

Glitz and glamor as SIFF opens in style

Xu Wei and Zhu Shenshen

The 25th Shanghai International Film Festival opened last Friday with no shortage of glitz and glamor on the red carpet.

Among the top celebrities and filmmakers from China and abroad who graced the red carpet at the Shanghai Grand Theater were mainland filmmaker Chen Kaige, British actor Jason Statham, Chinese-American pop sensation Kris Phillips, Hong Kong actors Chow Yun-fat and Nicholas Tse, and mainland star Shen Teng.

The creators of "Meg 2: The Trench," "Salvation," "Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms," "Who's the Suspect" and "Moscow Mission" were also present, as was the international jury panel for the Golden Goblet Awards.

The first installment of the Chinese fantasy epic film trilogy, "Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms," will be released on July 20.

On the red carpet, Phillips stated that all of the characters in the film have distinctive personalities, and his role has several levels of emotion.

The sci-fi adventure film "Meg 2: The Trench," starring Statham and China's Wu Jing, will be released on August 4.

"It's exciting for me to work with Wu," Statham said. "Wu has a lot of interesting ideas. I try to keep up with him. I'm very humble and grateful."

Hong Kong star Chow plays a habitual gambler looking for a means to connect with his autistic son in the film "Salvation."

Chow, who has been seen jogging on the Bund in Shanghai these days, said his character is considerably different from that of his representative work, "God of Gamblers."

The ongoing film festival is providing a platform for home-grown movies before their official release.

"All Ears," a nominee for this year's Golden Goblet Awards Main Competition, premiered at the Shanghai Film Art Center on Saturday.

The film, directed by Liu Jiayin and produced by Cao Baoping, centers on a scriptwriter's growth and new discoveries in life after he starts to write eulogies for the dead.

Director and scriptwriter Liu said that it has been more than a decade since her last film. She wrote the script as a conclusion to her own life in the past years.

"The story is loosely based on some of my own experiences," said Liu. "Just like me, the protagonist used to be confused about his career and life but



Left: The international jury panel team walks on the red carpet.

Below: Wu Jing (left) and Jason Statham pose for photos.

— Dong Jun



Right: (from left) Chen Kaige, Michelle Yeoh and Chow Yun-fat speak at the opening ceremony of the 25th SIFF. — IC



he finally finds where his true position is."

The cast of the highly anticipated action-packed drama film "Moscow Mission" also showed up on last Saturday.

The film by Herman Yau is based on the 1993 Sino-Russian train robbery, a real event that shocked the world.

The train was ransacked by groups of gangsters. For several days many passengers on the train were tortured and humiliated by criminals. The

incident caused a sensation, and a transnational hunt that lasted for 18 years to arrest all of the criminals.

Starring Andy Lau, Zhang Hanyu and Huang Xuan, it follows a cross-border pursuit of the gangsters.

The official release date of the two films is yet to be decided.

More than a dozen culture and technology companies signed up to launch new projects in the Shanghai International Resort in the Pudong New Area

during the Belt and Road Film Week, a part of the ongoing film festival.

The projects cover trending technologies like metaverse, virtual reality, generative AI for film production, as well as digital services covering entertainment, sports, shopping and tourism.

Shanghai is turning a global film and television production center, with Pudong as a pioneering zone, with a complete industry chain.



A visitor looks at a film prop used in the popular sci-fi film Wandering Earth II. — IC

AI reshaping films with 'disruptive influences'

Zhu Shenshen

ARTIFICIAL Intelligence is reshaping the film industry with "disruptive influences": while it improves work efficiency and brings opportunities, it also results in job loss, speakers said during the ongoing Shanghai International Film Festival.

The generative AI, including ChatGPT and related tools, will reshape processes of creation, special effects IP operation

and cinema management, Shanghai Daily learned.

Sci-fi fiction writers, directors, cinema operators, tech providers and researchers shared their vision of the entertainment industry under the wave of AI generated content at a SIFF forum.

Guo Fan, director of the blockbusters Wandering Earth I and II, is shocked by the development of AIGC. ChatGPT-like AI features mastered by MOSS robots in Guo's

films are a reality now. Guo admitted he never expected such techs to become a reality before 2025.

On the other hand, AI brings high efficiency and new tools for film production, and may bring Chinese filmmakers opportunities to catch up with Hollywood, Guo said.

He will start an "AI rediscovering" journey, including visits to special effects and AI studios worldwide, before starting the filming of

Wandering Earth III.

Concept vision design used to take two weeks, but now it may take only two days with AIGC, which generates 20 acceptable images. This greatly improves the efficiency of creation and opens up imagination to improve workflow, said Wang Yixu, founder and CEO of Stella, which operates film IPs, including the Love Between Fairy and Devil, a popular drama on streaming sites.