

A FILM BY GEOFFREY PHEASANT

SHIRLEY
VALENTINE

IVAN
KINGSLEY

JOHN
PRITCHARD

AITANA
LLORENTE

GIEDRE
JACKYTE

TAO
GUO

BETTY
FAY



THREE
COUPLES
FREED

Open  Pictures





THREE COUPLES **FREED**

Runtime: **85 minutes**

Directed By: **G.Pheasant**

Written By: **G.Pheasant**

Produced By: **G.Pheasant**

Production Co: **OpenPictures**

Edited by: **G.Pheasant**

Cinematographer: **G.Pheasant**



LOGLINE

Was the life we chose the life we imagined and dreamed of, or is the life we have the one we truly deserve?

SYNOPSIS SHORT

Three separate couples each decide to make some important decisions on the future of their relationships. Stumbling and searching, they try to find their own alternative and drastic paths to happiness.

SYNOPSIS FULL

Three Couples Freed's poetic cinematic vision takes the audience from the iconic sights of central London to the dim and hazy, yet beautiful time-worn Essex coastline.

Back and forth the movie sublimely weaves its way deep into the lives of the three couples, each grappling with their emotions and thoughts of a life lost, desired, or perhaps deserved.

Vincent and Emily Chen, middle-class Chinese business professionals whose relationship is under the strain and pressures of living a modern London experience, both feel the weight of traditional family expectations of managing financial success. Vincent puts his life on hold while being married to Emily, and decides to callously and psychologically manipulate his way to freedom.

Caine and Maya, both 19 years old, awkwardly navigate their way through a doomed, tempestuous love affair – Maya is often frustrated when trying to positively steer her boyfriend Caine, a homeless petty criminal who wanders from one mate's sofa to the next, and from one cheap deal to the next. Maya's traditional Spanish family background forces her to see the reality of a relationship with a guy who is still reaching and searching for a sense of his own happiness and purpose.

Reggie and Colleen are well and truly in the twilight years of their marriage – Colleen's years of gnawing away at Reggie's soul have left him alone and desperate to flee a life of never-ending belittling. Even at the age of 84, Reggie plots a brave but fragile leap for freedom and revenge.

OUR STORY

Three Couples Freed was filmed during England's Covid-19 epidemic, from June 2020 - July 2022, post-production was completed late 2023.

Essentially, the film is about discontent, disillusionment and the choices we often need to make in our lives, specifically in connection to our relationships and how often our lives head in a direction we hadn't expected or planned for. This can sometimes lead us to question the current path our life is taking.

From the outset, I had no particular requirement in terms of the actors' ethnic or cultural background ,but I did want a diverse cast, as I felt this would certainly enrich the narrative and inform the audience.

However, what I did require was a cast which could endure the hardships of being involved in a zero-budget film, particularly as this film demanded a lot of filming in external locations and public places, so the ability of the actors to be able to maintain their enthusiasm, while only being fuelled by a cold sandwich and a coffee (collected by me from a well-known supermarket!), was paramount.

I can say in this regard I got lucky, as all the cast members really dug deep, "roughed it ", and managed to get this production past the finish line, showing that, with the right planning and dedication, a zero-budget film can surpass all the usual expectations of quality and performance, which is normally credited to fully funded films. Well done to us all!



FEATURED

Tao is a bilingual Asian actor who graduated in Circus Theatre Performance in China in 1988. In 2003, he came to the UK to study physical theatre and modern dance performance. Now based in London, Tao has played various roles in film, TV and theatre.

After graduating from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and determined to become an actor, Betty went on to train at RADA. Betty's true love is theatre, and she is an avid fan of Shakespeare's monologues. In her spare time, she enjoys playing with Lego, Cooking and travelling.

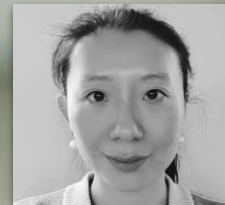
Born and raised in Spain, it was clear to Aitana at a very young age that she wanted to become an actor. She is currently studying at Rose Bruford College in London, and is a member of The South London Players theatre company. In her free time, Aitana enjoys playing the guitar and painting.

As well as acting on stage and screen, John is an eSports TV presenter and personality, and often hosts and presents various gaming festivals around the world.

TAO GUO as *Vincent*



BETTY FAY as *Emily*



AITANA LLORENTE as *Maya*



JOHN PRITCHARD as *Caine*





DIRECTOR

Born in Hammersmith, raised in Hackney, London's East End.

Coming from a working class, 1970's East End upbringing, wasn't exactly the ideal environment for someone with a notion of one day becoming a film director, so any thoughts I had at that time of breaking into the world of movie making, was frankly a million miles away from my day to day reality, expectations and opportunities for people like me at that time were extremely limited. However my creative drive couldn't be ignored, and in the 1980's & 1990's I pursued a musical career, feeling dissatisfied throughout this period, I realised much later on in life that film was my true passion, and in 2018 with no formal training as a writer or as a filmmaker, I took my first tentative steps to making my dream become a reality.

Being completely self-taught, but with passion, and a sharp eye for detail, I slowly developed a technique and soon acquired the skills to begin work on "Three Couples Freed" my debut film. I guess as I've had no structured, technical background in making films, my approach is more from a gut instinct, from my soul, It could be said.

It's an odd thing, but only when I started seriously thinking about writing and making a film, did it dawn on me how much film is a part of my everyday life, I'm always watching and analysing films, and, when I'm out and about, I find myself observing people and places as if I was looking at life through a lens.

CAST

Vincent **TAO GUO**

Emily **BETTY FAY**

Maya **AITANA LLORENTE**

Caine **JOHN PRITCHARD**

Grace **GIEDRE JACKYTE**

Grant **JAMES BODONYI**

Reggie **IVAN KINGSLEY**

Colleen **SHIRLEY VALENTINE**

Josh **DAVID CHAPPELL**

Dax **CHARLIE MOREL**

Tom **THOMAS CLARKE**

Vagrant/Tog **JOHN PORTER**

Isabel **BONNIE WAACK**

Dan **CHRISTOPHER CHUNG**

Jennifer **RACHEAL TSE**

Juan **TALPROFS**

Demi **CLEMENTINE PINET**

Jack **JASON YIP**

Toni **MARIA CORUTA BLENDEA**

Mary **JULIE FORTEZA**

Tog **MARK CLARK**

Doris **GEOFFREY PHEASANT**

Mr Chen **JIAN JAMES WANG**

Curator **LUDOVICA BULCIOLU**

Special Thanks

Jian Wang - **San Mei Gallery**
Vasilis - **Threegrams Coffee Shop**
Mr H - **One Plus Chinese Restaurant**
Simon - **China Palace Excel**
Judith - **Ye Olde Mitie Public House**





EQUIPMENT

Camera

Blackmagic Ursa Mini 4.6k

Film Format

CinemaDNG 4.6k

Sound

Sound Devices 702

Microphone

Rode NTG-8

Lenses

Russian Soviet Vintage

Helios 44.2 58mm f2

Mir-20M 20mm f3.5

Mir-10A 28mm f3.5

Mir-1V 37mm f2.8

Jupiter-9 85mm f2

Tair-11A 153mm f2.8

Lighting

x4 Generic 500W LED

EVF

Alphatron 0035w

Batteries

Const LB M100

Pag PL96

IDX E-HL9

Boompole

Rode

Tripod

Walimex Pro FT-9902

Camera Cage Rig

CamGear

*Digital Video Editing
& Grading Software*

Blackmagic Davinci Resolve (v20)

DIRECTOR FAQs

Where did the original idea for the story come from?

“I once witnessed an odd moment while out on one of my people-watching days, where I observed two couples arguing right in front of me while I was sitting in my car enjoying a Maccy Ds coffee and a burger, one couple was in the foreground, the other in the background. Oblivious to any onlookers, each couple pleaded their case on why they decided to do what they did to the other, but neither partner in each couple seemed to be listening to what the other had to say.”

What was it like trying to manage a zero-budget film?

“Well let's say that there were a few moments when I just wanted to chuck it all in. It's a very frustrating and emotionally draining task to undertake. You have limited options, and limited time. Every aspect of production is in some small way compromised. If it wasn't for the support of loved ones and the cast this film would have never been completed.”

Why did you decide to take on so many roles in making this film?

“Purely and simply because I couldn't find the technicians who were prepared to invest their time and talent for free. I mean, come on, I was a unknown, unproven writer-director with no track record, so for them it was a risk, and I don't blame them. So, either I did it myself, or this film was never going to be made.”

Why did you use languages other than English?

“When I first cast for this movie I didn't have any particular nationality in mind, What I did want was as many unique voices as possible, and it just so happened that for the talent I chose, English was not their native tongue. So I purposely adapted the roles and script to highlight these differences, all of which added to the film's detail. The non-English scenes were chosen extremely carefully, and used for a very precise dramatic effect.”

How did you manage to shoot a film during the COVID-19 crisis?

“It indeed was a challenge, firstly to make sure everyone during the process was as safe and healthy as possible. But, in other regards, it helped the production. The fact that there was a lack of people at the locations really helped the filming schedule, particularly when we shot in public places.”

What did you learn from the making of this film and would you do it again?

“What a long list! I learnt so much, and it really did live up to all my expectations. I would say my one big takeaway from this is plan, plan and plan again, I can't stress it enough, do your research, write your storyboards, scrutinise your script and be clear about your directing skills, and what you want from each and every scene. Finally stay true to your vision. And, yes, in a heartbeat, In fact I'm already planning my next feature film.”