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WITNESS CHINA'S MASSIVE TRANSFORMATION UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL: ZEITGEIST BOWS DOC "UP THE YANGTZE" ON DVD

New York (September 16, 2008) — With a theatrical gross topping \$1.3 million (US & Canada) including over 125 markets in the U.S., **UP THE YANGTZE** is one of 2008's highest-grossing and critically acclaimed documentaries. Also a prize-winner at the Toronto, San Francisco, and Vancouver Film Festivals, Chinese-Canadian filmmaker Yung Chang's stunning debut film comes to DVD on **November 18, 2008**.

China's Yangtze River—and all of the life that surrounds it—is undergoing a truly astonishing transformation wrought by the largest hydroelectric project in history, the Three Gorges Dam. The water is rising at a drastic rate, forcing mass relocations of villages and dramatically altering the landscape. Chang returns to the gorgeous, now-disappearing countryside of his grandfather's youth to trace the surreal life of a "farewell cruise" that traverses the gargantuan waterway.

Aboard the luxury liner, Chang uncovers its microcosmic society with touching humanism and wry wit. Sixteen-year-old Yu Shui (renamed "Cindy" by cruise management) faces a bitter irony when her peasant family sends her to work as a dishwasher on the ship while the river's floodwaters begin to drown their home. Meanwhile above deck, spoiled only-child Chen Bo Yu (renamed "Jerry") plays up his charm to coax big tips from the wealthy international passengers who've come to see a country in dramatic flux.

With breathtaking cinematography and startling intimacy, **UP THE YANGTZE** gives a human dimension to the wrenching changes facing not only an increasingly globalized China, but the world at large.

The DVD release of **UP THE YANGTZE** features a luminous anamorphic master of the film created from Hi-Def elements and enhanced for widescreen televisions. **Extra features include: twelve deleted scenes; startling time-lapse footage of the Yangtze river flooding; a 2006 research demo on the coastal city of Zhaojia and its struggle with relocation; theatrical trailers; optional English subtitles for the deaf and hearing impaired; Traditional Mandarin subtitles; and stereo and 5.1 soundtracks.**

Director Yung Chang will be available for interviews.

UP THE YANGTZE Film/DVD info:

2008 • 93 minutes • Canada • Color • In English, Mandarin and Sichuan with English subtitles • 1.85:1 original theatrical aspect ratio • Not Rated • Cat. No. Z1108 • UPC 795975110839 • SRP \$29.99

Celebrating its 20th Anniversary as one of America's preeminent independent distributors, New York-based Zeitgeist Films has built an impressively diverse catalogue of foreign, documentary and arthouse titles by such renowned directors as Todd Haynes, Jan Svankmajer, Peter Greenaway, Abbas Kiarostami, Guy Maddin, Kirby Dick, Atom Egoyan, Agnès Varda, François Ozon, Derek Jarman, Yvonne Rainer, Olivier Assayas, Philippe Garrel and the Quay Brothers. Recent releases include Oscar winner *Nowhere in Africa*; blockbuster doc *The Corporation*; dance doc hit *Ballets Russes*; Oscar nominee *Sophie Scholl—The Final Days*; Oscar nominee *My Country, My Country*; Sundance winner *Into Great Silence*; Caméra d'Or winner *Jellyfish*; and 2008 Golden Gate Award winner *Up the Yangtze*. Launched in 2001, Zeitgeist Video has released dozens of highly praised DVDs, including the recently-released remastered Two-Disc Collector's Edition of Quay Brothers shorts, entitled PHANTOM MUSEUMS; and a Four-Disc Box Set of Derek Jarman masterworks entitled GLITTERBOX, starring Oscar Winner Tilda Swinton (*Michael Clayton*).



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CRITICAL ACCLAIM FOR *UP THE YANGTZE*

"An **astonishing** documentary of culture clash and the erasure of history amid China's economic miracle."
—Stephen Holden, *The New York Times* (Critics' Pick!)

"A **gloriously cinematic** doc of epic, poetic sadness.... China's Three Gorges Dam is considered by many experts to be a full-steam-ahead eco-disaster, but helmer Yung Chang's **gorgeous meditation** is more concerned with the project's collateral human damage." —John Anderson, *Variety*

"**WILD APPLAUSE** [Highest Rating]! What Chinese Canadian filmmaker Yung Chang achieves in his documentary *Up the Yangtze* is **remarkable**." —*San Francisco Chronicle*

"**Visually stunning**, this documentary by Chinese-Canadian filmmaker Yung Chang is part travelogue, part social critique of China's economic miracle and the sweeping cultural changes it is forcing in its wake." —*Chicago Reader*

"**Witty, lovely and profoundly unsettling**.... Chang's images of the Yangtze and the new megacities replacing the villages on its banks are **spectacular**, and his cast of characters rival any fiction film I've seen recently." —Andrew O'Hehir, *Salon*

"[A] lucid, **beautifully observed** portrait..." —Scott Foundas, *Village Voice*

"**Masterful and haunting**." —Ty Burr, *Boston Globe*

"Beijing-based cinematographer Wang Shi Qing has **an impeccable eye**, often coming up with **haunting images** that show both the beauty and uncertainty of this pivotal time."
—Kenneth Turan, *Los Angeles Times*

"**Grade A!** Filmmaker Yung Chang finds a sad and beautiful way to glimpse the big picture of dislocation through an **exquisitely poised** small study." —Lisa Schwarzbaum, *Entertainment Weekly*

"Chang gracefully juxtaposes the country and the metropolitan...to express the knotted-up mixture of anguish, anger, hope, and trepidation of those in the dammed river's wake. It's a **tender and profound portrait** of unwieldy, mass-scale modernization at work." —*Slant Magazine*

"**Every second of this film is personal**.... Chang brings a dramatist's touch and an anthropologist's patience to getting-to-know-you filmmaking." —Michael Sragow, *Baltimore Sun*

"**Remarkable**.... The twin narrative **beautifully encapsulates** the problems faced by China as it transforms itself into an economic powerhouse." —*Philadelphia Inquirer*

"**Touching**.... It's a **haunting** film about environmental and social change that avoids a polemical tone."
—*New York Magazine* (Critics' Pick!)

"**Lovely, engrossing**.... *Up the Yangtze's* main tone is one of a melancholy mournfulness for the unimaginable scope of what is soon to be lost, and never regained, in the name of progress."
—*Miami Herald*