

Biography

Joanna decided to move to Beijing in 2002 when she switched careers to filmmaking. Since then she premiered her first feature documentary, *NEO-LOUNGE*, in 2007 recounting intimate stories of foreigners who came to Beijing searching to break from their past. It played in over 20 festivals around the world and has won four awards, including two Best Documentary awards. Her second film, *YUGONG YISHAN*, which explores an ancient Chinese fable and how it relates to three generations, premiered at the Pusan International Film Festival in 2008. It won the Kyobo Award at the 29th Busan Asian Short Film Festival and the Best Short Documentary at the 8th Festival Internacional del Cine Pobre Humberto Solas. In 2009, she was one of 12 non-African filmmakers commissioned by the Rotterdam Film Festival for their *Forget Africa* series. Joanna relocated back to her hometown, Cebu, earlier this year to also start working on Philippine projects.

Prior to working with documentaries, Joanna worked in various fields around the world including finance (Deutsche Bank, Asia-Pacific) and economic development (United Nations, Bangkok, Beijing & NY; Asian Development Bank, Manila). She pursued her Bachelor's degree at Boston College with a year exchange at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques (BA Political Science & International Studies) and her Master's degree at the London School of Economics (MSc Development & Environmental Studies).

Filmography

Sunday School (January 2010), Philippines/Zambia, 43 minutes

Genre: Documentary

Writer, Director, Producer, Editor & Camera

This film explores how the pains of everyday life are intricately linked with faith and the church in Zambia. Time seems to stand still as events unfold for a girl, a young mother and an elder. Amid recurring themes of death and renewal, we rediscover religion as a force to heal wounds that the modern world has long left behind.

- One of 12 non-African projects commissioned by the International Film Festival Rotterdam for their *Forget Africa* series.

Screenings:

- World Premiere, 39th International Film Festival Rotterdam (Rotterdam, Feb 2010)
 - Section: Signals – Where is Africa?
- 33rd Göteborg International Film Festival (Göteborg, Jan 2010)
 - Section: "Forget Africa"
- 20th African, Asian and Latin American Film Festival (Milan, Mar 2010)
 - Section: "Forget Africa"

- 13th Religion Today Film Festival (Trento / Bolzano, Oct 2010)
 - Section: Woman and Religion
- International TV Festival Bar (Montenegro, Oct 2010)
- 7th Amakula Kampala International Film Festival (Kampala, Nov 2010)
- 12th Cinemania International Film Festival (Manila, Dec 2010)
 - Section: Documentary
- 15th International Film Festival of Kerala (Kerala, Dec 2010)
 - Section : Forget Africa
- 3rd Hangzhou Asian Film Festival (Hangzhou, Oct 2011)
- 2011 Women Make Waves Film Festival, Taiwan (Taepei, Oct 2011)

Yugong Yishan (愚公移山) (September 2008), CHINA/THAILAND/PHILIPPINES, 30 minutes

Genre: Documentary

Writer, Director, Editor & Producer

From an old Chinese fable to one of the stories in Chairman Mao's Little Red Book and to a small bar in Beijing owned by a Chinese musician, *Yugong Yishan*, explores the spirit of the Old Fool through three generations.

Awards:

- Recipient of a grant from the Asian Network of Documentary 2006, Pusan International Film Festival
- 29th Busan Asian Short Film Festival (Pusan, May 2009)
 - KYOBO Award
- 8vo Festival Internacional del Cine Pobre Humberto Solas (Gibara, Apr 2010)
 - Pobreza Zero Award

Screenings:

- World Premiere, 13th Pusan International Film Festival (Pusan, Oct 2008)
 - Section : Wide Angle
- 10th Cinemania International Film Festival (Manila, Oct 2008)
 - Section: Competition
- 6th Taiwan International Documentary Festival (Taipei, Oct 2008)
 - Section: Asian Network of Documentary
- Festival International des Programmes Audiovisuels (Market) (Biarritz, Jan 2009)
- 14th Hong Kong Independent Short Film & Video Awards (Hong Kong, Mar 2009)
 - Section: Asian New Force in Competition
- FAT ART "Music to My Eyes" art show : (Beijing, Apr 2009)
- Made in China (Exhibition) : Global artists in Beijing (New Delhi, Apr - Jun 2009)

- 55th International Short Film Festival Oberhausen (Oberhausen, Apr - May 2009)
 - Section: Unreal Asia
- 11th Barcelona Asian Film Festival (Barcelona, Apr - May 2009)
 - Section: Emerging Talents
- 6th Documenta Madrid Film Festival 09 (Madrid, May 2009)
 - Section: Documenta la Musica
- Busan Asian Short Film Festival (Pusan, May 2009)
 - Section: View of Asia 9
- 44th Karlovy Vary IFF (Karlovy Vary, Jul 2009)
 - Section: Documentary Films in Competition
- Portobello Film Festival (London, Sep 2009)
 - Section: International
- 23rd Annual Wine Country Film Festival (Napa, CA, Sep 2009)
 - Section: Shorts
- Antalya International Film Festival (Antalya, Oct 2009)
- Festival of Liberties (Brussels, Oct 2009)
 - Section: International Competition
- International TV Festival Bar (Montenegro, Oct 2009)
 - Section: Documentary Competition
- Festival dei Popoli (Florence, Nov 2009)
 - Section: Short Documentary Competition
- Asiaticafilmmediale (Rome, Nov 2009)
 - Section: Documentary
- 15th Lyon Asian Film Festival (Lyon, Nov 2009)
 - Section: Documentary
- 32nd International Short Film Festival Clermont-Ferrand (Clermont-Ferrand, Jan - Feb 2010)
 - Section: Other Delights > Music Videos > DB2
- 8vo Festival Internacional del Cine Pobre Humberto Solas (Gibara, Apr 2010)
 - Section: Short Film Documentary Competition
- 4^{eme} Festival International du Court-Metrage de Mohammédia (Mohammédia, Apr 2010)
- Art in house (Manila, Oct 2011)

Neo-Lounge (July 2007) CHINA, 86 minutes

Genre: Documentary

Writer, Director, Camera, Editor & Producer

Many are choosing to come to Beijing to pursue a new life. In a city full of surprises and changes, many foreigners find refuge in this trendy bar, Neo-Lounge, run by a hip Shanghainese couple. *Neo-Lounge* follows a year in the lives of a Bulgarian jazz singer and an exuberant Italian businessman and their colorful friends, in their journey in breaking from a traditional past, whilst pursuing their own space in unpredictable Beijing.

Awards:

- 9th Cinemania International Film Festival (Manila, Aug 2007)
 - Best Documentary
- 34th Brussels International Independent Film Festival (Brussels, Nov 2007)
 - Best Documentary
- 8th Asiaticafilmmediale (Rome, Nov 2007)
 - Special Mention
- 14th Temecula Valley International Film & Music Festival (Temecula, CA Sep 2008)
 - Special Jury Prize

Screenings:

- World Premiere, 42nd Karlovy Vary IFF (Karlovy Vary, Jul 2007)
 - Section: Documentary Films in Competition
- Asian Premiere, 9th Taipei Film Festival (Taipei, Jul 2007)
 - Section: City of Dogma! A Cinematic Celebration
- 27th Hawaii International Film Festival (Honolulu, Oct 2007)
 - Section: Best of West
- 48th Festival dei Popoli (Florence, Nov 2007)
 - Section: International Competition
- 6th Festival Film Dokumenter (Jogjakarta, Dec 2007)
 - Section: Spectrum
- 14th Slamdance Film Festival (Park City, UT, Jan 2008)
 - Section: Documentary Feature Competition
- Asian hot shots Berlin (Berlin, Jan 2008)
 - Section: Documentary Feature Competition
- European Film Market (Berlin, Feb 2008)
 - Film Market for 58th Berlin International Film Festival
- 36th Belgrade International Film Festival (Belgrade, Feb - Mar 2008)
 - Section: Facts and Puzzles

- 5th Festival Internacional de Cine Contemporaneo de la Ciudad de Mexico (Mexico City, Feb - Mar 2008)
 - Section: Philippine Cinema
- 6th Festival Internacional del Cine Pobre (Gibara, Cuba, Apr 2008)
 - Section: Informative Section, Documentary Film
- 26th Minneapolis/St. Paul International Film Festival 2008 (Minneapolis, Apr 2008)
- Docu-Lounge Malmö (Malmö, Sweden Apr, 2008)
- 24th Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival (Los Angeles, May 2008)
- 5th Documenta Madrid – Festival Internacional de Documentales de Madrid
 - Section: Original Documentary Competition (Madrid, May 2008)
- Rooftop Films (New York, NY, June 2008)
- 8th International Documentary Film Festival “Flahertiana-2008” (Perm, Russia, Sep 2008)
- 5th China Independent Film Festival (Nanjing, Sep 2008)
- 14th Temecula Valley International Film & Music Festival (Temecula, CA Sep 2008)
- Miradas-Doc, el Festival Internacional de Cine Documental (Tenerife, Spain, Oct - Nov 2008)

Lao Shan, Lao Yin (Old Mountains, Old Shadows) (March 2006) CHINA, 6 minutes

Genre: Documentary/Experimental

Writer, Director, Editor & Producer

Whilst more youth are increasingly coming to Beijing to pursue their dreams, what do the older folks dream about in a small village tucked away in the mountains just 90 km away? In a village where the average age is in the mid-50s, the folks are instead of fighting to survive in the Revolution, are now struggling to maintain dying customs, including their own version of traditional opera.

- MY CHINA NOW (UK, 2008)
 - One of 25 short films chosen as part of the collection traveling in festivals and galleries around the UK
- Rooftop Films (Brooklyn, NY Sep 2007)
- Crossroads Film Festival (Jackson, MS March - Apr 2007)
- Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (Missoula, MN Feb 2007)
- Asiaticafilmmediale (Rome, Nov 2006)
- International Documentary Challenge (Mar 2006)
 - Best Experimental Documentary
 - Best Cinematography
 - Premiered at the American Film Institute Theater on 31 Aug 2006

The Temple (October 2005) CHINA, 5 minutes

Genre: Documentary/Experimental

Writer, Camera, Director & Editor

A temple connotes many images including a place of worship as well as the physical body. For Leo, it is also where he lives in Beijing. The Temple explores how a man contemplates the choices he has made in his life and how these have led him to Beijing, a city in the midst of reinventing itself.

Selected for:

- Finalist , Best Short Film Award, 26th Hawaii IFF (Honolulu, Oct - Nov 2006)
- 55th Melbourne IFF (Melbourne, July - Aug 2006)
- 4th Berlinale Talent Campus, Berlinale Film Festival (Berlin, Feb 2006)