

Postmodern City Films & Global Flows 2018 F

The Cabbie 運轉手之戀



Group 3 of 2016 F Class
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& Kate Liu

Outline

I. Discussion Questions

II. Introduction: Director, Film Style and Structure and Films about Taxi Driver

III. Taxi Industry, History & the Cabbies in the Film

IV. Taxi Driver as a Flaneur?

V. Taxi Triangle on the Road:

A. Taxi Driver Family

B. Traffic Police

C. Risky Elements





I. Discussion Questions

G 3 Do you find the taxi drivers in *The Cabbie* professional? Would you dare to become their passengers? In what ways is Da-chuan a flaneur?

G 1 -What other professions could be considered *flâneur*. Why and how do they respond to the flows in the urban city? [Helen]

G 5 Among all occupations, why does the film match the father taxi driver with a coroner first, and then the son with a traffic police officer? What roles do the sister and brother-in-law play?

4. G 7 Is A-Quan dead or not at the end of the movie? Explain its meanings in detail. [G5]

5. G 6 What's the significance of the accidents & the gangster-like passengers in this film?

6. G 2 Explain the film as a self-reflexive film? What is the function of the main character's "breaking the fourth wall"? (G 7)

7. G 4 Why do people tend to reveal their deepest secret to a total stranger? What kinds of understanding does Ah-Quan show of his passengers [G6]



II. Introduction

Director
Screenwriter
Cast

Connie Shao

Film Genre
Film Technique

Zhoe Chang &
Kate Liu

Directors

2000 37th Golden Horse Judges' Award 2000 第37屆金馬獎 評審團大獎
2000 3rd Taipei Film Fest. Best Director 2000 第3屆台北電影節 年度最佳導演

陳以文 (Ivan Chen)

- Multiple collaborations with Edward Yang (楊德昌)
- Style heavily influenced by Yang
- 1994 Scenes of Violence (暴力紀實錄)
- 1999 Guo Jong (果醬)



張華坤 (Hua-Kun Chang)

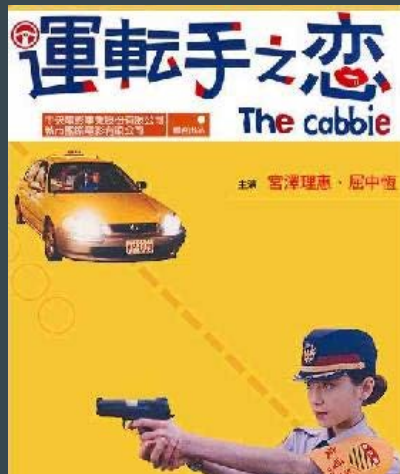
- Mostly a producer
- Often collaborates with Hsiao-Hsien Hou (侯孝賢)
- Founder of City Film Ltd.



Screenwriter

蘇照彬 (Chao-Pin Su)

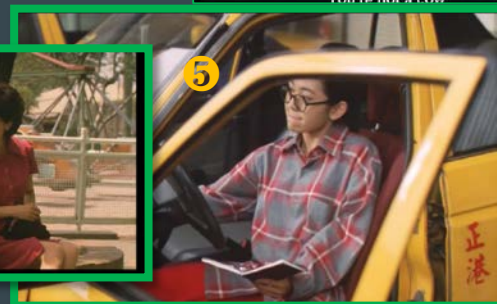
- Born in Tainan, **father was a taxi driver.**
- MA degree in engineering
- Fascinated with science fiction
- Notable Works:
 - 2000 The Cabbie (運轉手之戀)
 - 2002 Double Vision (雙瞳)
 - 2004 Silk (詭絲)



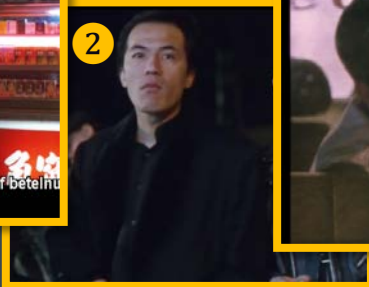
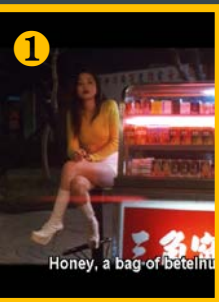
Cast

- 1 屈中恆 - 蘇大全 Da-Quan
- 2 宮澤理惠 - 莊靜文 Jing-wen
- 3 張嘉年 (太保) - 蘇周 (主角父親) Father
- 4 程秀瑛 - 游希子 (主角母親) Mother
- 5 蔡燦得 - 小妹 (主角妹妹) Sister
- 6 蘇照彬 (飾演迎娶小妹的化工博士)

Source: [Wikipedia](#)

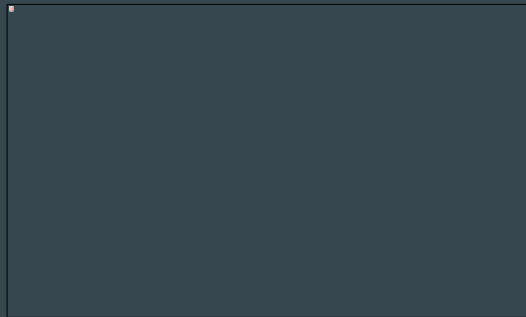


Extra 1 王心凌 (飾演檳榔西施 Betel Nut Girl) ; 2 戴立忍 (飾演流氓 Hoodlum) ; 3 唐從聖 (飾演乘客 - 拿出假槍 toy gun scare) ; 柯一正 (飾演警察局隊長 - police chief) ; 4 蔡振南 (飾演協調會長 negotiator) ; 5 李立群 (飾演基因博士乘客 gene doctor) 6 李愛綺 (台語女歌手-李嘉, 飾演強盜女 Female Robber)



(Black) Comedy or a Meta-Filmic Comedy

- **Black Comedy?** A comic style to make the serious or taboo theme lighter for the audience. Is life and death taboo?
- Comedy with a **Self-Conscious Narrative Style:**
- a **1st-Person Narrator**
 - who tells the story of **one day in his life, with flash backs about his family, his driving career, his pursuit of his dream-girl, and his passengers (more later).**
 - who **breaks the fourth wall** to address the audience.



Films about **Taxi Drivers** as a Social Misfit, a Drifter, or One with Worldly Wisdom for Survival



Taxi Driver
(Martin Scorsese,
1976)

Rob Di Niro
Judy Forster

[Image source](#)



夏日暖洋洋 (/
Love Beijing 寧瀛
2002)

[Image source](#)

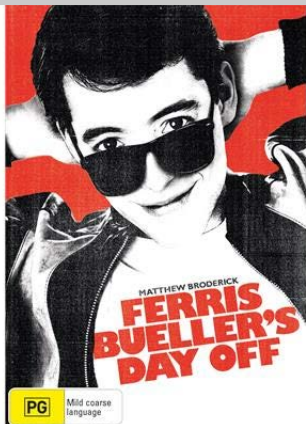


Cosmos (1996,
six Quebecois
directors, including
Denis Villeneuve)

[Image source](#)

Films w/ **Self-Reflexive Narrators** (addressing the audience)

<http://screencrush.com/breaking-the-fourth-wall-movies/>



Ferris Beuler's Day Off (蹺課天才, 1986)

[Image source](#)



Fight Club (1999)

[Image source](#)



I've Heard the Mermaid

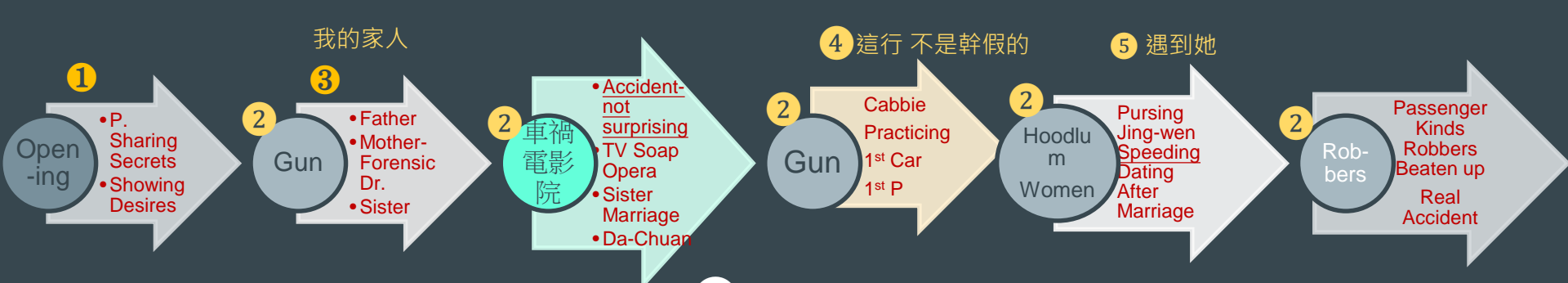
Singing (1987, Patricia Rozema)

[Image source](#)

Ah-Quan-narrator

- Sound and honest
- Passionate about driving





1 City as Reflected in The Passengers

- Meta-filmic Techniques
- 1) Title cards
 - 2) Fast-forwarding
 - 3) Addressing the audience

Thesis



The film, told from the perspective of a taxi driver as a flaneur, presents how he witnesses, experiences and makes sense of a variety of urban flows, regular and irregular ones, in his taxi, and with his family & taxi company.



III. Taxi Industry & History in Taiwan; the Cabbies in the Film

History

1991: Unified yellow color (Polls held by Taxi guild)



History (Cont.): Conflicts

1995: Riot between two taxi companies (全民 v.s. 大豐)

1996: Murder of Ms. Peng Wan Ru (彭婉如事件)

2016: Protest against Uber

2018: Uber working with Taxi companies

回顧影片轟動一時1995年的台灣計程車暴動事件



Cabbie as a Profession (Kinds, Skills & Ethics)



Με,λε,ρεου,ελε,λυμμε,τε,το,δε,ρη,μει



Professionalism: Skills vs. Tickets

“Talking about driving . . . I didn’t care about school grades, but if I drove badly, or failed my first driving test, I’d never live it down. Nobody judges driving by such high standards” (*The Cabbies* 2000).



It was my first
ever speed-trap photo

Professionalism vs. Skills: Cabbies of Different Kinds

They are connoisseurs of driving techniques. [They] control the wheels with total precision” (*The Cabbies* 2000).



Profession (Cont.): Lack of Skills



Fantasy, Professionalism & Ethics





IV. How is a taxi driver *Flâneur*?

Eilleen Chang

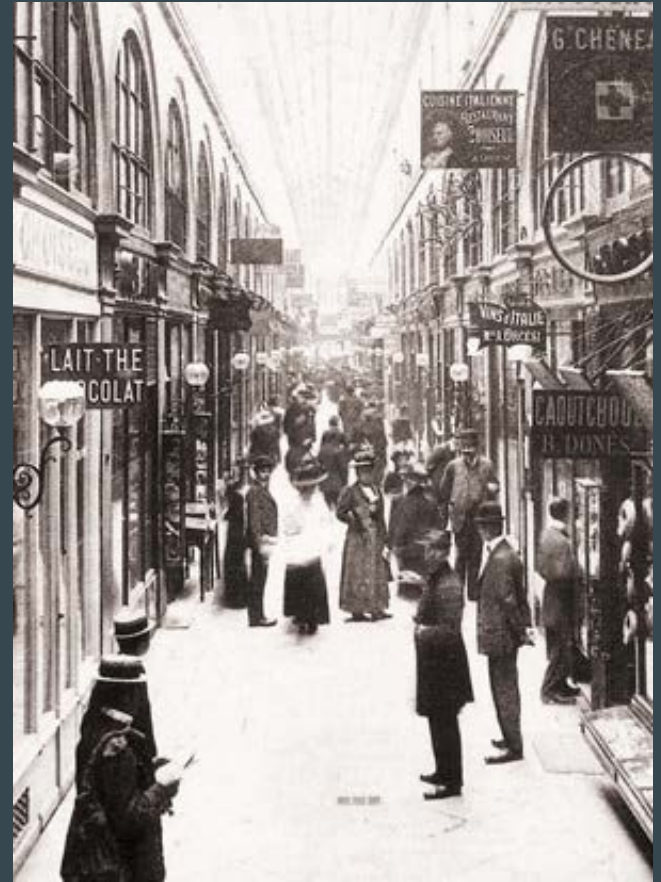
- Seeing diversity of urban life
- Hearing different stories
- Meeting different passengers

Flâneur

(n.) in French

stroller, lounge, saunterer, loafer

- Associated with aimless urban wandering and observing
- “an emblematic representative of MODERNITY and the personification of contemporary urbanity”
(Ferguson, 1994, p.22)



Seeing Diversity of Urban Life and Urban Views

The father

"Say he does 70,000 km a year, he already covered at least 2 million km. That's to say, five round trips from the earth to the moon. He's now on his sixth trip back from the moon. As long as he doesn't hit a meteorite, he should reach earth by the end of the year."

("The Cabbie", 2000)

Hearing and Collecting

different stories happening in the city

“My dad once told me, people **tend to confide their secrets to strangers** they’ll never meet again.”

→ **Loneliness of urban dwellers**

(“The Cabbie”, 2000)

Types:

- **Family Problems** 1) husband’s affair; 2) father’s affair, 9) brother “murderer”
- **Social Indifference** 3) desire for anonymity 6) genetic determinism
- **Sexual Problems & Desires** 4) problem with erection, 7) flasher 8) asking for a date
- 5) kid’s dinosaur fantasy



Meeting different passengers and categorizing them

“Whenever passengers get in, I try to guess what they’re like. Will they pay? Will they give me a little extra? Will they tell me to keep the change? I’m mostly right about them.”

→ Observation

→ Categorization – Those giving more, the stingy types, The borrowers, the robber...

("The Cabbie", 2000)



I'm mostly right about them



What types are they?



These guys are the stingiest type



Sorry, can you lend me NT\$1000 ?

∇. Taxi Triangle on the Road:
A. Taxi Driver's Family –
experienced with death

The Su Family: Father

- Su Zhou (蘇周)
- Taxi driver/ The boss of the taxi company
- Mediator → deal with compensation claims
- Sophisticated → eat after seeing You at work
→ friendship with the police
- Familiar w/ death and facing car accidents



The Su Family: Mother

- You Xi-zi (游希子)
- Coroner → stereotypes/ a good observer
- Familiar with death when dealing corpses
- An ordinary mother



The Su Family: Mother & Father

- Emotional
- Love (through their actions in the daily life)



The Su Family: Sister

- Chemistry lover
- Familiar to danger → chemical explosion



The Su Family: Sister

- Sister's husband: chemical engineer
- Topics over Dinner Table (cf. Jingwen's visit)

→ occupation// food pollution or car accidents



Taxi Drivers

- Traditional
- Intimate



I didn't care about my school grades



Unless it flies or swims
he's hit it



I mean it
it'll be quicker this way!

Taxi Drivers

- Like a family → sharing



to grow up in a taxi firm



He told everyone
I didn't want to marry



V. Taxi Triangle on the Road:

B. Traffic Police

C. Risks

Traffic Police

1. Can be lenient
2. Facing drivers who over-speed, so not care about traffic rules

Things they think they can control perfectly

Cars w/ Driving skills



So he reversed
all the way back to Taipei

Women w/ Flirting skills



Their Acceptance and Ease in Face of Death



Staying calm in the face of life & death



Risks & the Unpredictable on the Road

- However, they still cannot escape from Death's clutches.
- Risk Elements: **Violence & the Irregular** on the Road



Family



Taxi industry



Things
beyond control

Conclusion

Taxi driver as a flaneur/flaneurie, is in and outside the flows.

The flows: regular but with risks & accidents

