

# Earth And Shadow

Produced by Shuyu Gao



"Nostalgia is like moss, it thrives after the rains."

**Contact:** Shuyu Gao

shuxixishu@gmail.[com](mailto:shuxixishu@gmail.com)

+44 7469530292

# Earth And Shadow

## Tag line:

“Nostalgia is like moss, it thrives after the rains.”

## Synopsis

"Earth And Shadow" is an essay film born from my introspection.

How can memories be made tangible? As the wheels of progress roll over our history, and the evidence of our hometown and childhood existence is destroyed, where should the memories of the past and childhood find their place? In this film, I reflect on my relationship with time. Through the lens, the film aims to explore my fragmented reflections and perceptions on the passage of time when witnessing its effects on different entities.

The film lacks a protagonist; instead, it employs dual-narrative voice-over to contrast the fleeting existence of a hometown with the enduring tenacity of ferns. These sharply contrasting narratives intertwine to construct a understanding and reflection on the concepts of time and eternity. Ultimately, they overlap. I, my demolished hometown, and the ferns all rise and fall through the tides of time at different speeds through our respective life cycles.

## The documentary

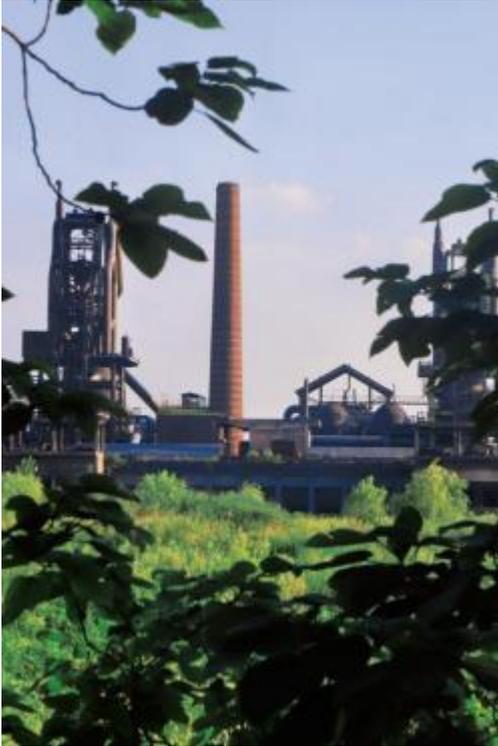
This documentary is a visually rich portrayal of the contrast that between the fleeting existence of a hometown with the enduring tenacity of ferns. It uses a mixture of archive, observation footage and experimental imagery to create a dream-like world.

## Director's vision

The old factory, including my dad and me, resembles drops in the river of time, drifting with its waves. I wholeheartedly acknowledge the reality that, within the scope of the universe, everything is undergoing rapid decay.

My deep fixation on memories and an inherent fear of irreversibility have always been part of me, which serves as the driving force behind the creation of this film.

## Background



*The old factory*

I was born in an old factory compound which born in the era of china's planned economy, which has gone through four generations without much change. The neighbours were all employees of the old factory. The younger generation grew up and moved away from the compound, leaving only the elders still live here.

Ferns are the oldest terrestrial plants, part of them extinct during the Permian period and becoming coal seams buried underground. However, some ferns have survived. Those species continued to live and reproduce in the same simple and primitive manner as their ancestors did billions of years ago. Coal and fuel those made from ferns were the vital resources that fueled China's industrialization 40 years ago.

My father was born during the golden era of the industry district, but by the time he became my father, the entire factory businesses had declared bankruptcy and had become rundown urban areas in a matter of period.

## Style

### Cinematic Language

At the beginning of filming, I wanted to convey my personal feelings about my memories through the lens. So I retrieved what I felt when recalling this memory, and I felt ambiguity, uncertainty.

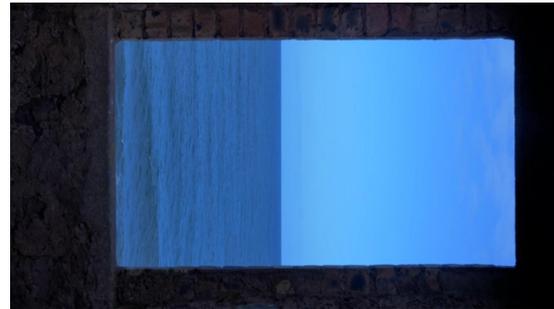
In “Earth And Shadow”, the film's visual language becomes an integral part of the storytelling. Through archive footage, observational shots, and experimental imagery, it create a realm where time and memory intertwine.

The use of archive footage acts as a portal to the past, resurrecting the glory of bygone eras. These historical fragments become windows into the community's once-thriving history. In stark contrast, the present reality is unveiled through observational footages, grounding the narrative in the tangible present.



*Archive footages and observational footages*

The experimental imagery design was come from my dream. Those footages rich with symbolic significance, forming the film's artistic centerpiece. Each composed shot serves as a visual metaphor.



### *Experimental footages*

Cinematically aim to explore the profound themes of transience and eternity. Through abstract visuals and surreal compositions, creating an ethereal atmosphere that mirrors the delicate balance between dream and existence.

### **Narrative**

The narrative style of “Earth And Shadow” is a tapestry woven from the threads of memory, time, and the juxtaposition of past and present. Through a carefully orchestrated blend of archive, observation footage, and experimental imagery, this film offers a contemplative exploration that transcends traditional linear storytelling.

The narrative style of “Earth And Shadow” is an invitation to engage in introspection and contemplation. It encourages people to ponder the complexities of memory, the passage of time, and the enduring connections that bind us to both the past and the present. Through this unique narrative tapestry, it aspires to create a profound cinematic experience that resonates on both an emotional and philosophical level.