

Xiju Film "*The Poetry of a Gale*" Nominated for Golden Rooster Award

On the morning of September 26, 2025, the press conference for the China Golden Rooster and Hundred Flowers Film Festival was held in Beijing. In the nomination list for this year's Golden Rooster Awards, the Xiju film *The Poetry of a Gale*, produced by the Jiangsu Performing Arts Group, successfully secured a nomination for "Best Opera Film." This honor not only serves as high recognition of the film's artistic value but has also brought this work, which seamlessly integrates traditional Xiju with cinematic art, and its creative team back into the public spotlight.



I. Accolades and a Splendid Transition from Stage to Screen

As a mature stage production, *The Poetry of a Gale* has long been celebrated with numerous awards. It has won prestigious honors such as the "Outstanding Production Award" at the 4th Jiangsu Provincial Culture and Art Awards, the Jiangsu Province 11th Spiritual Civilization Construction "Five One Project" Award, and the 2018 Zijin Culture and Art Festival Outstanding Production Award. Its profound artistic depth and intellectual substance have been widely recognized by both industry professionals and audiences.

The film adaptation, however, is not a mere recording of the stage performance but a profound "cinematic recreation." Through the language of film—flexible camera work, meticulous scene transitions, and compelling audiovisual effects—it breaks the physical boundaries of the stage, presenting this epic historical story in a more immersive manner. This marks a splendid transformation of traditional opera on the silver screen.

II. Stellar Cast: Zhou Dongliang Leads in Depicting the Complex Relationship Between Emperor and Minister

The film brings together a powerful creative team. The script is written by Jia Lu, a National First-Class Screenwriter, ensuring both literary depth and dramatic tension. Leading the cast is Zhou Dongliang, a celebrated Xiju (Jiangsu opera) performing artist and recipient of the prestigious Plum Blossom Award, the Wenhua Performance Award, and the Magnolia Stage Award. His representative works include *The Pearl Pagoda*, *The Jade Dragonfly*, *Dream of Zisha*, and *Heroic Sons and Daughters*. The Xiju film *The Pearl Pagoda*, in which he starred, was nominated for Best Opera Film at the 32nd China Golden Rooster Awards.



Renowned as the “Prince of Xiju,” Zhou is praised for his resonant and expressive voice, superbly nuanced acting, and elegant stage presence. With a wide artistic range, he excels not only in the stylized performance traditions of classic repertoire but also in boldly exploring innovation in new works. In doing so, he has helped Xiju remain rooted in tradition while continually revitalizing itself, making him a defining figure of contemporary Xiju.

In *The Poetry of a Gale*, Zhou Dongliang plays Emperor Gaozu of Han, Liu Bang. Not only does he demonstrate the unique charm of Xiju music through his richly nuanced singing, but he also employs his profound acting skills to delve into the complex psyche of an emperor torn between political strategy and personal loyalty. Zhou's portrayal captures Liu Bang's grand ambition, suspicion, and eventual genuine emotion with layered depth and vivid authenticity.

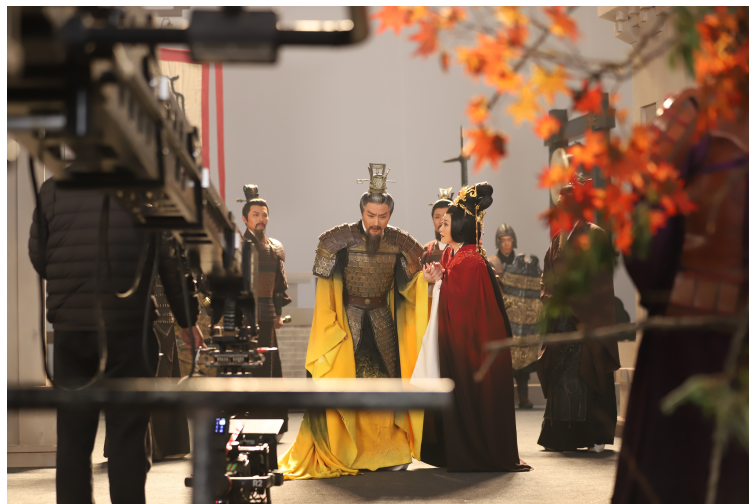
He is joined by a stellar cast of Xiju masters, including Tang Da, Zhang Jinhua, Ji Chunyan, Jiang Gaosong, Sun Lijian, and Zhu Peng. The film centers on the intricate and subtle relationship between Liu Bang and his chancellor, Xiao He—a historically renowned pair of "wise ruler and virtuous minister." Rather than offering one-dimensional praise, the film delves into their conflicts in governance and personal sentiments, ultimately depicting how they overcome turmoil to achieve profound reconciliation. The narrative is tightly paced, with 鲜明 conflicts, encompassing both thrilling court intrigues and subtle emotional exchanges, collectively composing a stirring and thought-provoking "*The Poetry of a Gale*."

III. Director Liu Xuezhong: A Master Craftsman in Opera Film



The success of this film owes much to director Liu Xuezhong. As a seasoned artist in the realm of opera films, he has long dedicated himself to bridging the expressive aesthetics of traditional opera with the realistic characteristics of cinematic art through his unique vision and skilled direction.

In creating *The Poetry of a Gale*, Liu faced the core challenge of preserving the essence of Xiju—its singing, recitation, and stylized performance—while using cinematic techniques to enhance narrative tension and emotional impact. He masterfully controls the rhythm of the camera, seamlessly transitioning between grand scenes of "court conflicts" and intimate moments of "emotional exchange." His close collaboration with Zhou Dongliang and other artists allowed him to capture the most compelling moments, ensuring that even audiences unfamiliar with opera could be deeply moved by the story and characters. This Golden Rooster nomination is a resounding affirmation of Director Liu Xuezhong's artistic prowess and a testament to his contributions to the cinematic adaptation of traditional opera.



Conclusion

The nomination of *The Poetry of a Gale* for the 38th China Film Golden Rooster Award for "Best Opera Film" is a microcosm of the development of Chinese opera films. It signifies how traditional opera is being revitalized through modern mediums, thanks to the concerted efforts of dedicated artists like Director Liu Xuezhong and exceptional performers like Zhou Dongliang. We not only look forward to *The Poetry of a Gale* achieving further success at the Golden Rooster Awards but also hope it serves as an inspiration and catalyst for more outstanding opera films to emerge. Only in this way can the excellent traditional Chinese culture extend its vitality in the world of cinema, enduring and renewing itself through the passage of time.

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The photos in the text are provided by the Jiangsu Performing Arts Group.