



# Pouch

A FILM BY ZIXUN KINO MA

STARRING ANNE LI & YUQI MIAO DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY HSUAN-ZE OSCAR LIN PRODUCTION DESIGNER ZHICHEN YU  
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY JESSICA FOREMAN & ANGIE GAO SOUND DESIGN BY TIANCHEN DANTE HONG EDITED BY ZIXUN KINO MA  
PRODUCED BY ZHOUE EMMA ZHU WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY ZIXUN KINO MA



#### LOGLINE

Jing, an undocumented Chinese immigrant working for an illegal driving service in Sydney to support her daughter back home, begins to question her decision to stay in Australia after meeting an unexpected passenger.

**Title:** Pouch

**Genre:** Drama

**Country:** Australia

**Production Year:** 2024

**Language:** Mandarin with English subtitles

**Duration:** 22:21

**Aspect Ratio:** 1.37:1

**Frame Rate:** 25fps

**Shooting Format:** Digital

**Exhibition Format:** mp4, 2k DCP

**Sound:** Stereo





## SYNOPSIS

Jing, a Chinese single mother, resides illegally in Australia, working as an airport pick-up driver to support her daughter's education in China. Years of separation have led Jing to grow distant from her daughter. One day, Jing encounters a mysterious passenger around her daughter's age. As they bond during the journey, Jing starts to see her own daughter in the girl. However, when the journey comes to an end, Jing is caught by her boss for taking unauthorised side jobs. Meanwhile, the girl appears to have been harassed by Jing's boyfriend, who is also an illegal immigrant. Overwhelmed with despair, Jing begins to question her decision to come to Australia.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

My first encounter with Australia was in elementary school when my dad brought me a kangaroo plush toy from a business trip. It was my favourite childhood toy. However, my parents later thought that boys playing with plush toys lacked "masculinity". During a move, they threw away the kangaroo without my consent. As an adult, I happened to bring up this matter with my parents. Surprisingly, they apologised, realising they were wrong. This memory leads to the premise of the short film: being a parent is an identity, not an ability. They make mistakes, have regrets, and hesitate before decisions... they are no different from us.

Another issue addressed in *Pouch* is illegal immigration, a serious problem faced by Australian society. According to statistics from the Department of Home Affairs, there are approximately 70,000 unlawful non-citizens in Australia. Two-thirds of them have overstayed for more than two years, and one-third hold long-term jobs. However, when discussing this group, people often reduce them to mere numbers, rarely considering them as real, living individuals.

During the peak of the pandemic, dining in was prohibited, so I relied on delivery for a while. During this time, I encountered a Chinese delivery guy in

his 30s who was on an expired tourist visa and couldn't speak English at all. "Earn as much as I can," he said. I often imagined his background—what kind of environment does he live in? Does he have children? Why did he come to Australia? I channelled these questions into Jing, the protagonist of *Pouch*, and comes up with a slow and simple narrative that stems from my thoughts and reflections.

ZIXUN 'KINO' MA, WRITER / DIRECTOR/  
EDITOR



## PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

Remember how we mumbled out the first word in our life? We learned from our parents. They have been our role models since the day we were born. We admire them. They are our heroes and teachers. They are perfect and benevolent. We learn to do the right things from them to survive, to live a happy life. But adulthood is a myth. As we grow older, we realise that our parents are not perfect. They make mistakes. And they are also learning from their children, not only to be better parents but also better human beings. At some point in our life, parents and children are standing on the same ground.

While arriving at the crossroads of our life as international students, we eventually need to make our own decisions. Yet we are full of doubts and fear about our futures. The world is an intimidatingly vast playground. The right answers aren't always there. Even worse, there might not be an answer at all. People just choose to let it be. That's the freedom of choice. Freedom is what we can have only as we become adults, says the older ones. But they are also the ones who are daunted by it.

The character of Jing, performed by Anne with subtlety and smooth emotion, seems to live an ordinary life in Sydney. She has a partner, worries about her boss not giving her work to do, meets all kinds of clients and tries to be cool and independent. But when the undercurrent feeling of dislocation brought by her identity and the responsibility that she always chooses to avoid turns back to her, we start to learn that we only become mature adults when we have the courage to take responsibility for the freedom that we once chased after. As Churchill once said: "Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice". And if it's not for responsibility, what is the empty pouch for?

ZHOUYE 'EMMA' ZHU, PRODUCER



## KEY CREW BIOS

### ZIXUN 'KINO' MA DIRECTOR/WRITER/EDITOR

Kino Ma is an emerging director and cinematographer based in Sydney. His upbringing in a remote Chinese city and subsequent education in Australia sparked his interest in marginalised communities and overlooked social issues. Kino's portfolio spans narrative short films, documentaries, and video art installations. His latest screen-based installation, *Backfire*, earned the Innovation Award at the Sydney College of the Arts 2023 Showcase.

### ZHICHEN YU PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Zhichen Yu is a Chinese film director and production designer based in Sydney, Australia. As a director, her works are reflections of her personal journey with deep explorations in identity and feminism. Yu's portfolio spans experimental film, narrative short film with a distinct sensitivity and perspective.

Yu worked as production designer in multiple short film projects. She aims to forge a deeper connection between the audience and the characters' experiences through visual aesthetics that resonates with authenticity.

### ZHOUYE 'EMMA' ZHU PRODUCER

Emma Zhu is an emerging producer based in Sydney. Having worked as an assistant director and production assistant in China, her works span a diversity of short films exploring culture, identity, and humanity. She believes films can empower the the multiplicity of voices. Her vibrant personality and commitment to professionalism drive her further to produce films with authentic stories and empathetic power.

### TIANCHEN 'DANTE' HONG SOUND DESIGNER

Dante Hong is a film and television director who has been studying the film and television industry in Sydney for six years. His portfolio includes horror, experimental, and drama films, and more photo-based art installations, exploring various narrative structures and experimenting with directional possibilities.

Also active as a sound designer, he is dedicated to addressing an immersive and emotional experience by bringing immersive sound effects and selecting the most appropriate background music for scenes.

### HSUAN-ZE 'OSCAR' LIN DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Oscar Lin is a tech-savvy cinematographer from Taiwan, who constantly tries to incorporate new technologies from various fields into his filming procedure.

His work and cinematography style are deeply shaped by his cross-cultural upbringing, drawing from Taiwan's diverse immigration history. Oscar is adept at adopting diverse perspectives, breaking through barriers, and using his cinematographic language to connect every individual element within a story.

## CAST BIOS



**ANNE LI (JING)**

Anne is a dedicated actress, having moved to Australia at a young age. While pursuing her studies at the University of Sydney, Anne discovered her passion for the stage and joined Cathy Playhouse, where she began her journey into theatre. Since then, she has been fortunate to contribute to productions like *Sun-Rise* at the esteemed Nida Parade Theatre and *The Message* at the enchanting venue ARA Darling Quarter. Her passion does not end on stage, it has also been reflected in her performance in the short indie film *Cellar* (2020). Most recently, she has been cast in another short film *Pouch* (2024), adding another exciting chapter to her career. Anne is excited to keep exploring different roles and stories, always ready for new adventures in the world of acting.



**YUQI 'ESTHER' MIAO (WEN)**

Esther is determined to wholeheartedly devote herself to her acting career after graduation. She plans to actively seek out and participate in various performing arts projects, spanning across different fields such as films, TV dramas, stage plays, and commercials, in order to broaden her acting experience.

At the same time, Yuqi hopes to maintain her initial aspiration for acting, to treat her roles and audience with sincerity, and to focus on the process of creation rather than pursuing a specific outcome.



**HEYANG 'HENRY' QU (JING'S BOYFRIEND)**

Henry Qu, originally from Beijing, China, attended a short-term acting training program at the Central Academy of Drama. In 2001, he immigrated to Australia. He has bumpy and rich life experiences. In 2019, he joined the Sydney Drama Club "CathayPlayhouse", and performed in the play *The Servant of Two Masters*. In 2020, he founded the "SydFest" International Independent Film Festival, supporting the production of several independent short films and starring in major roles. In 2024, he played the character Ming in the short film *Pouch*.





## CREDITS

### KEY CREW

**Written, Directed, Edited by** Zixun 'Kino' Ma  
**Prodced by** Zhouye 'Emma' Zhu  
**Director of Photography** Hsuan-Ze 'Oscar' Lin  
**Production Design** Zhichen Yu  
**Sound Design** Tianchen 'Dante' Hong

### CAST

Anne Li  
Yuqi 'Esther' Miao  
Heyang 'Henry' Qu  
Tiemin Wang  
Ping Wu  
Hao Ren  
Jianzhen 'Damon' Cong  
Guanghua Lyu  
Emma Feng

### CREW

**Assistant Director** Xinyun 'Selena' Wu

**1st Assistant Camera** Zhuohan Li  
**1st Assistant Camera** Tian Yang

**Sound Designer** Tianchen 'Dante' Hong  
**Recordist** Tianchen 'Dante' Hong

**Gaffer** Jianzhen 'Damon' Cong  
**Gaffer** Jiatong 'Jay' Zhao

**Hair & Makeup Artist** Hao Ren

**Script Supervisor** Shurong Shi

**Sound Mixer** Zixun 'Kino' Ma  
**Foley Artist** Zhouye 'Emma' Zhu  
**Foley Artist** Hsuan-Ze 'Oscar' Lin  
**Foley Artist** Zhichen Yu

**Colourist** Yue Tseng

**BTS/Photographer** Hanxuan 'Neko' Chen

**Trailer Editor** Zixun 'Kino' Ma  
**Poster Design** Keyan 'Keyara' Huang  
**EPK Design** Zhouye 'Emma' Zhu

**Driver** Tian Yang  
**Driver** Jiatong 'Jay' Zhao

**Composer** Jessica Foreman  
**Composer** Angie Gao  
**Guitarist** Paul Foreman

**ZIXUN 'KINO' MA**  
**DIRECTOR/WRITER/EDITOR**  
+61 0431 637 552  
zixunkinoma@gmail.com

**ZHOUYE 'EMMA' ZHU**  
**PRODUCER**  
+61 0481 251 780  
emma001008@hotmail.com