

Revolution of Our Times

REVOLUTION OF OUR TIMES

A Film by Hongkongers

香港人作品

時代革命

THE TIMES
DIDN'T CHOOSE US
WE CHOSE TO
CHANGE THE TIMES

不是時代選中了我們
是我們選擇改變時代



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
SPECIAL SCREENING
2021 OFFICIAL SELECTION



Synopsis

“Hong Kong is on the frontlines of a global battle for freedom.” *TIME Magazine*

Over the past fifty years, Hongkongers have fought for freedom and democracy but have yet to succeed. In 2019, the “Extradition Bill” which would have allowed the extradition of Hongkongers to China opened a Pandora’s box, turning Hong Kong into a battlefield against the Chinese authoritarian rule. The award-winning director of “Ten Years: Self Immolator,” Kiwi Chow, made this documentary to tell the story of the movement, both with a macro view of its historical context and up close and personal on the front lines.



The 2019 movement is always labelled with the characteristics of “decentralized leadership”, “be water” (flexible tactics), “do not split” (unity but in different ways) and “blossoming everywhere” (protest all over the territory). The film covers seven teams of protestors with different stories which are put together as a comprehensive picture of the versatile movement:

A group of netizens formed a sentinel station which spread first-hand information from the frontlines and coordinated “parent-cars” to help protestors to escape;

An online journalist, who did the live broadcasting of the “Storming the Legislature” and the “Yuen Long Attack”, became an iconic figure and ultimately played a significant role pushing the movement forward;



A 73-year-old farmer with other elderlies formed the “Protect the Children” group. He persisted to shield young protesters with his own body, even after having been knocked to the ground, and pepper-sprayed in the eyes by riot police;

A high school voluntary first-aidier witnessed a subway terror attack by the police and was barred from entering the station to save the wounded. The nightmare made the once peacefully minded first-aidier more prepared to accept violent means to fight against authoritarianism;



A team of university students used relatively violent means like Molotov cocktails and flare guns, to protect their own campus, fearlessly countering over 2,000 rounds of teargas from the police;

A teenage valiant protestor was trapped in the “Poly-U Siege” with his schoolmates. He tried to escape through the sewers but failed. In desperation, he left his last words in a voice message;



A grown up frontline protestor became a father figure to a small squad of twenty young protesters. This group of strangers turned into a big family which eventually fled to Taiwan.

Democracy and freedom are now facing an unprecedented crisis all over the world. The film “Revolution of *Our* Times” is not only about the battle of Hongkongers but is about a war between all freedom lovers and dictatorships of our globe.

Running Time: 152 minutes

Language: Cantonese

Director's Biography: Kiwi CHOW

Kiwi CHOW graduated from the Hong Kong Academy for the Performing Arts with a Bachelor and a Master of Fine Arts. His first feature film, “A Complicated Story” (2013), was selected for the 37th Hong Kong International Film Festival and won the Award for Young Artist (Film) at Hong Kong Arts Development Awards 2014. Kiwi went on to direct the ‘Self-immolator’ section of the multi award winning and highly controversial film ‘Ten Years’. ‘Ten Years’ won Best Film in the 35th Hong Kong Film Awards and was viciously criticized by the Chinese state media. ‘Ten Years’ became a cult classic in Hong Kong and is now available on Netflix. Kiwi Chow’s newest feature film “Beyond the Dream” received stellar box office results in Hong Kong during its release in the Summer of 2020. It also won the Best Adapted Screenplay Award (57th Taipei Golden Horse Film Awards) and received six nominations in the 39th Hong Kong Film Awards.



Director's Statement

Within the narrative of the big event, this documentary also weaves in short stories of the protesters. There is no leader in this movement, which is rare in the global history of resistance. Everyone is of great significance to this movement. Every single participant is a brave soul. Masked demonstrators on the front line are allowed to speak their mind through the medium of a documentary. The audience is unable to see their faces, but they can enter their hearts and allow the protestors to present their brave, yet fragile souls.



In 2019, the Hong Kong people rebelled against the proposed extradition bill to amend the 'Fugitive Offenders Ordinance'. And in 2020, the regime replaced it with the more dire 'National Security Law'. Living under fear, the interviewees had to wear face masks, the production staff had to remain anonymous, and we will have to live with the fact that this documentary cannot be screened publicly in Hong Kong due to heavy monitoring by the government.



We have lost contact with some of the interviewees in the film, some went into exile, and some are serving sentences in prison. The people of Hong Kong have indeed given up a lot during this tumultuous period. And as a film director, it is my responsibility to take the risks and document the resistance.

It was not the times that chose us, but we chose to change the times.

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