

COMPLICIT

a film by Heather White and Lynn Zhang



DIRECTED BY HEATHER WHITE LYNN ZHANG WRITTEN BY CHRISTOPHER SEWARD
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS DIANA HOLTZBERG DAL LAMAGNA DALE RODRIGUES
ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS XIN LIU BING WANG KATH DELANEY ERIK JOHNSON MARIA SNYDER
GREG HEMMINGS STEVE FOSTER DWAYNE MENEZES DANIELLE TURKOV STEPHANIE VON STEIN
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY SUN SHAOGUANG MUSIC BY FREDDIE BRYANT

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NYWIFT || New York Women in Film & Television

THINK-Film
Impact PRODUCTION





LOGLINE

Yi Yeting is struggling to survive occupational leukemia, while helping other workers in similar situations, poisoned by benzene and n-hexane. He brings his fight against benzene from his hospital room, where he helps other workers, to Silicon Valley and the international stage. Against huge odds Yi directly confronts corporate and government interests, while empowering and inspiring the people around him.

SYNOPSIS

Yi YeTing is struggling with occupational leukemia and trying to obtain compensation from his employer. Wanting to help others, he begins working for a non-profit that assists workers with occupational illness and injuries. He discovers there are dozens of workers in his local area who were poisoned while making smartphones. Through research in the community, he discovers a leukemia cluster in the neighborhood surrounding Apple's main supplier Foxconn. Yi's research leads him to several workers and their families trying to survive while burdened with their health care costs. Powerful forces are unleashed as he confronts local factories, putting his own safety at risk.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION:

The film takes the audience on an 8000-mile journey to the world's electronics factory floors, revealing the situations under which China's youth population has shifted by the millions in search of a better life.

"Complicit is a fantastic film!"

- Maya Wang, Asia Division, Human Rights Watch





DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

and History behind COMPLICIT:

In early 2013 I was a Network Fellow at Harvard University's Safra Center for Ethics, and had recently arrived in China researching a book on the rise of China's mega-factories in the Pearl River Delta region. I had read a news article in 1997 describing dozens of Chinese teenagers paralyzed and in comas due to occupational poisoning in the newly established export factories in that region.

I was assigned a videographer named Lynn Zhang to accompany me for two weeks, filming my research. We began visiting hospitals in Shenzhen and Guangzhou to find out if the situation was still ongoing. Lynn and I discovered dozens of hospital rooms filled with young Chinese workers being treated for benzene and n-hexane poisoning from workplace exposures, including in electronics factories.

We heard about a young man suffering from occupational leukemia he had contracted while working for a shipping container company, who had decided to assist others also suffering from occupational diseases. We first met Yi

Yeting - COMPLICIT'S main protagonist - when he invited us to join him on a visit to Ming Kunpeng, a 26 year-old former worker with late-stage occupational leukemia.

Kunpeng worked for 3 years on an assembly line wiping parts for electronic components and developed cancer linked to a cleaning solvent containing benzene, a known carcinogen. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/cancer/npotocca.html>. He entered the factory when he was 19 years old and by age 22 was diagnosed with leukemia. During our many interviews with electronics workers as well as those from other industries, we discovered that the incubation period for occupational leukemia typically occurred after 2-3 years of exposure in the workplace.

For over a year and half Kunpeng's family had been trying unsuccessfully to get Kunpeng's medical expenses paid by his employer, the Dutch semiconductor manufacturer ASM Pacific, one of Holland's largest firms producing components and semiconductor equipment for the electronics industry. The family and ASM were at a stalemate in early 2013 when we arrived.

Yi was helping Kunpeng's family petition for an acceptable settlement from ASM. They weren't able to pay for chemo or surgeries without the company's support, which eventually they received. Ultimately Yi's help led to a much higher settlement agreement

(US\$100,000) than the industry average. But Kunpeng didn't receive an official occupational diagnosis and treatment in time. Early treatment is critical, and doctors said he had no chance of survival. Not wanting to be a burden on his family he committed suicide in 2015.

Over the next three years we filmed Yi as he assisted numerous other stricken workers and their families, underwent many chemotherapy treatments, unsuccessful efforts to obtain compensation from his employer, two government imposed evictions from his apartment, and a trip home to visit his family and mother's grave. We also filmed happy times with his family and a joyous celebration at a 12-course Chinese rural banquet.

In addition, we met dozens of other workers allegedly poisoned by benzene and n-hexane, all working for contractors and subcontractors for global electronics corporations. A few are featured in COMPLICIT.

We filmed in several provinces in China, also in the Netherlands and US. Because of the public interest that would be served by a film powerfully conveying all that we were discovering, I decided to put the book on hold and instead make a feature length documentary. It is my hope that after watching COMPLICIT viewers will feel a sense of increased connection to the workers that make the devices they can't live without, and understand the risks associated with chemicals used during their production.

ABOUT THE FILM TEAM:

Co-Director/Producer: Heather White is a first-time documentary director. From 2011-2014 she was a Network Fellow at Harvard University's Edmond Safra Center for Ethics. She is the founder and former Executive Director (1995-2005) of www.verite.org, an award-winning non-profit organization recognized for its groundbreaking leadership in the areas of global supply chain monitoring and factory social audits.

Co-Director/2nd Cameraperson: Lynn Zhang is a videographer who previously specialized in short documentaries.

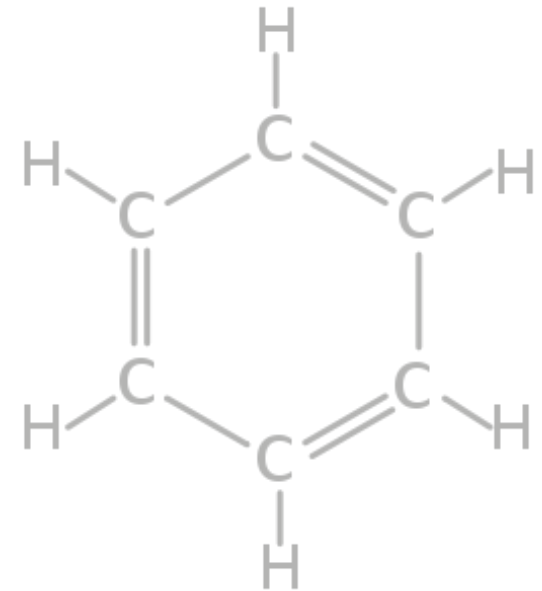
Executive Producer: Diana Holtzberg is a New York City based producer whose credits include : Mr. Gaga (2016); Growing Up Coy (2016); Requiem for the American Dream (2015); Education, Inc. (Heartland Emmy Award winner) (2015); Syl Johnson: Any Way The Wind Blows (2015); Back On Board: Greg Louganis (Emmy nominated + PGA nominated) (2014); Broken Heartland (2014); Bert Stern: Original Madman (2011); The Art of Failure: Chuck Connelly Not for Sale (Emmy Award Winner) (2009); The Dictator Hunter (2007); Loving and Cheating (2005); Imaginary Witness: Hollywood And The Holocaust (2004); End Of The Century: The Story Of The Ramones (2004); Still Doing It: The Intimate Lives of Women Over 65 (2004) ; Held Hostage in Colombia (2003)

Cinematographer / DOP: Sun Shaoguang is the cinematographer of three documentaries: widely acclaimed Last Train Home, China Heavyweight and Fallen City.

Music Director: Freddie Bryant is a jazz guitarist in the New York jazz scene. Bryant is on the guitar faculties of Berklee College of Music and Prins Claus Conservatorium in Groningen, Holland.

Screenwriter and Film Editor: Christopher Seward is an editor and producer, best known for Fahrenheit 9/11 (2004), Sicko (2007) and Fat, Sick & Nearly Dead (2010).

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Directors: Heather White and Lynn Zhang

Producer: Heather White **Executive Producers:** Diana Holtzberg, East Village Entertainment, Dal LaMagna, Dale Rodrigues

Category: Technology/Society/Health **Language:** Mandarin Chinese and English **Subtitles:** English **Length:** 89:48 minutes

Festivals: Premiering at London Human Rights Watch Film Festival, Geneva International Film Festival, Forum on Human Rights

Facebook: facebook.com/thehumancostfilm

Press Coverage from the London, Toronto and Geneva premieres:

"COMPLICIT is a shattering comment on inequality and the forces that work to maintain the unjust status-quo."

<https://www.filmdoo.com/blog/2017/03/08/review-complicit-2017/>

"Complicit, A Shocking Film On Global Outsourcing Featured At Human Rights Watch Film Festival"

<http://faze.ca/movie-review-complicit-global-outsourcing/>

"In this year's festival, the most complex film to assess was Complicit, a doc about Chinese activists struggling to help factory workers poisoned by the chemicals used to make cellphones and computers."

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/film/human-rights-watch-film-festival-critically-curates-documentaries/article34400377/>

"Complicit...forces one to ponder how much a life is truly worth in our profit obsessed world." ★ ★ ★ ★

<http://www.the-platform.org.uk/2017/03/25/film-nights-for-human-rights-complicit/>

"Complicit reveals the human costs of global outsourcing while highlighting the choices made by a group of inspired activists seeking change."

<http://povmagazine.com/blog/view/tiff-announces-human-rights-watch-film-festival-line-up>

COMPLICIT



Nominated for an EDA Award for best female-directed film by the Alliance of Women Film Journalists, partnering with DOXA Documentary Film Festival May 4 to 14, in Vancouver, BC.