

From the Weibo account of Mr. Li Xianting: “Memorandum Regarding Cancellation of 11th Beijing Independent Film Festival”

August 18, 2014: Posters and time schedules for the opening events of the 11th Beijing Independent Film Festival were released online. The police set up watch outside my home and outside the Li Xianting Film Fund.

August 19, 2014: In the afternoon some “State Secret” officials went to the Li Xianting Film Fund to say that the festival was to be called off. They also specified two films that they wanted to see. The Ministry of Education, Administration of Trade and Commerce, Tax Administration and other agencies also came to the Film Fund to ask questions.

August 20, 2014: At 10:00 am, Xiaopu Village leaders came to my home to inform me that higher authorities had ordered that the Festival be shut down. But the authorities also agreed that the Festival could be moved to Yanjiao in Hebei province and take place there. That night at 11:00 pm, State Secret officials again came to my home and told me to shut down the Fest.

August 21, 2014: Representatives from the Li Xianting Film Fund went to Yanjiao in Hebei and reserved a screening space at the Huifu Hotel.

August 22, 2014: At around noon, the Xiaopu Village Committee leader showed up and said “you’ve booked a bunch of rooms in Songzhuang, but higher authorities have said you can’t stay here.” Film Fund staff members in charge of receiving visitors and booking rooms came back to say that the hotel would no longer let us register to stay there. At 1:30 pm, the Songzhuang police came and arrested Li Xianting Film Fund artistic director Wang Hongwei and executive director Fan Rong. As of 6:00 pm, they had not yet been released. While he was at the police station, Wang Hongwei received two phone calls:

- 1) A person claiming to be from the Songzhuang Work and Safety Administration committee called and said “The wall of your courtyard is pressing up against a fuel pipe; you need to tear it down before the 31st.”
- 2) Huifu Hotel in Yanjiao, the hotel that had accepted our reservation, called and said “Public Security Bureau authorities have instructed us not to let your film festival be held at our hotel.”

The police station said that Wang Hongwei and Fan Rong had to sign statements agreeing to call off the Festival before they would be released. Wang Hongwei and Fan Rong were forced to sign these statements, and at 6:37 pm they were released. After that, a Li Xianting Film Fund staff member received notice that starting tomorrow, the electricity at the Li Xianting Film Fund will be cut.

In the afternoon, the Exit-Entry Administration came to the Li Xianting Film Fund to ask questions about foreign directors that the Fund would be hosting.

Translated by Scott E. Myers