20 The UNESCO world “City of Film”

A new engine to boost Qingdao’s urban development

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Located on the eastern coast of China, Qingdao is a beautiful, fashionable and creative coastal city with a permanent population of 9.29 million. Qingdao’s film history can be traced back to the beginning of the twentieth century. It is the birthplace of Chinese cinema, also known as a “natural environmental studio” for Chinese film and television because of its pleasant climate and beautiful scenery. Furthermore, it has been praised as China’s “cradle of film and television stars” as Qingdao is the home of a number of well-known movie stars. In recent years, Qingdao has promoted cinematic creativity as a significant strategic factor for sustainable urban development. From the perspective of the pattern of global film development, it has established policies to support the development of the film industry and planned to build a 44-sq km film and television cultural industrial zone. With the construction of the world’s largest film and television shooting base, Oriental Movie Metropolis, more than 150 film and television companies were established and located in Qingdao, and many film and television companies or studios from around the world come to undertake film production in Qingdao. The internationalization and the high-end technology of the film and television industry both contribute to making Qingdao the most promising film and television city in China.

Qingdao, the UNESCO “City of Film”

Founded in 2004, the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) aims to strengthen international cooperation between cities that view creativity as both a strategic factor for sustainable development and an important element of urban development. It aims to integrate culture and creativity into local developmental strategies and plans, and promote exchanges and cooperation between member cities in the development of creative industries, professional training, knowledge sharing, and the dissemination of products and services.

The Creative City Network covers seven creative city types: Design Capital, Film Capital, Crafts and Folk Art Capital, Food Capital, Capital of Literature, Media Art Capital and Music Capital. Currently, the UNESCO Creative Cities Network has already included 180 member cities from 72

Table 20.1 Twelve cities approved by UNESCO as Creative Cities

<i>Types</i>	<i>Creative City</i>	<i>Approval date</i>
City of Film	Qingdao(Shandong province)	October 2017
	Shenzhen (Guangdong province)	November 2008
City of Design	Shanghai	February 2010
	Beijing	April 2012
City of Crafts & Folk Art	Wuhan (Hubei province)	October 2017
	Hangzhou(Zhejiang province)	April 2012
	Suzhou (Jiangsu province)	December 2014
	Jing Dezheng (Jiangxi province)	December 2014
City of Gastronomy	Chengdu (Sichuan province)	February 2010
	Shunde (Guangdong province)	December 2014
City of Media Arts	Macau	October 2017
	Changsha (Hunan province)	October 2017

countries. On October 31, 2017, Qingdao was awarded the title of world “City of Film” by UNESCO, one of the 18 “City of Film” sites approved by UNESCO as well as the first “City of Film” in China (Table 20.1).

The rationale for Qingdao’s application for UNESCO’s world “City of Film” award

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network was founded in 2004 and covers seven areas: design, film, literature, music, media art, crafts and folk art and food. Initially, Qingdao also considered applying for “City of Design” in 2010. However, due to the large gap between Qingdao and other cities who were planning to apply at that time, such as Beijing and Shanghai, in terms of design resources, it did not submit its application. In 2011, following further research, Qingdao decided to apply to be the “City of Music,” and the relevant governmental bodies formally submitted an application to the National Commission for UNESCO of China; however, for various reasons, the application was not successful. Based on the lessons learned from this unsuccessful application, the committee in Qingdao thoroughly studied the successful experiences of cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Hangzhou and Suzhou, and conducted a comprehensive SWOT analysis of Qingdao’s own advantages and disadvantages, opportunities and challenges. Qingdao finally decided to apply to be the “City of Film” in 2015.

The reasons why Qingdao had respectively considered applying for “City of Design,” “City of Music,” and “City of Film,” and finally decided to apply for the latter can be explained by the following three aspects.

First, of all the seven areas, film has a stronger connection to social culture than design and music, etc. It is more relevant to the strategy of promoting China’s cultural power and can better represent Chinese cultural identity and tell Chinese stories internationally. Chinese national cinema is ideal for

spreading Chinese ideology and Chinese culture and promoting Chinese influence in the world.

Second, film is an essential cultural industry. Chinese film industry is growing significantly, and China is also becoming an influential country in the global film market with its huge box office earnings. Compared to music and other creative fields, the film industry possesses a comprehensive industrial chain and far-reaching influence. It plays a leading role in the cultural industry, and promotes cultural creativity and the development of related industries and the overall competitiveness of the city.

Third, relying on its remarkable film culture and related industrial foundation, Qingdao has a strong advantage in applying to be the “City of Film.” It is a “natural environmental studio” as well as a “cradle of movie stars” in China. Especially in recent years, the Qingdao Municipal Party Committee and the Municipal Government have attached great importance to the development of the film and television industry, striving to create a culture brand for the city as “the city of film and television,” and considering the film and television industry as an important strategy for sustainable urban development. Qingdao has formulated a high-end film and television industry development plan, and created the most favorable filming subsidy policy in the world, with the establishment of the Lingshanwan Film and Television Cultural Industrial Zone and the largest film and television production base in the world. A world-class software and hardware service system is also in place. In addition to this, it is attracting high-end film resources from both domestic and overseas markets for the development of a world-class film and television industry chain ecosystem, and is vigorously promoting the prosperity and development of film and television industries. A trillion-scale film and television industry cluster are taking shape. Qingdao has become the “new magnetic pole” and China’s most promising “city of film and television.”

The history of Qingdao’s application to be the “City of Film”

As of 2015, UNESCO had approved eight cities as world “City of Film” sites, i.e., Bradford (UK, 2009), Sydney (Australia, 2010), Busan (Korea, 2014), Galway (Ireland, 2014), Sofia (Bulgaria, 2014), Bitola (Republic of Macedonia, 2015), Rome (Italy, 2015) and Santos (Brazil, 2015).

In view of Qingdao’s good foundations in natural environment, history and culture, film talents and its existing film industry, the Qingdao Municipal Party Committee and Municipal Government reviewed the situation and worked out a strategy for applying to become the City of Film in 2015. The application points scheme included the “2016 Work Points of the Municipal Party Committee’s Steering Group on Deepening Reform” and the “Government Work Report.” In 2017, the Qingdao Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Film and Television Press and Publications Bureau established the “City of Film” Application Office to fully oversee the application process and the city officials visited Hangzhou, Suzhou and other cities

to learn from their successful experiences. The Shanghai Center for World Heritage Protection and the Research Center of the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Region were commissioned to organize the documents of the application and to promote Chinese ideology. The Application Office also strengthened liaisons with creative cities at home and abroad, and steadily promoted the construction of the Qingdao Film Museum and other related work.

In 2017, Qingdao's endeavors in the application for "City of Film" finally paid off and they were successful. From May 22–24, 2017, Qingdao organized an expert review meeting to apply for UNESCO "City of Film": status. From June 6–8, the Qingdao Municipal Government held the UNESCO Creative City Network Film Capital Summit. The representatives of the world "City of Film" and the representative of Qingdao jointly released the "City of Film Qingdao Declaration." On June 15, Qingdao submitted the application documents to the National Committee of UNESCO and the Mayor of Qingdao, with the letter of support from the China Film Association and the China Film Review. On June 19, the Northeast Asia Regional Consultation Meeting on the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, sponsored by UNESCO, was held in Qingdao. The image of Qingdao as the center of a booming film and television industry was well promoted, and this consolidated the foundation for Qingdao's application for the world "City of Film" award. On July 21, Qingdao entered the judging process through UNESCO's technical review. In August, UNESCO conducted the final review of the creative network of the city. On October 31, the list of new cities in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network was announced, and Qingdao was awarded the title of "City of Film."

The journey that Qingdao followed to become "City of Film" was not an easy one. Qingdao has expended a great deal of effort on this application in the past two years. The Municipal Party Committee and the Municipal Government set up a Film Capital application working group to coordinate and mobilize the power of ideology, culture, finance, foreign affairs, education and other related departments to fully promote the application preparation.

The Qingdao Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Film and Television Press and Publications Bureau established the Film Capital Application Office to scientifically analyze the domestic and international situation, and coordinate the mobilization of the relevant departments and the strengths of all sectors of society. Based on the successful application experiences of creative cities at home and abroad, and carefully evaluating the criteria for "City of Film," they explored the advantages of Qingdao's film industry as well as what might be the shortcomings. After establishing a solid plan for the application, including systematic management and coordination of the reporting route, and key links, they formulated strategic advancement plans and work schedules, etc. The application work was carried out in seven application categories: application material, UNESCO, the world "City of Film," hardware construction, film exchange activities, domestic and international

publicity and information liaison. Qingdao officials have constantly led the team to take advantage of all opportunities to win the support of UNESCO and the National Commission for UNESCO of China. Hence, they completed the construction of Qingdao’s Film Museum to the highest standards, and updated all the working hardware, and created the bold slogan “Qingdao, a city born for film.” At the same time, they carried out international communication and cooperation, continuously expanding Qingdao’s “circle of friends” in the creative city network, and organized a series of film and cultural activities to conduct multi-dimensional publicity. There were dozens of trips to Beijing for docking application work with ten revisions to improve the application documents. There was also mobilization and planning to build three distinctive film museums, and to secure letters of support from the China National Commission for UNESCO, and the Film Industry Association and other institutions. The committee held a total of 12 international and domestic film exchange events, and hosted a high-level UNESCO international conference, which consolidated Qingdao’s close relationships with 8 domestic creative cities and 8 foreign cities with the title of world “City of Film.” Twelve cooperation agreements were signed with two world “City of Film,” which promoted the strength of Qingdao’s film sector to the President of the UNESCO, the President of the Executive Board, and the Director-General and the Assistant Director of Culture, etc. Qingdao’s film and television colleges, enterprises and social groups all actively assisted the application, such as visiting Paris to invite renowned filmmakers to promote Qingdao’s film industry through various means. Through such continuous efforts, Qingdao has gained high recognition from UNESCO and the experts in the domestic and the international film industry, and ultimately successfully secured the application.

With a new development strategy, the supply-side structural reform, and accelerating this transformation through a new and dynamic energy, Qingdao aims to create a cultural and creative industry with film as its major component. The means Qingdao had to seize its opportunities, and face its problems, which means taking on such historical responsibility to be the pioneer for the integration of culture + economy + technology. This fully demonstrates a commitment to the aims expressed in Qingdao’s Declaration. The Declaration lays down future plans for Qingdao’s role as “City of Film,” and explains the hard work still to be undertaken, the journey ahead and the perseverance in the entire process. It also demonstrates the strong determination of the people of this island-city: to remember this mission and to courageously take on the responsibility.

The significance of Qingdao’s application to be the “City of Film”

Qingdao has become China’s first “City of Film” and the ninth one in the world. This will vigorously promote the development of Qingdao’s film industry and accelerate the pace of Qingdao’s international communication,

which will improve Qingdao's reputation and influence on the international stage. This could be achieved by the following four methods.

First, Qingdao needs to fully maximize its strength in terms of its natural environment and its history and culture as a coastal city. Creativity can be an engine to promote the integrated development of Qingdao's environment, culture and economy. Qingdao will be made into a creative film city comparable to the world's great other coastal cities, and this will contribute to the development of cultural and creative industries in China, Asia and the world as a whole.

Second, by taking advantage of the leading and radiating role of Qingdao's creative industries, and by maximizing their potential to attract global creative resources, Qingdao will be established as a vibrant center which will become a global hub for international creative talents.

Third, there is the need to bring out the creative potential of ordinary people, and to encourage them to participate in the construction of a creative city. By sharing the achievements of the creative industries, people can make their own contributions to the protection of cultural diversity and the development of creative industries worldwide.

Fourth, we need to promote Chinese culture to "go out into the world," and enhance the "soft power" of China. Throughout the hundred-year history of film's development, film has become the most popular media because of its easy-to-understand and entertaining features. Chinese national cinema is also the important carrier for projecting national/cultural identity to the world, which enhances China's cultural influence internationally. Qingdao's status as "City of Film" will maximize the role of cinema as a vehicle of mass media, which will further spread Chinese culture and its influence, and enhance the soft power of China.

The foundation and advantages of Qingdao becoming a world "City of Film"

The reasons why Qingdao was able to become China's first "City of Film" were not only because of its unique natural environment and deep-rooted film culture, but also because of strong support from the film industry and its creative talent. Qingdao has an intimate relationship with film. It was one of the first Chinese cities to screen films for commercial cinema in China. Qingdao has the first cinema operated by Chinese people, with the earliest Chinese documentary and the first 'talkie' being shot in China. This demonstrates Qingdao's rich cultural heritage of film. From the high-end film industry development plan to the most favorable filming subsidy policy in China; from Lingshanwan Film and Television Cultural Industry Zone to Qingdao Wanda Film and Television Industrial Park, the city of Qingdao has established the largest film and television production base in the world. With the high-end film resources from home and overseas, and the construction of the film industry chain, a 100 billion yuan film and television industry agglomeration

is taking shape. Qingdao is becoming the “new magnetic pole” of the film industry and the most promising “city of film and television” in China.

A long history of “natural environmental studios”

Qingdao is a harbor city with mountains, gardens and much historical architecture, attracting millions of tourists every year. Its unique natural features and cultural customs attract large numbers of film crews to shoot films there. As a “natural environmental studio,” with its seashore, beaches, Chinese and Western architecture and picturesque streets, it offers beautiful locations and sceneries for mise-en-scène and cinematography. Early Chinese films such as *Peach after the Robbery*, *Sons and Daughters of the Storm*, *Go to Nature*, and *Gold and Sand* were all shot in Qingdao.

The beaches at Shinan, Eight Great Passes, Luxun Park and Old Lane are the commonest places used as settings for movies such as *Miao Miao* and *Sons and Daughters of the Storm*. The TV series *Soong Ching-ling and Her Sisters*, *Family Status*, and *Summer Days in Midsummer* were all shot in the beautiful scenic location of Eight Great Passes. At present, more than 200 film crews come to Qingdao every year. Some outstanding works include *Tough Guy*, directed by Dingsheng and starring Liu Wei, *Chinese Divorce*, starring Chen Daoming, and Jiang Wenli’s *The Strong Woman*, starring Hai Qing.

Throughout the world, only cities that meet the demanding requirements of film in terms of natural environment, economy and culture, etc. are likely to become economically sustainable to be the “City of Film” for the long term. Thus, over the years, film becomes an integral part of a city’s image, and is transformed into an important dimension of a city’s urban cultural identity, finally becoming a “City of Film” in people’s minds. Over the past 100 years, Qingdao and its cinema have grown together and have benefited from each other in this mutual relationship, perfectly achieving the inseparable symbiotic relationship between the city and its cinema. Qingdao is known not only as a “natural environmental studio” but also as one of the most important cradles of Chinese cinema. The city has risen rapidly with the growth of its film industry – just like Los Angeles and Hollywood.

For the past 100 years, Qingdao has witnessed the development of Chinese film, with many unique film heritage landmarks in the city, which have become an indelible memory of its urban culture. The Sailors Club, located at No. 17 Hubei Road, is the earliest preserved historical building in China which was used for commercial film screenings. It has a history dating back more than 100 years. Similarly, in 1931, the first Chinese-run cinema in Qingdao was built in Zhongshan Road. This cinema, the Shandong Grand Theater – the predecessor of Chinese cinema – is still in operation and is turning to a new chapter nowadays. In order to preserve the precious memories of Qingdao and Chinese films in the future, in 2015, Qingdao systematically promoted the construction and development of the Film Museum, encouraging local organizations to protect and develop Qingdao’s film heritage. In April 2016,

Qingdao Butterfly House Film Museum was officially opened to the public. On May 20, 2017, the oldest commercial cinema in China, the former site of the Sailors Club, was transformed into the 1907 Film Museum, which was inaugurated on September 20, 2017. The Qingdao Film Museum, which integrates film and technology and is sponsored by the Qingdao Municipal Government, was located in the Lingshanwan Film and Television Cultural Industry Zone on the West Coast. Qingdao now has three film museums with different themes, and they have become a new platform to showcase Qingdao's film heritage to the world. The museums have also become a powerful part in Qingdao's local communities' efforts to build the "City of Film."

Oriental Movie DreamWorks: a studio that aims to compete with Hollywood

Behind the successful application for world "City of Film" status is the strong support of Qingdao's booming and fast-changing film and television industry. Qingdao has always attached great importance to the development of its film industry, and has always considered cinematic creativity an important strategic factor in sustainable urban development. Starting from its vision of global film development, Qingdao has actively connected with the international community.

Several reports on industrial development and other policy initiatives were written to support the development of Qingdao's film industry. These reports include "Opinions on Promoting the Construction of Cultural Qingdao and Building a Strong Cultural City" and the "Qingdao High-end Film and Television Culture Industry Development Plan (2014–2020)". These laid out an overall development strategy for the city of Qingdao with the film industry as the key player, and pointed out various ways for the integration of film and television with other economic sectors, such as manufacturing and tourism in the city.

The "Opinions on Promoting the Development of the Film and Television Industry" focus on the key links of the development of the film and television industry, such as the land, taxation, investment and financing, quality awards, talent and other aspects of targeted support. The city-level key film and television enterprises, celebrity studios, film and television industry parks and film and television shops were identified as the four key support targets, together with subsidies for outstanding films produced in Qingdao. In 2016, Qingdao Municipal Government and Wanda Group jointly launched a special fund for the development of the Qingdao Oriental Film and Television Industry, with a total cost of 5 billion yuan (investment of 1 billion yuan per year for five consecutive years) to subsidize production costs for "excellent film and television productions" completed in the Qingdao Lingshanwan Film and Television Cultural Industry Zone. The scope of subsidies includes renting exterior sites, studios, setting up sets, renting equipment, hiring extras, food and accommodation, transportation, costume props and post-production, etc. These subsidies can cover up to 40 percent of production costs and 10 percent of tax

refunds. It is currently the most favorable film support policy in the world, and the subsidy for a single film can go up to 120 million yuan.

The West Coast New District’s good location allows optimum industrial planning, using new dynamic energy to create the Qingdao Lingshanwan Film and Television Cultural Industry Zone with a total planned area of 44 square kilometers. Film and television enterprises that are located there will receive financial support covering 10 percent of their annual operating costs. At present, the Industry Zone is led by “Oriental Movie Metropolis” and attracts a large number of specialized organizations and talented people. Since the first quarter of 2018, it has attracted 159 film and television organizations to settle there, building a whole industry chain covering film and television scripts, filming, production, distribution, screening and sales promotion, etc. A number of cultural industry agglomerates with a total investment of 150 billion yuan in film, television, art and digital creativity have been established. Qingdao’s Lingshanwan Film and Television Cultural Industry Zone has become a major platform for the exploitation of new dynamic energy in Qingdao.

The Qingdao Oriental Movie Metropolis, which aims to be the “Oriental Hollywood,” has a total investment of 50 billion yuan and covers an area of 376 hectares, which makes it the largest film and television industry base in the world. The film and television industry park, Wanda Mall entertainment business, Binhai hotel group, Grand Theater, the International Theatre, the Yacht Club, the international hospital, the international school and other multi-sector functional areas have all been completed. The Oriental Movie Metropolis forms a complete film ecosystem, with the film industry park as its core and the surrounding industries as the supporting materials. Covering an area of 166 hectares, it is China’s first film and television industry park that provides a full range of production services and competitive subsidies for filmmakers from around the world. It is committed to working with leaders in the global film industry. It helps the development of China’s film industry by creating a new base for the film industry, and is the world’s largest and most attractive production base. The Oriental Movie Metropolis Park production area will have 52 high-tech studios of the highest international standards. Thirty studios will be completed in the first phase and 10 studios will be built in the second phase, including the world’s largest single studio with an area of 10,000 square meters, the world’s only indoor and outdoor combined underwater cinematography studio, film and television costumes and props studio and the world’s most advanced film and television post-production studio. The Industrial Park’s exterior covers an area of 60 hectares, equipped with a street built in European and old Shanghai style to meet the shooting needs of different types of film and television work. In addition to a large number of super-advanced facilities, the unique “Service +” platform of the Film and Television Industry Park cooperates with well-known equipment brands of the global film industry, and jointly launched the highest quality one-stop production service. When this project has been completed, it is estimated that

30 foreign feature films and 100 domestic film and television works will be produced in Qingdao's Oriental Movie Metropolis every year. At present, there are many Chinese and foreign blockbusters being shot and edited here, such as *The Pacific Rim: Thunder Re-emergence*, *Crazy Alien*, *Wandering Earth*, and *Hope Island. Great Wall*, directed by Chinese filmmaker Zhang Yimou and produced by Legendary (Hollywood), was awarded 16 million yuan in film production subsidies.

Qingdao issued a series of policies to offer the film industry more needed support, and integrated multiple advantages to form a powerful synergy. Qingdao not only has the location resources of “red tiles, green trees, blue sea and blue sky,” but also has world-class film and television facilities, a comprehensive production guarantee, the world's highest subsidies and abundant reserves of talent. Qingdao's dream of film has grown from the simple “cradle of stars” and “natural environmental studio” to today's “Oriental Movie Dream Factory” that can compete with major studios in Hollywood. In summary, Qingdao's Lingshanwan Film and Television Industry Cultural Zone of about 44 square kilometers, enjoys a total investment of 150 billion yuan, including 5 billion yuan of special funds for film and television industry development, and a production cost subsidy policy of up to 40 percent. There 159 film and television companies/studios make an average of 200 films per year, accounting for one-third of Chinese mainland films and television dramas. All these figures demonstrate the rapid rise of Qingdao's film industry.

A rich and profound film culture

Qingdao is a famous historical and cultural city in China. Located on the Yellow River and near Mount Tai, the Chinese cultural tradition represented by Confucius constitutes the cultural background of Qingdao. Facing the Pacific Ocean, the influence of various foreign countries has left an indelible imprint on the city. This blend of Chinese and Western cultures, including Qingdao's own marine culture, means that multiculturalism has become the city's most distinctive cultural identity.

Film not only blends into every corner of Qingdao, but is also deeply immersed in its soul and in the daily life of its citizens, which makes film the most important and unique urban cultural emblem of Qingdao. There are three film museums, more than 20 film clubs, and more than 60 cinemas in Qingdao. Various cultural events such as film salons and open-air film screenings have been deeply integrated into public life. Watching films together has become an important way for people to enjoy themselves, especially in the holidays, when many cinemas in Qingdao are crowded with long queues. According to statistics, the city's movie box office revenue earned 515 million yuan in 2017 (Figure 20.1). It is the audiences' passion for movies and strong purchasing power that are behind the good performance of its box office.

In order to bring film culture to its ordinary citizens, as well as the commercial screenings, Qingdao has turned the streets and lanes into the “second

Figure 20.1 Qingdao box office earnings and growth rate, 2012–2017.

cinema line” for public welfare film screenings. With the aim of meeting the basic cultural needs of urban low-income residents, migrant workers, and special groups such as students, the elderly and the disabled, Qingdao continues to increase its spending on public cultural services and on the expansion of the coverage and service targets of public film screenings. Qingdao widened the audiences for films by showing them to people in the countryside, the local urban community, construction sites, public squares and welfare institutions.

More than 70,000 public welfare films were screened throughout the year. Qingdao founded the Farmers Film Festival in 1998 and the School Film Festival in 2001. Subsequently, they have been held year after year, continuing to this day. In recent years, through strengthening facilities, enriching the supply of film sources, improving the quality of screenings, and broadening service channels, Qingdao’s public film service has gradually improved, and people’s spiritual and cultural life has become increasingly rich. In order to meet the new expectations of citizens for a better life and to increase their cultural benefits, Qingdao will also organize a film festival for its citizens and carry out a series of film and cultural activities such as Watching Movies with Parents and A Celebration by the Ambassadors of the Film Capital, to encourage the public to express their feelings and to share the fruits of cultural development. Film is becoming a spiritual ambassador and cultural brand of this charming city, which is full of vitality.

Qingdao has always attached great importance to cultural exchanges with the international film industry, and has held international film activities, such as New Zealand Film Week, Indian Film Week, Sino-French Film Week and German Film Week, etc. Appreciation of outstanding Chinese and foreign

films and the talks by the filmmakers held by the 1907 Light and Shadow Club, the Qingdao Literature Museum and other organizations, have become frequent, creating a paradise for film lovers. In 2016, Qingdao signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the City of Film with Bradford in the UK, and held a film summit in Los Angeles to promote Qingdao's film and television policy globally. In June 2017, Qingdao Municipal Government invited the world "City of Film" cities to participate in the world "City of Film" conference in Qingdao, and jointly published "the World City of Film Qingdao Declaration," which aims at strengthening the cooperation in film and other creative fields. The Qingdao Film and Television Industry Elite Exchange was held in 2017, which attracted six major Hollywood companies to visit and negotiate further cooperation. This was followed by the 2017 Chinese Film Festival, the 2017 Asian Film and Television Cultural Forum, the 16th Film Performing Arts Society Awards, the Golden Phoenix Award, the Qingdao Film Fair and the 15th National Cinema Film Promotion Conference. In April 2018, the 16th National Cinema Film Promotion Conference was held in Qingdao. In June, the SCO National Film Festival and China (Qingdao) International VR Image Week were held in the city again. Film has become an important medium between Qingdao and other global creative cities. Film and cultural exchanges in the global creative city network promote exchanges and cooperation in the fields of economy, education, science and technology, tourism, etc., and create a more open and human environment for the development of the city.

Ongoing development of film education

In addition to its claim to be the home of numerous film stars, Qingdao also provides talent support for the development of the industry through multi-level and all-round film education and training. There are nearly ten colleges and universities offering film and television performance courses as well as a large number of performing arts training organizations, providing ample space and opportunities for young people to receive film-related education and training.

The apex of Qingdao film and television education is Beijing Film Academy Modern Creative Media College, which is the only independent college of the Beijing Film Academy. It is an undergraduate full-time degree, educational institution officially approved by the Ministry of Education. The College has eight film major departments and one basic teaching department, with subjects ranging from literature, directing, performance, cinematography, photography, visual art, sound and technology, animation, to media management. Launched in 2011, the College has followed a policy of "scientific planning, step-by-step implementation, education with focus, and the encouragement of crossovers" as its philosophy for program design. And it also proposed "Controlling scale, moderate development, focusing on connotation, and paying attention to quality" as its philosophy for program

development. The college has created its academic programs with film art as the programs and the four majors: art, management, literature and law. Since 2011, 22 undergraduate majors have been launched, including drama, film and television, literature, film and television directing, performance, cinematography, film and television design, animation and cultural industry management, etc. There are nearly 2,000 students in total. Drama, together with film and television studies, have all been listed as key education disciplines by the city of Qingdao. The majors in drama, film and television, literature, drama and film directing, performance, cinematography and animation are the College’s main undergraduate majors, and the College directly reports to the Shandong Provincial Department of Education. The College adheres to the philosophy of strong integration, a solid foundation and practical work in educating film and television talents. The syllabus includes digital film and television production, new media art, network art and animation game design. These skills are urgently needed by the country as Chinese young people are familiar with film and television and understand modern technology. There are nearly 1,500 graduates enrolled in three-year courses, and they are highly praised by employers on account of their good basic quality, professional skills and comprehensive ability.

The Qingdao Shanghai Theater Academy Art School was established in December 2011. Jointly established by the Shanghai Theater Academy and the Qingdao Economic and Technological Development Zone Management Committee, it is a full-time, comprehensive secondary art school with national recognition. The School is headed by the Huangdao District Government of Qingdao, which is fully responsible for its operation and development.

With the goal of “educating first-class practical artistic talents with the potential to adapt themselves to the needs of the cultural industries and cultural undertakings, and providing high-quality art students for higher art institutions,” the School offers ordinary high school academic art classes and secondary vocational educational art classes. Currently, there are nearly 740 students and 124 faculty members.

The College has employed a group of famous academic staff and filmmakers from home and abroad to participate in the teaching and management of the College. Since the formal enrollment in the fall of 2012, the School’s operation and management have been well run, with ongoing improvement of professional strengths. The rate of graduates’ enrollment has greatly exceeded the average level for Shandong Province. Students and academic staff continue to win awards in various professional competitions both locally and nationally, which also reflected well on their reputation in return.

Conclusion

Based on a comprehensive analysis of its own strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and challenges, Qingdao has identified its position in a global network, and strategically determined its identity as a world “City of Film.”

Based on such considerations, Qingdao seized the opportunity to fully launch the application for UNESCO's "City of Film." With UNESCO, one of the most influential international organizations, Qingdao will be able to promote itself internationally such as showcasing its strength in the film industry, its international popularity and global recognition. Thus, Qingdao will become an international film hub to attract global film talents and to achieve the leap forward to develop Qingdao's film industry to an international standard.

In light of the national strategy for the transformation toward a nation of new and dynamic energy, and a modern economic system, Qingdao takes film as the major player for the development of its cultural industry. This is also due to the application of the following five concepts of national advocations: "innovation, coordination, green awareness, openness, sharing." The overall implementation of this "five in one" policy is the guidance for the development of Qingdao's film industry. As a result of large-scale investment and construction, Qingdao's Lingshanwan Film and Television Cultural Industry Zone has seen a "butterfly transformation" from a remote rural area to a new industrial zone. In this new journey of constructing Qingdao as the "City of Film," the local film industry is bound to become the new engine for the transformation of Qingdao's urban development, and the "Oriental Hollywood" will definitely emerge soon in China.