

Traits and Dilemma: Feminism and Multiple Demands in Young Chinese Female-Directed Films

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Abstract : With the rise of feminism in the global film industry, feminist expressions in Chinese films have also evolved, reflecting societal focus on gender issues. This article focuses on young Chinese female directors such as Yang Lina, Teng Congcong, and Yang Mingming. Their films now present richer female perspectives and consciously incorporate unique female life experiences. They highlight women's real-life struggles, portraying 'struggling' female identities—characters facing professional failures and desire identity issues, ultimately returning to family roles. These films commonly explore the 'mother-daughter relationship', with some using genre storytelling for commercial appeal and others deconstructing the 'myth of motherhood' to reflect reality, rewriting traditional maternal roles. The 'struggling' female identity in these directors' films shows an aesthetic of 'pseudo-reality', blending realistic situations with poetic, lyrical elements, reflecting their creative traits and internal conflicts. These contradictions are closely related to the unique creative context of Chinese cinema in which they operate. Emerging under China's strict film censorship system, film industrialization, consumerist culture, and internet environment, new-generation directors face multiple demands. How to 'survive' amidst complex commercial requirements while creating films with a clear feminist consciousness is the fundamental dilemma faced by young Chinese female directors.

Keywords : female directors, feminism film, female dilemma, film censorship system

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