi Chuxing, founded by Cheng Wei, announced on August 1 that it would absorb Uber China's operations. The deal ended the companies' fight for China's ride-hailing market, making Didi Chuxing the only entity that has been powerful enough to impact Uber's ambitious global expansion so far.

With the explosive increase of privately-owned vehicles in China, more people are able to enjoy the convenience of private cars. However, this comes with a price. With one in four of Beijing's **20-million-plus** population owning a vehicle, the **5 million** cars have driven the mega city's rush hour speeds down to a standstill.

*"I don't think Uber can beat Chinese companies just by burning cash. Didi understands more and works well with local entrepreneurs in its effort to build a global ride-hailing platform."*





Chen delivers a speech at an e-commerce entrepreneurship summit, Hangzhou. IC

## Chen Xiaodong: Embracing E-commerce

Amidst global retail decline, Intime Retail Group realized an impressive total sales volume of more than US\$1.1 billion in the first half of 2016, which was largely attributed to the efforts of CEO and executive director Chen Xiaodong, who has worked tirelessly to embrace the internet. As a traditional retail giant, Intime's online shops share information on frequent customers and offer a common payment service and inventory management system to compete with online retailers.

The year 2016 was difficult for China's traditional retail businesses. Traditional business shrank by more than **10 percent** and the growth rate for supermarkets slowed to **4 percent**.

*"When plunged into a harsh winter in your industry, don't just sit there and wait for the arrival of spring. It won't make your difficulties go away. Work, and work harder, for solutions."*



Wang speaks about the development of artificial intelligence.

## Wang Yongdong: A.I. Trailblazer

On August 5, Microsoft China released its fourth-generation Bing chatbot in Beijing. The new generation chatbot, developed by Microsoft's Asia-Pacific R&D Group with Wang Yongdong as Chief Technology Officer, has made major technological breakthroughs and realized real man-machine conversation based on an affective computing framework.

*"I think it's still too early to talk about artificial intelligence threatening humans. Science fiction writers have wild imaginations and the development of artificial intelligence is still at the very beginning stages."*





Liu displays a lamp installed with flexible sensors in Royole's headquarters in Shenzhen. by Mao Siqian/Xinhua

## Liu Zihong: Thinner, Better

On April 1, Royole, the Shenzhen-based global leader in flexible display technology, announced a partnership with China Mobile, the country's largest mobile telecommunications company. Through the strategic partnership with China Mobile, Royole chairman and CEO Liu Zihong gained the power to develop new flexible displays and sensors based on the insights of a company with nearly a billion subscribers.

In 2014, Royole introduced the world's thinnest full-color flexible displays, with a thickness of **0.01 millimeters** and a bending radius of **1 millimeter**. In 2015, Royole began mass production of its proprietary flexible electronics at its production facility in Shenzhen. The company has also filed more than **500 patents** (issued and pending) and utilizes materials, processes, devices, circuits, software, and product designs from a number of countries.

*"In many Chinese cities, startups can easily transform technologies into real products because the cities have developed a sound industrial chain, from raw materials, chips, electronic components and parts to circuit boards."*



Tan displays his VR products.

## Tan Zheng: VR Heavyweight

From September 15 to 19, the 2016 China-France Young Leaders Forum was held in Zhengzhou and Beijing. Tan Zheng, chairman and CEO of ANTVR, presented his company's second generation virtual reality (VR) headset to distinguished guests including former French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin. ANTVR was the only VR equipment producer at the forum. The leading Chinese VR company sold more than 200,000 VR devices in the first quarter of 2016.

More than **70 percent** of China's heavy VR users are male and **60 percent** of them are aged between **25** and **34**. Most are from a demographic that heavily consumes tech and digital products.

*"There are two paths in any industry: closed and open. At this stage, ANTVR is taking the open path, which will help us avoid head-on collisions with overseas rivals."*



# Top 10 Technological Advancements Of 2016

Text by Ru Yuan

Science and technology have always been the primary drivers of human progress. Looking back at 2016, China witnessed many significant events in global science and technology circles and launched numerous new products.

## Augmented Reality

Augmented Reality, or AR, is an upgrade of Virtual Reality (VR). With the help of computer technology, it applies virtual information to the real world, overlaying the real environment and virtual subjects in real time into the same picture or space. Such technology could clearly lead to breakthroughs in many sectors such as education and healthcare, despite the fact that it is mostly used today in video games.



July 31, 2016: The first AR experience store opens on the Bund in Shanghai. CFP

## Driverless Cars

In 2016, more Chinese people learned about driverless technology's remarkable role in upgrading the efficiency of transportation. Internationally, many famous companies such as Google, Apple, Uber, and Tesla are increasing investment in automated cars. Domestically, several famous Chinese brands are also developing driverless vehicles.

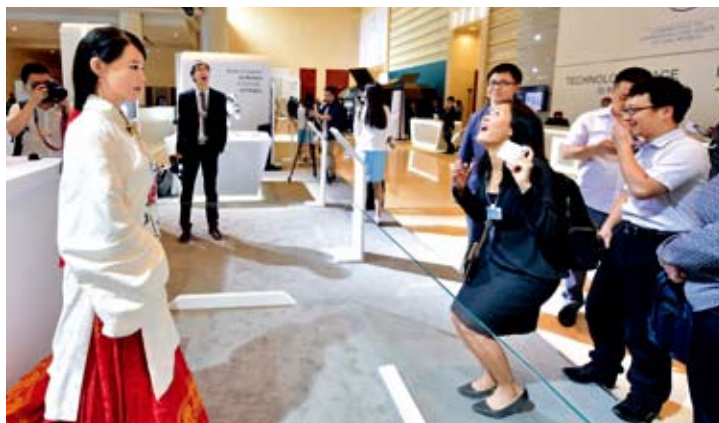


## Gene Sequencing

Gene sequencing technology can be used to lock individual problematic genes and prevent and treat relevant diseases. In 2016, the cost of gene sequencing dropped drastically in China thanks to the development of cloud computing and big data as well as the domestication of gene sequencing instruments.

## Humanoid Robot

In February 2016, Boston Dynamics Inc., an arm of Google, announced the release of the humanoid robot "Atlas" that can move freely, squat, run, and even climb hills and carry items. Such an intelligent robot has aroused great expectations in many Chinese people.



June 26, 2016: During the Summer Davos in Tianjin, Jia Jia (left), a humanoid intelligent robot developed by the University of Science and Technology of China, captivates the audience. by Yue Yuwei/Xinhua

## 5G Communication

"5G" refers to the fifth-generation broadband wireless communication standard which could be 40 times faster than the 4G network, enabling a smartphone user to download a 3D movie in six minutes. In 2016, China, South Korea, Japan, and the European Union invested heavily in the development of 5G network technology.

December 3, 2016: A driverless car travels during the 2016 China Intelligent Vehicle Championship in Shanghai. IC

## Wearable Technology

The world has seen rapid development in wearable technology over the last few years. In China, statistics show that the market for smart wearable equipment in 2015 was valued at 12.58 billion yuan (about US\$1.8 billion) and could reach as high as 20 billion yuan (about US\$2.88 billion) in 2016. Moreover, this technology, aimed at the personal consumer market, began moving towards the enterprise market. For instance, DHL tested equipping its employees with smart glasses, which improved efficiency by 25 percent.



A model displays a pair of smart glasses in Shanghai. IC

## Smart Home

In simple terms, a "smart home" refers to linking all equipment in a household with the technology of the Internet of Things to control appliances, lighting and environmental monitoring, all managed through a smartphone. Last year brought the arrival of many such products to Chinese families.



May 11, 2016: A smart coffee machine prepares coffee for visitors at the 2016 International Consumer Electronics Show Asia (CES Asia). IC

## Smart App

Smart apps are more individualized and proactive than ordinary ones. Some apps released by major retailers can automatically push ads when users enter a store and analyze past purchases to introduce their most attractive new arrivals. Some apps send information to their users instantly, such as informing them their favorite café is nearby.



December 12, 2016, Shanghai: A college student downloads an app facilitating the smart recycling of waste material. Smart apps have brought great opportunities for Chinese citizens to experience easy access to many things in "smart cities." IC

## Cloud Computing

Cloud computing is nothing new in China, but in 2016, it became more integrated with greater numbers of industries and better utilized to solve problems related to mass data.

## Digital Twin

A totally new term for 2016, "digital twin" refers to computerized companions of physical assets that can be used for various purposes. Digital twins use data from sensors installed on physical objects to monitor their near real-time status, working conditions or position. It is estimated that in three to five years, hundreds of millions of articles will be digitally twinned. More enterprises will use this technology to plan or implement equipment maintenance, design work flow, forecast equipment troubles, upgrade operation efficiency, and assist in product development.

The article was sourced from stories from Xinhuanet.com, Tech.163.com, and Science and Technology Daily.



# 2017 Outlook: Dawn of AI

Text by Ding Changyan

In 2016, artificial intelligence (AI) began to profoundly change human life. Clearly, the trend will continue through 2017, and the following three features will likely characterize the future development of AI in China.

First, 2017 will be a breakout year for artificial intelligence in China. The term “artificial intelligence” was officially coined in 1956 at a small but now-famous summer conference at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, U.S.A. Over 60 years later, a battle between the AlphaGo computer and world-famous weiqi (“Go”) master Lee Sedol attracted global attention to AI and inspired a new wave of development.


At the end of 2016, the consulting firm McKinsey & Company released a report titled *The Rise of Robots: Artificial Intelligence in the Eyes of Chinese Executives*. According to the report, the development of artificial intelligence

has reached a critical point and its exponential development is set to create a boom for high-tech companies. Among the 80 Chinese companies interviewed, over 90 percent opined that AI would become a subversive power in their respective fields.

Many enterprises in China and abroad, including Google, IBM, Facebook, Microsoft, Alibaba, Baidu and iFLYTEK, have stepped up AI development in many sectors. The most noticeable improvements have emerged in areas such as smart cities, intelligent transportation, healthcare and education. The trend has shown no signs of slowing as 2017 arrives.

Second, Artificial Intelligence Plus could replace the Internet Plus. In recent years, technologies in the fields of intelligent voices, machine learning and deep learning have gradually matured. Some basic AI support technologies have begun to seek integration with various applications in other sectors. For example, the adoption of intelligent voices in judicial and short-hand writing sectors will probably replace traditional recording methods. In addition, AI will also contribute to medical diagnoses and treatments. Analysts predict that in 2017, Artificial Intelligence Plus will begin to gradually replace the Internet Plus and bring big changes to traditional sectors. Furthermore, AI will greatly promote the development and application of other new technologies and accelerate the digital transformation process of Chinese enterprises.

Third, the development of AI

will accelerate the arrival of the Internet of Things (IoT) era. The IoT, a concept that emerged a relatively long time ago, needs AI to mature to truly blossom. In contrast with the internet, which connects people, the goal of the IoT is to connect everything to foster exchanges of information and communication. Today, however, AI products are too few and not popular enough, which has impeded the development of the IoT to a great extent. Surely, through 2017 and into the future, AI technologies relevant to the IoT will see further development and considerable evolution, ultimately accelerating the dawn of the IoT era. 



November 16, 2016: The 18th China Hi-Tech Fair opens at the Shenzhen Convention and Exhibition Center, at which AI robots with various functionalities draw intense attention. CFP

## Top 10 Chinese Keywords Of 2016

Edited by Li Zhuoxi

### Supply-side Reform

Since the end of 2015, the Central Economic Work Conference has overseen supply-side structural reforms such as cutting overcapacity, de-stocking, de-leveraging, lowering costs and improving weak links. Under the “new normal” situation, the term has transformed from a buzzword mostly used by economists and officials into a real and clear roadmap for the government and enterprises to implement further reform measures.

### Property Surplus

Affected by pressures wrought by excessive property inventory, the year-on-year growth rate of property investments in 2016 slowed considerably and even declined in some areas. The sector’s contribution to China’s economy fell to the lowest level on record. In the Government Work Report delivered by Premier Li Keqiang during the “two sessions” earlier in the year, real estate was one of the most frequently mentioned areas. The premier stressed that government policies on the real estate sector should objectively reflect real market situations, and that both rentals and sales can help alleviate the housing surplus. The report set the tone for China’s property market in 2016.

### Targeted Poverty Alleviation

Targeted poverty alleviation focuses on regional environmental conditions and individual poverty levels. Scientific and efficient assessments will be made to identify, track and aid the poor. According to the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020), poverty should become history in China by 2020, and no one will be left behind.

### RMB in IMF’s SDR

The Chinese yuan, or RMB, was added to the basket of special drawing rights (SDR) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on October 1, 2016. China’s currency accounts for 10.92 percent of the basket, with the U.S. dollar at 41.73 percent and the Euro 30.93 percent. After the inclusion, the RMB became a globally accepted currency, making it easier for Chinese citizens to travel, study and invest overseas.

### Intelligent Chinese Manufacturing

Intelligent manufacturing refers to intelligent development of models and technological breakthroughs in the manufacturing industry with independent intellectual property rights. Achieving “intelligent manufacturing” requires optimization of not only the manufacturing process, but also manufacturing facilities and final products.



June 14, 2013, Beijing: A poster featuring the faces of missing children is intended to inspire positive energy and get more people looking for them. CFP

### Chinese “Amber Alert”

On May 15, 2016, the Chinese Children’s Safety Emergency Response (CCSER) system was launched by the Anti-Trafficking Office of the Ministry of Public Security, with technical support from the country’s e-commerce giant Alibaba. The system is dedicated to broadcasting essential information on the front lines as soon as a child is confirmed missing. Due to similarities to the American system, it was dubbed the Chinese “Amber Alert”.

### Green Development

Faced with worsening air and water pollution, the Chinese government has stressed the need for green development. The Central Economic Work Conference held near the end of 2015 called for the promotion of green development in both industrial production and daily consumption. At the Central Urban Work Conference held along with the Central Economic Work Conference, top Chinese leaders stressed comprehensive readjustment to optimize production, living and ecology. In the “No. 1 Central Document” of 2016, an annual agriculture policy paper, an entire chapter is devoted to the promotion of green agricultural development. Working for clean water and green mountains has already become the social consensus.

### Two-Child Policy

On December 27, 2015, the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress passed the *Law of the People’s Republic of China on Population and Family Planning (2015 Amendment)*, which allows couples to have two children. The amendment came into effect on January 1, 2016, marking the end of the decades-long “one couple, one child” policy.

### Craftsman Spirit

“The spirit of the craftsman” was a phrase introduced in the 2016 Government Work Report to encourage enterprises to develop consumer-tailored and flexible production processes to foster the spirit of craftsmanship while striving for the best. The buzzword quickly spread across China, alluding to striving for the best in every sector.

### Huddling for Twilight Years

Now, as China is rapidly becoming an aging society, the massive senior population has created incredible demand for senior care. “Huddling for the twilight years” is a phrase that has emerged among seniors. Those sharing similar hobbies and living habits have begun relocating closer to each other to create support communities for their “twilight years.”



## Ten Lifestyle Trends Of 2016

Edited by Li Zhuoxi

### Abandoning Cash

Last year brought a heavy increase in the popularity of mobile transactions. Cash in wallets has been replaced by WeChat Pay, Alipay and China UnionPay. The rise of online payments has streamlined purchasing procedures and made consumption more comfortable. Traditional banks also got in on the trend of giving up cash. In 2016, China UnionPay launched the Quick Pass service, through which users of several banks can make purchases of things no more than 300 yuan just by scanning their card, without entering a password, connecting to the network or signing.

### Soaring Second-Child Economy

China's universal two-child policy came into effect on the first day of 2016. The demand generated by hundreds of thousands of families across the country boosted many old and new industries. The maternity and childcare markets were the first beneficiaries. The move also changed the layout of houses. In view of the needs of families with a second child, more and more real estate projects introduced an additional bedroom to layouts. Greater numbers of startups that focus on infants have emerged. Industries including baby food, toys, children's apparel, family cars, and early education have all seen boosts.



Ms. Li, a native of Chongqing Municipality, says that having a second child has cost 800,000 yuan that her family saved in the past three years. CFP

December 19, 2016: Workers place shared bicycles in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. CFP

### I Run Therefore I Am

In 2016, China held a total of 263 marathons, an average of one marathon every other day. That was well over ten times more than five years ago. Admission to run in marathons in Beijing and Shanghai was hard to get and required candidates to participate in a lottery. Thanks to sound sporting infrastructure, the dawn of the internet age, and the feeling of freedom afforded by running, the long-range running activity has become very popular across the nation in only a short period. China has entered an age of nationwide running.



December 11, 2016: About 30,000 athletes from 47 countries and regions run in the Guangzhou Marathon. CFP

### The Longest Mile

No matter how complete the subway and bus networks are, they rarely cover the final steps between the station or bus stop and the home. Bicycles, convenient vehicles for shorter trips, could solve the problem perfectly. Shared bicycles became popular in 2016. Users just install a mobile app, search for bikes nearby, scan the QR code on a bike to unlock it and ride away. When finished with the bike, the user can just lock it at any place, any time. Shared bicycles offer a new, environmentally-friendly method of travel.



### Fall of Print Media and Rise of We-Media

Last year was chilly for print media; many famous print media brands shut down. Some people have called this life-changing era the fourth industrial revolution. Numerous cultural products have struggled to keep up with the rapid development of technology and meet the needs of consumers. With the fast-paced nature of the market, even the slightest slowdown sucks any vitality out of a brand. Meanwhile, the dawn of "we-media" has arrived. Instead of being directed centrally, media is increasingly crowd-sourced. Crowdsourcing has become the future of more and more facets of media. To earn a living in tomorrow's media landscape, professionals will need to achieve an increasingly high skill level.



September 11, 2016: Fans crowd into the themed coffee bar opened by famous we-media professional "Uncle's Friends" in Shanghai. CFP

### Middle-Class Art Collection

Artists may be proverbially poor, just as art collectors are rich. However, the definition of "rich" changed drastically in 2016. The emerging middle class is dipping its toes in realms once monopolized by the elite. In terms of art, they brought down the purchasing threshold, increased market diversity and pushed art styles closer to daily life.



June 26, 2016: A man examines art at an exhibition in Beijing. CFP

### Dawn of the Webcast

Webcast platforms could possibly be the most popular internet product of 2016. Webcasting of computer games, outdoor events and even personal routines all attracted a huge amount of capital. Last year was dubbed the "First Year of Chinese Webcasting." Webcasts exploded from just a handful of mobile apps into the talk of the town, especially among the younger generation. Last year, webcasters became an indispensable facet of every new product release strategy and their talent broke from small, crowded studios to sophisticated venues and facilities. The public was amazed at the impact of this rising press corps that can turn anyone into an internet celebrity. And the capital market's attitude towards webcasts turned upside down, from skepticism to obsession.

### Sharing Life

Last year saw a steep upturn in the sharing economy. The movement was born of increased resistance to wastage, and the mobile internet provided the technology to facilitate action. In 2016, about 50 million people provided service in areas of the sharing economy, accounting for 5.5 percent of the working population. The number of people involved in the sharing economy exceeded 500 million. It has become a new trend to earn extra unofficial income by working through sharing economy platforms.



Liu Qing, president of Didi Chuxing. In the first half of 2016, the number of taxi-hailing app users increased to 159 million in China, of which Didi Chuxing accounted for 46.6 percent. CFP

### Boom of VR

The development of virtual reality accelerated in 2016, and many devices and types of content for consumers finally hit the market. Over the next 5 years, combining VR technology with immersive applications will become more mainstream. This technology is changing many kinds of entertainment and the artificial intelligence industry, including film and TV programming, video games, video delivery and even architecture. In the coming years, it will be applied to many other fields such as manufacturing and health care.

### Say Hi to AI

Artificial intelligence (AI) went very mainstream last year. In March 2016, AI computer AlphaGo defeated the world Go champion Lee Sedol 4 to 1. The win triggered a wave of intense interest in AI in China. Internet giants announced an impending "revolution" and invested heavily in its development. The technology is being applied in more and more sectors and businesses, including social networking, e-commerce, logistics, and driverless cars.



# 2016: Dark Horses Rise in Chinese Film

Text by Gao Yuan

By the end of 2016, the atmosphere in Chinese cinemas had changed drastically. It felt like China's film market and theater-goers had both matured and diversified. Hollywood blockbusters crammed with stunning visual effects no longer dominated the big screens. Some low-budget domestic films deeply moved and pleasantly surprised Chinese spectators, in turn placing greater expectations on domestic movies.

## Watching for Nostalgic Sensation

*The Monkey King 2*, a fantasy, and *The Mermaid*, a fantasy romantic comedy directed by Stephen Chow, kicked off China's 2016 movie year on a high note when they hit screens for the Spring Festival in early February. *The Monkey King 2*, based on China's classic novel *Journey to the West*, has proved an all-time favorite across all Chinese demographics, young and old, men and women. It grossed a total of 1.2 billion yuan. *The Mermaid* broke many box office records for a Chinese-language movie, such as the biggest opening day, the biggest single day gross, and the fastest to gross 1 billion yuan. It soon replaced the 2015 film *Monster Hunt* as the highest-grossing Chinese film of all time. By February 26, 2016, its box office revenue had exceeded 3.3 billion yuan, making it the first member of the Chinese 3-billion-yuan club.

*The Mermaid* is a love story with Chow's unique "nonsense comedy" style and the popular environmental-protection theme, but, technically, it's far from groundbreaking. Most were drawn to it because of Stephen Chow and nostalgia. Chow was a staple of the 1990s across China and remains one of the most beloved Hong Kong directors and actors. Millennial hunger for nostalgia has sparked a revival for him and his work, as most of them were introduced to Chow through videotapes. For this reason, the film's promotional campaign stressing that "we owe him a ticket" was particularly effective.

*The Mermaid* wasn't alone in profiting on nostalgia. Other hits included *Warcraft* in June, *Big Fish & Begonia* in July, *Time Raiders* in August, *A Chinese Odyssey: Part Three* in September, and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* in November. Chinese millennials have created a huge market for "nostalgic" films.

However, overall quality still plays a decisive role in terms of the film's market performance. A prime example of this factor is the unimpressive *A Chinese Odyssey: Part Three* versus the similar yet wildly successful *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*.

## Domestic Dark Horses

In the second half of 2016, Chinese domestic films gained steam and many low-budget hits emerged. In July, *Kaili Blues*, a film by breakout 26-year-old Chinese director Bi Gan, won massive acclaim soon after its release. Bi swept the Best Emerging Director award at several film festivals. The film follows a rural doctor in Guizhou Province. While searching for his niece, the doctor stops in a mystical town with ghosts of his past, present and future and meets his deceased lover. The dense subtropical forests and brooding mists of mountainous Guizhou, coupled with the poetry recited by the rural doctor, form a complicated yet intriguing mystical realist work. Films like *Kaili Blues* are rare in contemporary Chinese cinema. Its poetic quality and obscurity leave the audience with wide space for contemplation and self-examination.

In September, another domestic dark horse won acclaim from both critics and audiences: a story of womanhood based on the popular internet novel *Soul Mate*. Two girls, Qiyue and Ansheng, meet at 13 and become best friends. One is passionate and the other reserved, and their relationship is built on trust until they both fall for the same man. Many domestic coming-of-age films have failed in recent years, so the prospects for this film about the pains of youth didn't look great at the outset. However, *Soul Mate* stood out with its vivid and delicate portrayal of young women. Zhou Dongyu and Ma Sichun, leads in the film, shared the 53rd Taiwan Golden Horse Award for Best Actress.

Several other movies such as crime films *Operation Meikong* and *What's in the Darkness* and sarcastic black humor *Cock and Bull*, as well as *Tharlo*, a film about a young Tibetan, were critically deemed highly artistic and heavily applauded by film reviewers, but only *Operation Meikong* did well at the box office. The other films' shortcomings have been attributed to disadvantages in publicity and screening schedules.



A still from *Soul Mate*.



A still from *Tharlo*.



Poster of *The Monkey King 2*.

## Much More than the Box Office

From 2003 to 2015, the Chinese film market maintained an average annual growth rate of 35 percent. While total box office revenue hovered at about 44 billion yuan in 2015, analysts predicted early in 2016 that the figure would reach 60 billion yuan by the end of the year. However, in April, July, and September of 2016, the country's box office revenues sagged compared to the same period of 2015. Films released during normally surefire hit movie periods still performed poorly. To reach the 60-billion-yuan threshold, many Hollywood and domestic blockbusters scheduled releases in November and December, but the strategy didn't pan out.

In contrast with over-performing domestic low-budget art films were some floundering big-budget movies, both imported and domestic. Many films were abject failures in terms of both box office figures and critical reviews. If less pressure was placed on box office performance, low-budget art films would have greater room to perform and boost the healthy development of China's film market.

To come in 2017 are fantasy comedy *Journey to the West: Demon Chapter* and action comedy *Buddies in India* for the Spring Festival period in January. As similar films did in 2016, we hope these movies will lead to more pleasant surprises throughout the year. 47



# Reading China: Top 10 Chinese Books Of 2016



## ***Awaiting the Breeze*** — Re-examining Rural Ethics

Author Ge Fei is a famous contemporary Chinese writer and professor of Chinese literature at Tsinghua University. Through recounting stories of ordinary people from Zhaocun Village in southern China, *Awaiting the Breeze* traces the development of the village across 50 years, landing on the possibility of “rural China” disappearing altogether one day. But this is not a simple work of nostalgia. “It looks quite decadent, but it’s actually full of vitality,” opined one critic.

Written by Ge Fei, published by Yilin Press, June 2016



## ***Anonymous*** — Urban and Rural Life

In her novel *Anonymous*, renowned contemporary Chinese writer Wang Anyi took a man from a modern, civilized society and threw him deep into the mountains for a fight for survival. Filled with subtle warnings and abstract metaphors, the book deftly reflects on the process of civilization. As professor of Chinese literature at Fudan University Zhang Xinying noted, “It might seem

like the main hero of *Anonymous* is a specific person, but it’s really about the changes in all humans when they suddenly return to an uncivilized world.”

Written by Wang Anyi, published by People’s Literature Publishing House, January 2016



## ***Tide of Studying Abroad: Era of Turbulence and Dreams***

— Survey of Early Foreign-bound Chinese Students

Senior Hong Kong publisher and writer Cheung Shin-yee searched the memoirs of nearly 300 people to piece together trends of the first half of the 20th Century, when the flow of students studying abroad reached its zenith during China’s early waves of modern transformation. It also recounts the experiences of studying abroad of Cai Yuanpei and Lu Xun and many other famous modern Chinese intellectuals. The study is particularly meaningful as it coincides with another wave of studying abroad that has emerged in China: “I hope the new trend doesn’t share the fate of its predecessor.”

Written by Cheung Shin-yee, published by Beijing Joint Publishing Company & Post Wave Publishing Company, October 2016



## ***Public Political Philosophy*** — Original Chinese Work on Political Philosophy

A book describing and analyzing the three mainstream Western public political philosophies, this publication marked China’s first domestic systemic research on public political philosophy. The book has been described as “an outstanding original work that filled a void in research in China.” Author Ren Jiantao is a professor of

political science at Tsinghua University and active in research of political philosophy, Chinese and Western political discourses, and Chinese politics.

Written by Ren Jiantao, published by Guangxi Normal University Press



## ***Collection of Yang Xianrang*** — Century of Art Tradition

Born in 1930, Yang Xianrang is one of the earliest Chinese printmakers to have won international acclaim, as well as a pioneer in the research of Chinese folk art. This anthology of his work consists of four volumes: *From the Island*, *A Group of Three*, *Roaring Dreams*, and *Be Myself*. The collection covers his experience, teachers, helpful friends, folk art, and Sino-Western art communication, composing a comprehensive review of his

life. In some circles, Yang is called “a man with Chinese century-old art history.”

Written by Yang Xianrang, published by Guangxi Normal University Press, November 2016



## ***Big City in a Massive Country: Unity, Development and Balance of Contemporary China***

— Research on Development of Big Cities

This book uses the general laws of economics and empirical data to study the reality behind air pollution, traffic congestion and other issues arising from China’s rapid urbanization and highlights the importance of China’s development of big cities. From the author’s point of view, the general public’s help is needed to solve problems such as over-population and provide equal resources and opportunities. Author Lu Ming is director of the Center for Development and Policy Studies at Fudan University.

Written by Lu Ming, published by Shanghai People’s Publishing House, August 2016



## ***A Kingdom of Giant Babies*** — Seeing through China’s Psychology

This book is based on a thorough analysis of the narcissism of a giant baby, suggesting that the same sort of concept is affecting many Chinese plagued by common psychological problems including acting in a manic, over-controlling and helpless way. It presents an acute picture of human psychology. Gracefully written with deep concern for providing relief, the book also touches

on the brilliance of humanity. Author Wu Zhihong is a famous Chinese psychologist.

Written by Wu Zhihong, published by Zhejiang People’s Publishing House, December 2016



## ***Notes on The Handbook on Sea Creatures*** — Pop Science

*The Handbook on Sea Creatures* was illustrated by painter Nie Huang in 1698. He drew 300 sea creatures he had seen on China’s coast. The book is full of wit and humor, but it also has many inaccuracies. Zhang Chenliang analyzed and researched Nie’s work from the perspective of

modern biology. Due to its detailed content and concise style, it has proved to be a very popular piece of original scientific work.

Written by Zhang Chenliang, published by CITIC Press Group, December 2016



## ***Behind the Loneliness*** — A Hao-style Sci-fi

This book is a collection of science fictions that Hao Jingfang published from 2010 to 2016, including the 2016 Hugo Award-winning *Beijing Folding*. The title was drawn from words of the author: science fiction conceives a possible world where people stand on the edge of the world and will most likely feel alienated. To be rejected by the world is the loneliest kind of loneliness.

Written by Hao Jingfang, published by Jiangsu Phoenix Literature & Art Publishing House, August 2016



## ***A Farmer Like This*** — Wonders of Rural Life

Farming life in China’s Taiwan is well known throughout the world. Author Lu Yao visited more than 60 farmers and 10 non-governmental organizations in Taiwan to record their stories and get a big picture of real rural farmers. The book illuminates the possibilities of combining modernity and traditions to create a better rural life.

Written by Lu Yao, published by Changjiang Literature & Art Publishing House, June 2016



# Zhou Dongyu: Forever Young

Text by Ru Yuan



One of the most promising young actresses in China today, Zhou Dongyu sees her work as a service to the audience rather than a self-satisfying art. IC

On November 26, 2016, 24-year-old Chinese actress Zhou Dongyu won the 53rd Taiwan Golden Horse Award for Best Actress for her rebellious and erratic performance in *Soul Mate*. She shared the award with her co-star Ma Sichun, who played the other lead in the film, marking the first time in the history of the Golden Horse Awards, the equivalent of the Oscars for Mandarin-language cinema, that the annual honor has been bestowed on two different actresses.

*Soul Mate* is a romantic drama about two best friends reaching adulthood. Because of the changes brought on by maturity, the two girls' friendship is tested and their lives veer away from each other. Many critics have opined that the young Zhou was lucky to win on her first nomination, but that her portrayal of the impulsive and contradictory Ansheng captured audiences' attention and connected with them emotionally as the character's mood shifted.

## A Lucky Start

Zhou was born into an ordinary family in Shijiazhuang City, Hebei Province in early 1992. Before turning 18, her life was like that of most her peers in China: dominated by commuting between home and school. In 2010, Zhang Yimou, arguably the best-known and most internationally recognized Chinese director working today, chose Zhou from more than 8,000 actresses to star in *Under the Hawthorn Tree*. Although Zhou was a senior high school student without any acting experience, the veteran filmmaker sensed her potential.

Her sentimental yet vivid portrayal of the heroine in *Under the Hawthorn Tree* prompted rave reviews by critics and spectators alike, and Zhou soon became known to the people of her hometown after

winning Best Actress at the 56th Valladolid International Film Festival in Spain, the Outstanding New Actress Award at the 14th China Huabiao Awards and Best New Performer at the 20th Shanghai Film Critics Association Awards for her role in *Under the Hawthorn Tree*.

The luck of the emerging actress continued from there. In 2011, she was admitted to the Beijing Film Academy (BFA), China's most respected film school, which has produced plentiful artists and filmmakers that now form the backbone of the country's film industry. While the school's admission process is one of the toughest and its admission rate one of the lowest in the country, Zhou managed to get in. "Zhou applied for the acting major, but the entrance exam covered both acting and academic subjects," noted BFA President Zhang Huijun. "Although her academic scores were not as good as her acting scores, we admitted her due to her obvious gift for acting."

## Changing the Stereotype

For a long time, Zhou's "fortunate" and "smooth" start in the film industry played a large role in discussions about her. She has inspired high expectations from both fans and colleagues because almost every actress discovered by Zhang Yimou shoots to fame. Today, the most internationally-famous former Zhang protégés include Gong Li and Zhang Ziyi, who starred in *Farewell My Concubine* and Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, respectively.

Although Zhou seems on track to follow her predecessors' paths to stardom, she's a little different. In the three years after she was admitted to the BFA, Zhou received a number of film offers and starred in several, but the characters always seemed the same. "I'm always that innocent girl

with a fair complexion and black hair—the first-love type," she once lamented.

She felt the need to break out of the pigeonhole. In 2013, Zhou auditioned for a small role in *Breakup Buddies*, a road movie which later became the highest-grossing 2014 domestic Chinese film. Directed by young director Ning Hao and starring two of China's biggest comedy names, Xu Zheng and Huang Bo, the film had already attracted a strong cast. "Actually, the director turned me down at first," recalled Zhou. "But days later, he called me in for an audition. 'I have to land this role' was all I could think on the way to the audition. It was the perfect opportunity to change my image." During her audition, Zhou was asked to do some name-calling in a local dialect. "I tried my best, but I couldn't tell if they were satisfied with my performance from their expressions," she revealed. Two days later, she was notified that she had been cast as a trashy rural hairdresser, turning her previous lovable, innocent image upside down and resulting in the most memorable female character in the film.

After *Breakup Buddies*, Zhou began to receive a wider variety of offers, and she ended up playing an ill-tempered genius in *The Ark of Mr. Chow* and an undercover agent in the spy TV drama *Sparrow*. "I still need to further hone my skills by playing different characters," says the 24-year-old. "By doing this, I get a deeper understanding of a wider variety of people I might not have otherwise ever known. As an actress, if I don't deconstruct myself via contrasting roles and changes in environment, I am afraid that my art will lose vitality."


## Millennial Chinese Actress

Throughout history, the cinema of the Chinese mainland has never lacked

iconic actresses, and their star personas have embodied both the fantasies and frustrations of the public. Today, a lot of focus is placed on the "Four Dan Actresses," a term originally coined in the 1920s to refer to popular male actors portraying female roles, now used to describe the most promising young Chinese actresses. The latest list of the "post-90s" generation of Four Dan Actresses includes Zhou Dongyu, Yang Zi, Zheng Shuang, and Guan Xiaotong, based on a 2016 survey of more than 170 million netizens and 110 professional media and industry insiders.

Although the growth rate of China's box office slowed in 2016 (still totaling an impressive figure of nearly US\$7.2 billion), the country's film industry has been developing rapidly in recent years. And the tastes of Chinese spectators have become more varied, with romances, comedies, action thrillers, science fiction and fantasy films all finding demanding sectors of the market. The film industry has created a handful of golden opportunities for Chinese actors and actresses, especially young ones.

"We were born at a good time for this industry, and I've found many opportunities as a millennial," remarks Zhou. "However, it is still a little early to talk so much about goals. Young actors and actresses need a good script to reach the audience."

Zhou now sees her trade as a service to the audience rather than a self-satisfying art. As an actress, Zhou is not yet as well-rounded as she would like to become. But youth is her treasure. "I seldom worry about finding my next job, and I don't really have the burdens of superstars," she smiles. "I don't think I've reached that level. Preparing myself to play a lot of different roles is still my priority." 





Phurbu, a crane protector. by Qian Ye

# The Crane Protector

Text by Qian Ye

The Longbao Shoal National Nature Reserve is in Yushu Prefecture, Qinghai Province in northwestern China, 4,200 meters above sea level. It is one of the highest alpine wetlands on the planet and home to black-necked cranes. Its summers are short, but just long enough for the birds to lay eggs and hatch them before migrating elsewhere for winter.

For three decades, Phurbu has been taking care of these black-necked cranes in the wetlands of Longbao.

## Birds of a Feather

A native of Chindu County, Yushu Prefecture, Phurbu left his hometown when he was 16 to attend junior high school in Xining, the provincial seat, where he concentrated on physical education. After graduation, he gave up an opportunity to join the provincial art troupe because his family wanted him to accept an offer from

a local government department in charge of agriculture and animal husbandry near his hometown. He volunteered to take care of the black-necked cranes in the nature reserve two years later due the lack of help there. “I was born to befriend birds,” he grins. “I am so lucky to have so many opportunities to watch them and take photos. And if I contribute to their protection, that’s even better.”

Life was tough there, with only a single row of tile-roofed houses without electricity or running water. Phurbu was proud to accept the challenge and join the first group of crane guards alongside other local Tibetans. He didn’t regret enduring the hardships caused by strong ultraviolet rays, big temperature fluctuations and harsh living conditions. With hardly any vegetables to eat, he still survives on fried noodles, butter tea and dried yak meat; and he saves potatoes for special occasions.

His patrol is so demanding that for several months at a time, he barely finds a chance to return home to change clothes .

“All I want to do after patrolling the lake is to eat something warm and get to bed,” Phurbu explains. He does miss home and laments, “I feel guilty about spending so little time with my family: I’ve hardly ever embraced my son and have no idea how he was raised.”

He has worn out two motorcycles shuttling between work and home. The single trip across the bumpy mountain roads takes three hours. “I receive very low subsidies for gas and food.”

“How have you lived like this for nearly 30 years?”

“People say I am one of the birds,” Phurbu mutters before lighting a cigarette and staring off into the distance.

## Sleeping among the Cranes

The nature reserve spans 100 square kilometers of permafrost. In summer, sedge communities pop up, providing the cranes with their favorite foods such as *Kobresia littledalei*, *Pedicularis verticillata*, and *Dicotyledoneae* on the lakeside as well as mare’s-tail and *Catabrosa aquatica* in the water. The period from mid-May to early July is the breeding season for these migrant birds, during which time they are often threatened by predators such as snow leopards, wolves, and foxes. This is the period when they need the most protection.

Phurbu and his colleague pitch a tent on a small islet, about a kilometer south of his station, and sleep right next to the birds. Every evening, they spend an hour crossing the



As a major breeding habitat for black-necked cranes in the north of the Tibet Autonomous Region, the Longbao Shoal National Nature Reserve has witnessed the species’ population growing from 19 to more than 200 over the 30 years since its establishment in 1986. by Phurbu



lake with the tent and quilts on their heads to reach the islet where they stay at night.

The wide difference in temperature between day and night makes the mission even more difficult: When night falls and the temperature drops below freezing, they fear flash hail storms. Mosquito bites are inevitable. It is extremely quiet at night except for the calls of bar-headed geese and black-necked cranes. Highly-experienced Phurbu can identify attackers by hearing the cries, whether man or red fox. “When a poacher attacks, bar-headed geese jitter collectively and black-necked cranes yell loud and clear continuously,” Phurbu explains.

Phurbu confronts anyone who attempts to steal eggs, and most end up leaving them.

He can’t count how many times his feet have been injured because he stood in peat all summer, and he now has severe

arthritis. Two years ago, fortunately, the World Wild Fund for Nature financed the installation of cameras in the peat so he doesn’t have to patrol at night.


## Splendor of Life

The Longbao National Shoal Nature Reserve was established in 1986, at which time the black-necked crane population tallied 22. The latest survey shows that the number has hit 216, accounting for a fourth of the world’s total. Today, Longbao Shoal has been included in a project to protect the ecological environment in conservation areas of the source regions of the three rivers (Yangtze, Yellow, and Lancang). This is good news for the protection of the endangered black-necked cranes.

Phurbu and his colleague wake up at 7:00 a.m. every day to patrol by car around the lake, have lunch with a herder, drink a cup of butter tea and continue their journey

around a larger circle, counting the birds at seven protection zones. He returns to his dwelling in the protection station around 8:00 p.m. He then takes notes on the whole day’s trip, analyzes the location of the birds, drinks some barley wine with dried beef and goes to bed.

After nearly 30 years of dedication, Phurbu is now deputy director of the nature reserve, which has further raised his standing with neighboring herders, most of whom still don’t understand his motivation to contribute so much. They think of the animals as just a few birds and eggs.

Things are quite different for Phurbu: Guarding this tract of land has become part of his life. Some have pushed him towards retirement, but he doesn’t want to give up the 100-square-kilometer wetland and his hopes for it. His life would seem empty without the sounds of black-necked cranes in breeding season. 



The black-necked crane is the only species of crane to breed and live on plateaus. by Phurbu





May 3, 2016, Havana, Cuba: Chanel presents its first fashion show in Cuba with an exclusive line for early spring. Xinhua

# Cuban Inspiration

Text by Chu Jiwang

I took a five-hour flight between Peru and Havana, Cuba to accomplish my long-held dream of visiting the famous Caribbean socialist country.

When I was young, I read much about Cuba, one of the most important countries in the socialist bloc, and learned about related iconic figures such as Fidel Castro as well as the country's celebrated candy and cigars.

Time changes everything. China has emerged as the second-largest economy on the planet, thanks to the implementation of reform and opening-up policies. Cuba may be fading in the memories of modern Chinese citizens, but its history is engraved in the minds of the older generation.

Over the years, my curiosity about Cuba never waned. Finally, I got the chance to set foot on its soil and see its old Spanish houses with wooden windows and doors, some of which were empty. The vintage cars took me back to the last century; only dwellings in downtown areas were refurbished. The

whole city seemed worn down. The country, embraced by the sea, exceeded my every expectation.

I learned from our tour guide that in Cuba, all land and real estate belong to the state. Individuals can only own one house; buying a second would be extremely expensive because of taxes.

Sun is a handsome young man from China who married a local girl. He got a green card and owns a house after inheriting another from his in-laws when they passed away. To minimize taxes, he moved to a bigger house after selling the inheritance.


Despite the beautiful coastal landscape and pleasant climate, Havana's tourism sector remains relatively undeveloped. High-rises are few and far between. Considering the island's breathtaking natural scenery, the lack of facilities seemed like a waste. Cuba would have been highly developed by now had the government opened its door wider to

the outside world and sought foreign investment. From another perspective, however, the natural beauty has remained pure, which makes the beach more charming.

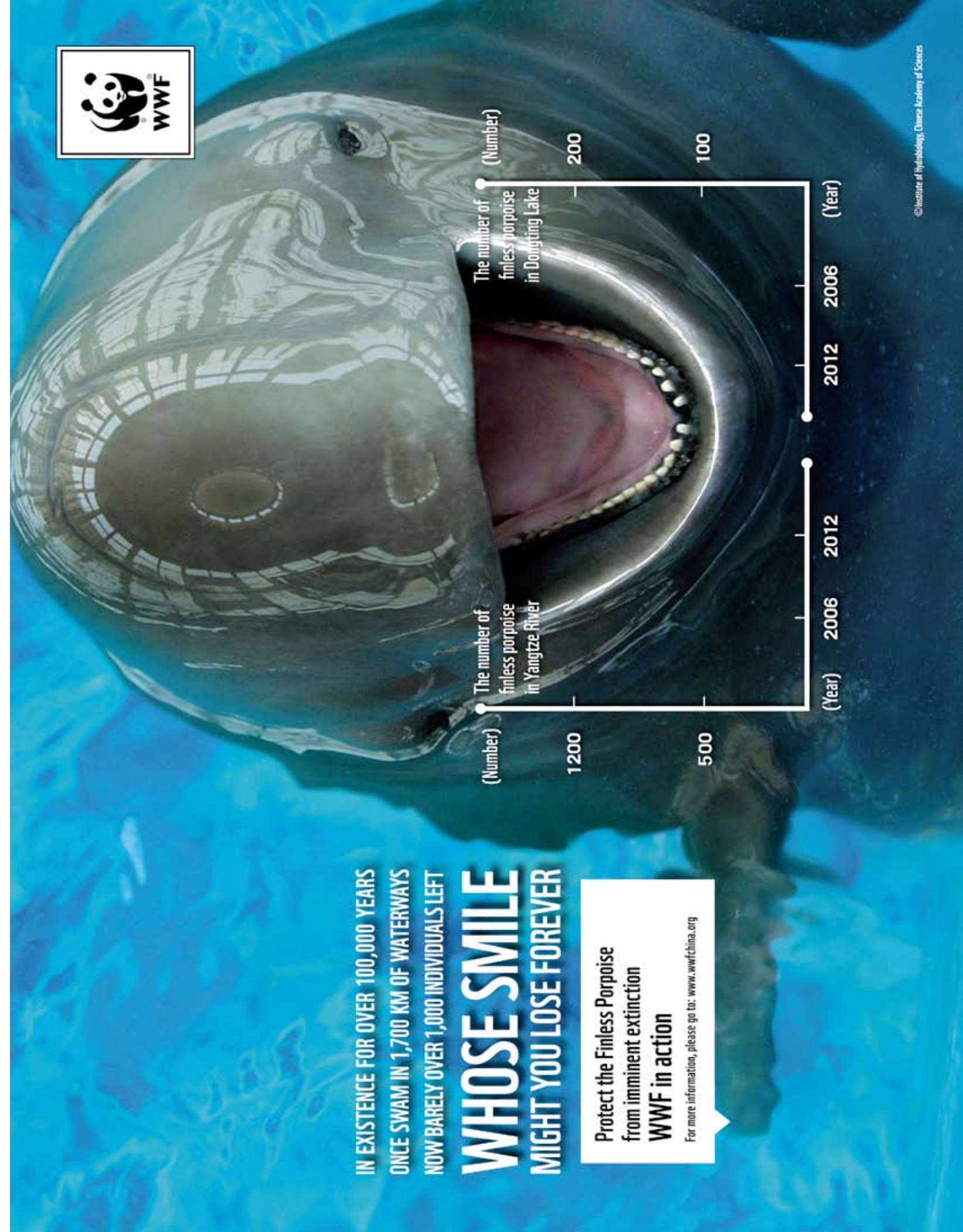
On November 21, 2016, the Cuban government sponsored an investment seminar for Chinese entrepreneurs, and I was lucky enough to attend. Upon learning that I was from Ningbo, one particular official showed great interest in me. "I've been there!" he smiled. "We should meet up next time." I was happy to introduce him to the idea of our country's Belt and Road initiative and expressed my excitement in regard to the prospect of future cooperation.

On policies regarding land and real estate, they stressed that such projects would require funds from both sides for joint development. Conservative policies could be what is slowing economic development in Cuba, in my opinion.

Shortly after leaving, we heard the

news that Fidel Castro had passed away. Is a new chapter about to unfold? 

Chu Jiwang is president and founder of the Ningbo Ruyi Joint Stock Co., Ltd., a major Chinese logistics equipment manufacturer. More than just an entrepreneur, Chu is a recipient of the China Charity Award, the top philanthropic honor in the country. In each issue, he shares his business insights and inspirations gained from his life experience.







**Book of Time:  
Yu Shicun on the  
24 Solar Terms**

Written by Yu Shicun, illustrations by Lao Shu,  
published by China Friendship Publishing Company,  
January 2017

On November 30, 2016, China’s 24 Solar Terms, a knowledge system to measure time developed by Chinese ancestors upon observations of solar movement, was included on the 2016 Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, becoming the 39th item of Chinese heritage to make the list.

The ancient Chinese divided the sun’s annual movement into 24 equal parts, with the spring equinox, the autumn equinox, the winter solstice, and the summer solstice each dividing solar terms. The earliest complete record of the system was found in the *Writings of Prince Huainan* published during the Han Dynasty (202-220 B.C.). The system still influences Chinese thinking and behavior.

Yu Shicun’s *Book of Time* is a comprehensive guide to China’s culture of solar terms, illuminating it from unique angles. Yu applies the 24 Solar Terms to fields including astronomy, climate, agriculture, healthcare, aesthetics and philosophy as well as from perspectives of Chinese history, customs, and survival methods.

The author interprets the Chinese philosophy of time: Not only do solar terms relate to agriculture and health, but they inspire feelings and transmit knowledge on life, nature, and the universe. By focusing on the relationship between nature and man across these terms, the author argues that these ancient schemes are still at work today.

Yu Shicun, an outstanding Chinese writer and poet, is considered “one of the greatest thinkers of modern China” with highly influential philosophies, a strong sense of historical mission, and the temperament of an intellectual. His major works include *Trilogy of Man*, *Uncommon Sense: Discourse of China 1840-1999*, and *Big Time: Rediscovery of the Book of Changes*.

The book features illustrations by Lao Shu, also known as Liu Shuyong, an eminent Chinese scholar and painter who serves as a professor at the School of Culture and Communication under the Central University of Finance and Economics as well as a critic of visual culture.



1.	2.	3.
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1. The Slight Cold, the 23rd of China’s 24 Solar Terms, falls on January 5 or 6 every year and marks the coldest days of the year.
2. The Spring Equinox, the fourth of China’s 24 Solar Terms, falls around March 20 every year. It is the central point of division of the 90 days of the spring, when day and night are equally long in the northern and southern hemispheres.
3. The Great Snow, the 21st of China’s 24 Solar Terms, falls around December 7 every year. It becomes colder during the period, with an increased possibility of snow.
4. The Winter Solstice, the 22nd of China’s 24 Solar Terms, falls between December 21 and 23 every year. Astronomically, it marks the start of winter in the northern hemisphere.
5. The Great Cold, the last of China’s 24 Solar Terms, falls around January 20 every year, the last final stretch of the lunar calendar, ready to herald spring’s arrival.

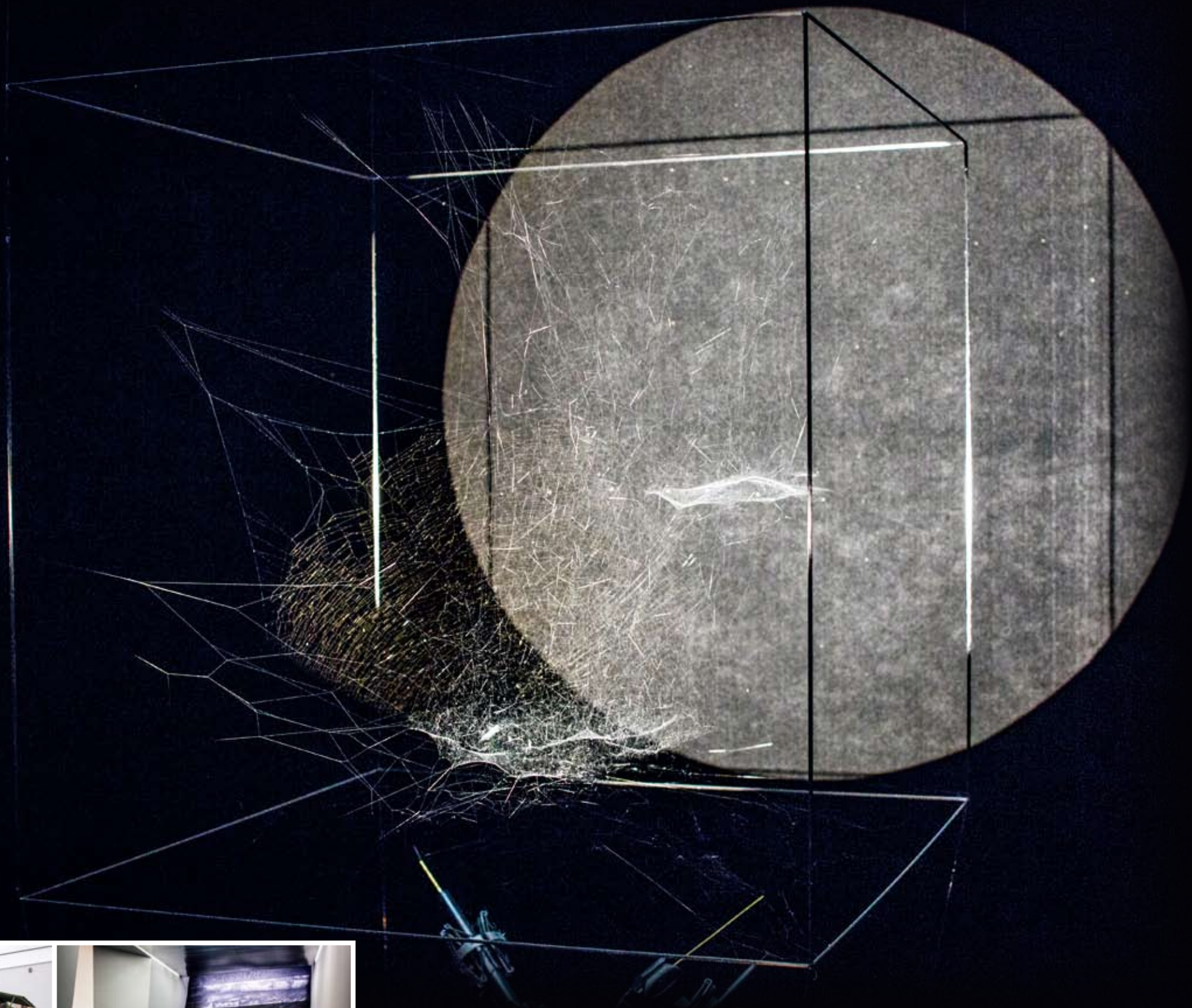


# 11th Shanghai Biennale: Never Stop Thinking

Text by Xue Peng

Photos courtesy of PSA

On November 11, 2016, the 11th Shanghai Biennale kicked off at Shanghai-based art museum Power Station of Art (PSA). A total of 92 artists and artist groups from 40 countries brought work to town and displayed it in PSA's three floors of cavernous exhibition halls, next-door garage and signature massive funnel.



*Lunar Station* by Marjolijn Dijkman, steel pendulum and sand, table, video, found objects, 2015



*Seven Days* by Wang Haichuan, installation, 2013



*Wall of Skies* by Zheng Chongbin, ink, paper, metal, light, 2016 (new iteration)

*Sonic Cosmic Webs* by Tomás Saraceno, spider silk, cosmic dust, stellar wind, and projection, 2016





*The Great Chain of Being—Planet Trilogy* housed on the PSA's second floor is a massive installation produced by students from the School of Intermedia Art at the China Academy of Art. Consuming the nearly 2,000-square-meter space, the installation is the most magnificent piece at this biennale.

Launched in 1996, the Shanghai Biennale was the first international biennale dedicated to contemporary art on the Chinese mainland. The 2016 biennale, masterminded by the Raqs Media Collective from India, is themed “Why Not Ask Again: Arguments, Counter-arguments and Stories.” Monica Narula, a member of the Raqs Media Collective, revealed that the reason they chose the phrase “why not ask again” is they want people to perpetually ponder certain questions. Narula and her team believe that even if a question already has an answer, it still inspires other ques-

tions and should attract more people to pay attention to it, re-explain it or even turn it upside down.

This year's biennale features four intersecting orbital paths: “Terminals,” “Infra-Curatorial Platform,” “Theory Opera” and “51 Personae.” “‘Terminals’ are places of departure, arrival, and transfer,” explains show curator of “Infra-Curatorial Platform” Liu Tian. “They are the connecting hubs of events. ‘Infra-Curatorial Platform’ invited seven young curators from different parts of the world to each develop a sub-exhibition. ‘Theory Opera’ presents

performance activities throughout the biennale, and the project ‘51 Personae’ aims to find 51 actions and ‘figures’ to celebrate and explore the city of Shanghai. These efforts are designed to make the biennale less conventional and more flexible.”

PSA's second floor houses the work *The Great Chain of Being-Planet Trilogy*, a massive installation produced by students from the School of Intermedia Art at the China Academy of Art. Consuming the nearly 2,000-square-meter space, the installation is the most magnificent piece at this biennale. Divided into the three

parts, namely “Infinite Perspective,” “End of Time,” and “Towards Darkness,” the piece invites spectators to follow a winding route through 40 “sceneries” such as a glasshouse and futuristic jungle composed of fluorescent tubes. At the same time, spectators are flanked by copper funnels broadcasting sounds and voices from the 1960s. The narrow walkway leads through a succession of tableaux. In such a closed environment, people can only see the sparkling “sceneries” in the darkness, and can never imagine what awaits around the next corner. The sci-fi flavored piece viv-

idly explores the question asked by Mou Sen, creator of the work and a forerunner of experimental theater in China: What on earth is existence?

The biennale chose “Arguments, Counter-arguments, and Stories” as its sub-heading for two reasons: On the one hand, it is the title of a film directed by Ritwik Ghatak, one of the most revered figures in the Indian film industry in the 20th Century. On the other hand, Raqs Media Collective took inspiration from *The Three-Body Problem*, a renowned Chinese science fiction by Hugo Award winner Liu Cixin. The

Raqs Media Collective viewed “arguments, counter-arguments, and stories” as a three-body problem born of physics and focusing on laws of physics such as gravity.

Asking questions and re-thinking accepted ideas are common pursuits of curators and artists alike. As the Raqs Media Collective expressed in their work notes, every biennale will leave its own mark on time. Every biennale is beautiful because it captures a city's imagination for months and then disappears until the next one.

The 11th Shanghai Biennale runs until March 12, 2017. 

The author works for *Sanlian Lifeweek*.





*A Boat of Sylvie, the Fortune Teller* by Xu Dongsheng, oil on canvas, 200x250 cm, 2015

### Floating Life under the Flash Light

Light is everywhere and quite an essential element of Xu Dongsheng's paintings. It exists in the dark sky, in the shining and sacred faces of arhats and in the resplendent light emanating from Sylvie's graceful dance. Xu Dongsheng grants independence and material visual form to latent light. Shining phantoms in his earlier works hugged and comforted each other with candles in hand to drive out darkness; unidentified luminous objects in dust guided these lost and trapped lambs like deities. From the walking dead to imagery presentation and refined light and lines, Xu Dongsheng attempts to optically pursue the ultimate form to manifest life and the essence of life via a lonely, dark, and deep world.

December 17, 2016—January 3, 2017  
Today Art Museum, Beijing

### New Directions: Wang Haiyang

A graduate of the Printmaking Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Wang Haiyang is a “dual threat” in the realms of painting and animation, fusing them to expand the rhetorical scope of both media. The exhibition premieres the artist's meticulously produced stop-motion animation *Wall Dust* (2016) and screens five experimental films: *The Proof of Existence*, *Communication*, *Golden Breath*, *Seize the Moment or the Moment Seizes Me*, and *The Invisible Hand*. *Wall Dust* features the surreal world of the trilogy's protagonist Fikret, replete with imagery that oscillates between lonely, weird, absurd, and erotic. In other new works, presented as short loops on bulky monitors, he applies the fundamentals of stop-motion animation to video, exploring the visual representation of traces, time, consciousness, and serendipity. In these works, the creative process, like the finished film, reflects the artist's desire to compress and elongate time all at once.

November 4, 2016—January 8, 2017  
Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), Beijing



*Wall Dust* by Wang Haiyang, HD video, sandpaper, pastels, mixed media, 2016



### Song Dong: “I Don’t Know the Mandate of Heaven”

This exhibition is the first major survey of Song's work to be exhibited on China's mainland over the past eight years. It includes some of the artist's best-known works that have played fundamental roles in establishing his career, as well as several rarely-exhibited works. Some pieces have been specially commissioned by the museum for this exhibition including *In My Fiftieth*, *I Don't Know the Mandate of Heaven* and *Back Image*, manifesting the museum's long-term commitment to support the creativity and production of contemporary art through exhibitions.

January 21—March 26, 2017  
Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai

A detail view of the installation  
*Waste Not* by Song Dong.

### Yin Xiuzhen—The Instrument of Spirit

Yin's focus on social realism has always revolved around social experience, and it also reflects sociopolitical, economic, and historical changes through the portrayal of the subtle and real circumstances of individuals. This deep concern for life itself is naturally and intuitively conveyed to audiences with the aid of the artist's skill in manipulating everyday materials. During the creation of this new piece, the artist's acute and richly insightful contemplations on the world once more begin to take shape through her choice of materials. As opposed to the characteristic materials commonly seen in past works—old clothing seen as humanity's “second layer of skin,” this time the artist has chosen ceramics as her medium. This shift indicates that the artist's “bodily” understanding of creative materials is currently probing a spiritual world focused on form.

November 25, 2016—January 12, 2017  
Pace Gallery, Hong Kong



*Thought* by Yin Xiuzhen, clothes and steel, 340x510x370 cm





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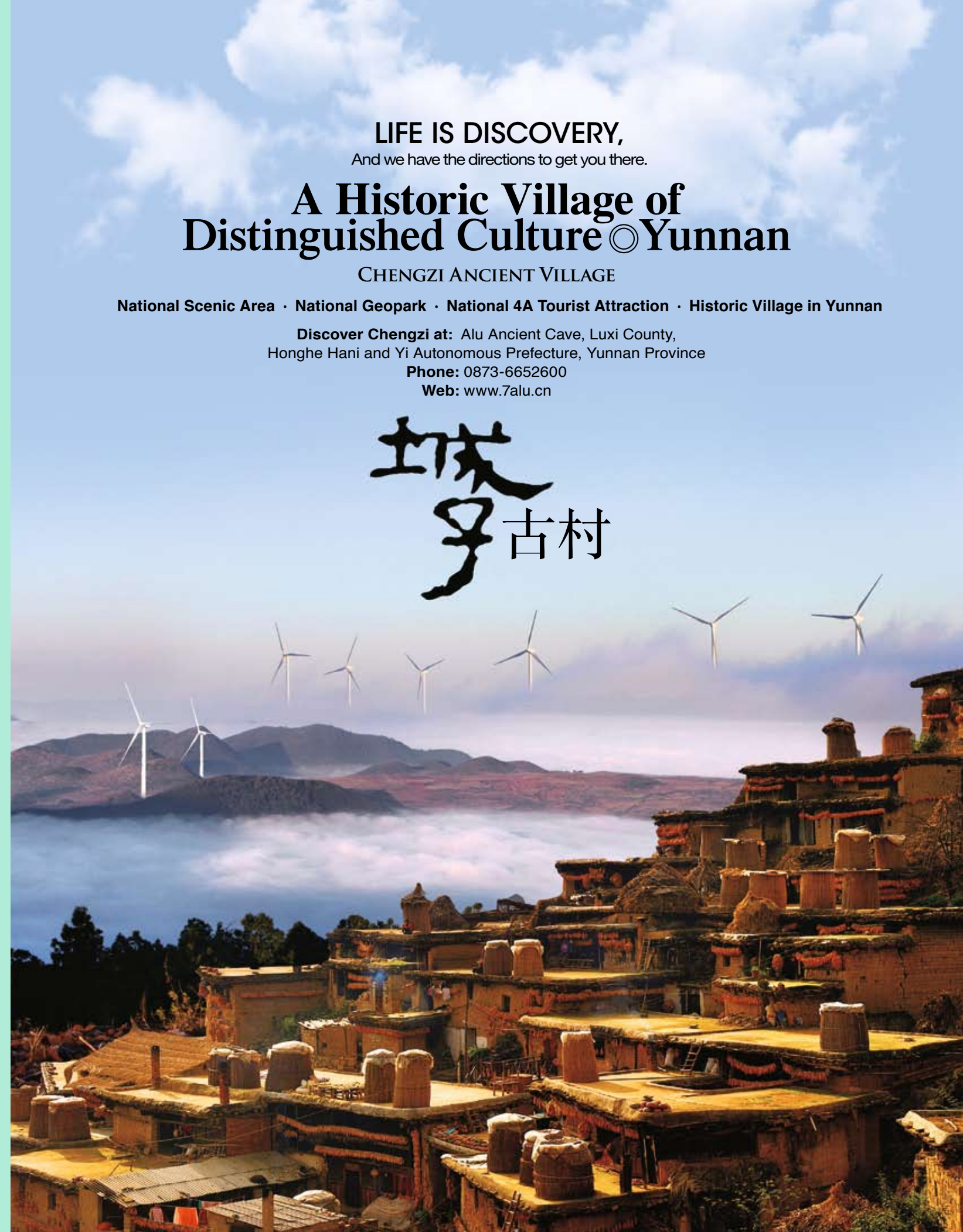
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