



JAEGER-LECOULTRE HIGHLIGHTS THE VALUE OF CHINESE CINEMATIC HISTORY THROUGH ITS PARTNERSHIP WITH SHANGHAI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Inspired by the parallels between the worlds of fine watchmaking and film, Jaeger-LeCoultre has enjoyed a close relationship with the cinematic arts over more than a decade, including its partnership with Shanghai International Film Festival. These are worlds in which creativity stems from a singular relationship between technical skill and artistic flair, where heritage does not simply mean history; it is the foundation on which the culture of the present and future are built. For Jaeger-LeCoultre, ensuring that its cultural heritage will be maintained is a core value – one that is embodied in its collaboration with Shanghai International Film Festival in an ongoing project to restore some of the great classics of Chinese cinematic history.

A Rendez-Vous With Time

On the opening night of this year's 22nd edition of Shanghai International Film Festival, Jaeger-LeCoultre hosted a charity dinner, where it donated a specially customised timepiece for auction. The following day, Jaeger-LeCoultre and its Chief Executive Officer, Catherine Rénier, hosted a programme of events to celebrate the project and raise public awareness of its immense cultural value. It began with the unveiling of a new short film, *A Rendez-Vous with Time*. Starring the Chinese actress Ni Ni, it underlines the Grande Maison's commitment to film restoration and reflects on the relationships between the past, the future and the making of memories.

This was followed by a panel discussion between Ni Ni and another brilliant young talent, the British actor Nicholas Hoult. A friend of the Maison, whose connection to Jaeger-LeCoultre dates back to the Venice Film Festival of 2015, Hoult flew to China specially for this occasion. Joined on the panel by Catherine Rénier, they explored the parallels between watchmaking and filmmaking, and the symbiotic relationship between cultural heritage and the future. Both Nicholas Hoult and Ni Ni firmly believe that their generation has an important role to play in passing on the value of classic cinema to future generations.

A Rendez-Vous With Flowers Of Shanghai

Highlight of the programme was the premiere of the restored version of Hou Hsiao-hsien's 1998 masterpiece, *Flowers of Shanghai*, the subject of last year's restoration project.

One of three masterpieces made during the 1990s by the Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-hsien, *Flowers of Shanghai* is based on the 1892 novel *Biographies of Flowers by the Seashore*, written by Han Bangqing and later translated into Mandarin by the celebrated novelist Eileen Chang. It is set in the demi-monde of 1880s Shanghai and immerses the viewer in the richness, emotional intensity and claustrophobia of that world. With its intense dialogue, sumptuous design and beautiful amber-toned



lighting, all captured by the remarkable work of cinematographer, Mark Lee Ping-Bin, it represents Hou's great contribution to cinematic art.

Recapturing the visual beauty of the original was a challenge and to ensure the desired outcome, the director and cinematographer were directly involved. A team of language and culture experts worked to refine the subtitles in order to best capture both what was said and the meaning of what was left unspoken.

Like fine watchmaking, film restoration requires the utmost patience and precision, combining technical sophistication with artistic finesse. The aim is not simply to arrest decay but to bring a film back to a version most faithful to its original release in every respect. As with watchmaking, advances in technology are a great aid to the process, although they can never entirely replace the craftsman's hand or the artist's eye.

Time at the Heart

The restoration project focuses on classical Chinese masterpieces and has so far resulted in saving 12 films for posterity. Important cultural artefacts, rarely shown on the big screen, they include *The Spring River Flows East*, *Two Stage Sisters*, *A Better Tomorrow*, *Endless Love*, *Outside the Window*, *Painting Soul...* The film chosen for restoration next year is *New Year Sacrifice* (Zhu Fu in Mandarin) directed by Hu Sang and originally released in 1956. The screenwriter Yan Xia (who was China's Deputy Minister of Culture at the time) adapted the screenplay for *New Year Sacrifice* from a famous short story written in 1924 by Lu Xun.

Time is the essence of both watchmaking and filmmaking: capturing moments in time, displaying time and expressing a sense of time. It's about recording memories and creating memories. And with every classic film that it helps to restore, Jaeger-LeCoultre underlines its passion and dedication to the art of time.

Jaeger-LeCoultre

Since its founding, Jaeger-LeCoultre has made precision an art form in its own right, balancing skills and artistry with sophistication and aesthetical finesse. In keeping with the inventive spirit of 1833, the artisans of the Manufacture create collections which have always been at the forefront of fine watchmaking: Reverso, Master, Rendez-Vous and Atmos. This rich legacy built by the Grande Maison over generations serves as a constant source of inspiration in pushing the boundaries with unprecedented timepieces.