

《中国电影的国际ization战略》

Chinese filmmakers are walking a tightrope between localization and globalization. Finding a happy medium is surprisingly like cooking fish, Raymond Zhou learns.

As China's film industry rockets into the stratosphere of amazing box-office returns, the international market becomes increasingly enticing. Yet, only a fraction of its revenues come from outside China, and even that is often the result of counting in the foreign receipts of co-productions, which technically do not go to the Chinese pocket. Chinese film companies, however, are moving up the learning curve. At a Beijing International Film Festival forum, CEO of Bona Film Group Ltd Yu Dong maps out three stages that Chinese films have to take to launch a global entry.

"None of the steps can be skipped," he emphasizes.

The first stage, according to Yu, is what he jokingly calls "dumping". Movies are bundled together and sold to foreign television stations, video websites and, in the old days, video distributors. The Chinese companies receive a pittance, e.g. \$20,000 for 10 movies, or a mere \$100,000 for the whole year's inventory. "There is little room for price negotiation. If you don't use the low-price strategy, they'll go buy Korean or Japanese movies instead," he says. "You have to remember there are some 5,000 movies produced annually throughout the world. China accounts for roughly 10 percent, the US 10 percent, India more than 20 percent. And I'm not counting the 100-some pornography films from Japan."

Whoever buys the Chinese stock will have to find ways to make money out of it. So, whatever platforms they can find they will use to release some of these movies, which means exposure for Chinese stories and Chinese actors, says Yu. "This will help cover 80 to 150 markets across the world."

For phase two, Chinese companies will participate in the investment of some projects with global reach and, in return, will place Chinese situations and Chinese actors inside the stories. The cameo appearances of several A-list Chinese stars in these big Hollywood franchises have caused controversy in China, with some members of the Chinese public complaining about the short shrift given to these big names, but Yu holds a different view. "No matter how small the role, it is worth it," he says, citing the example of Wang Xueqi in Iron Man 3. "This is 2013's biggest movie in the whole world, and the global audience got to know this Chinese actor," Yu says.

The third stage will involve Chinese productions with international participation. Yu says *Wolf Totem*, which has just wrapped production, is a perfect example. It is based on a Chinese best-seller, but is directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud, a French director with a track record for incorporating wild animals in his stories. It has reportedly pre-sold \$8 million in the European market.

This project is spearheaded by Zhang Qiang, an executive of China Film Group. "It tells a Chinese story with Chinese characters and Chinese emotions, backed up by Chinese investment, but it has potential global appeal," says Yu. Yu's Bona is mulling similar projects, to be co-produced with Fox Film Corporation, which has a financial stake in his company. "We may even produce movies with dual language soundtracks, a Chinese one for the domestic market and English for the international market," Yu says.

