

Shao's script has a universal and eternal love theme and its Chinese title, "Myth of Love," is a tribute to Italian filmmaker Federico Fellini's 1969 film "Satyricon."

Italian actress Sophia Loren is mentioned a few times by Mr Bai's friend, Mr Wu, who claims to have had a romantic night with her in his younger years working in Italy.

"I gave her my first time and she gave me the entire Rome," Mr Wu tells his friends. He has remained single in his fictional "myth of love," claiming Loren as the only woman he has ever loved.

Mr Wu's quest for love gradually changes as Shao's middle-aged characters start to recognize that "reality is not a Fellini film." They all eventually get the courage to believe in love and embrace any new possibilities that life can offer.

"I hope that despite their age and cultural backgrounds, people in modern China can bravely face up to their emotional demands, show open hearts and minds and more tolerance to various opinions and options in a relationship," said Shao.

She recalled making a living by writing novels when she previously lived in Shanghai. In leisure, she enjoys cooking, shopping, coffee and chats with her local friends.

She said development of the story for "B for Busy" started in 2019 and was not a difficult process. She recorded what she saw and heard naturally over the period of time she spent in Shanghai.

"I am not a native of Shanghai, but it gives me a passion to observe the city with curiosity and diverse perspectives," Shao said. "I do not worship the city or disparage it. Most of the time I see it as a good friend and I am very willing to explore its charm in many details."

She depicts the warmth and kindness of Shanghai people in the movie. On screen, Mr Bai is a typical Shanghai gentleman who cooks a meal and sets a vase of flowers on the table for guests, paints on the kid's dirty dress and cares for people in the

neighborhood.

A considerate and romantic role is played by famous Shanghai actor Xu Zheng, also the film's producer. He identified Shao's talent during a film pitching event at FIRST International Film Festival and decided to support her work's progress to the big screen.

"The film has a very contemporary narrative and perspectives," said Xu. "It depicts the beauty and flavors of the city in a natural and artistic style. It is fresh Chinese cinema. I think what our film market requires is not simply blockbuster movies, but a diverse menu to encourage originality."

Xu also suggested that Shao expand the story beyond the backdrop of Shanghai to give it an inherent power to touch people out of the city, like the Woody Allen movies "Vicky Cristina Barcelona" and "Midnight In Paris" which have universal appeal but retain the flavors of different cities.

Some viewers are amazed at the



Lead actress Ma Yili plays Ms Li



The movie focuses on the delicate emotions of three women living in Shanghai.

city's tolerance for various cultures and how people from other cities naturally adapt to the local culture and lifestyle to become new Shanghaiese. The foreign characters in the movie, including Mr Bai's Italian tenant Alexander and Ms Li's biracial daughter Maya can speak fluent Shanghai dialect.

Netizen "Flying Time" said on Douban that the film ignited her aspiration to experience the colorful life of Shanghai. She is attracted to the film's city scenes, such as a cafe on a tree-lined street, small stores selling imported foods and old foreign-style houses.

Professor Liu Haibo, a film expert from Shanghai University, noted that the movie reflects the real lives and emotions of ordinary Shanghai people, and gives urban relationships a new and creative interpretation.

"Dialogue takes up quite a large proportion of the film," Professor Liu said. "As a dialect movie, the director has to strike a delicate balance between the language and the content. If the characters were not that cute and impressive, dialect would have been a burden."

"Surprisingly, all the characters in the film are very charming and interesting. Influenced by the culture of Shanghai, they're independent, self-respecting, vivid and warm-hearted."

He anticipates that increasing numbers of future Chinese films will include dialect in their scenes because it can help add elements of humor and realism to the story.



Xu Zheng, the film's producer and lead actor