

一棵树的礼告

IS FAITH REDEMPTION OR
ANOTHER KIND OF
HELL?

OBITUARY OF A TREE



Directed by
TIFFANY MAI

ETHAN SEAN ELEANOR NATASHA CHENG WILLIAM BLAIR LIU

Director of Photography LEWEI QIU Art Director JOLENE LIU Editor RUOLIN WANG Producer ABBY LI Writer TIFFANY MAI Gaffer COLIN LIN

Title of Film

Obituary of A Tree

Country of Production

Australia

Date of Completion

25th November, 2025

Duration

17min 18s

Genre Drama

Drama

Language

English

LOGLINE

Obituary of a Tree is a psychological drama about Eleanor, a nurse who tries to save her dying husband and preserve her family but after discovering the truth behind her son's suicide, she realizes her own neglect and blind faith caused the tragedy.

Writer/ Director

Yunyao Mai

Contact details

tiffanymai666@gmail.com

Producer

Jiayi Li

Contact details

jili3742@uni.sydney.edu.au

Co- Producer

Ruolin Wang

Contact details

vanessswang9@gmail.com





Gynopsis

Obituary of a Tree is a psychological drama about Eleanor, who had first lost her husband to leukemia, was then devastated by the suicide of her son. Unable to accept the truth, she began searching through her son's diary for answers. In the process of retracing the past, she discovered that her son had been subjected to school bullying due to his feminine tendencies and was trapped in deep helplessness for being unable to save his family. Yet, she herself had escaped reality by obsessively praying to gods and Buddha, overlooking her son's cries for help. Ultimately, in despair and anger, she smashed the statue of Buddha, wrote a eulogy beneath the withered phoenix tree in front of her home, and faced the cruel truth and her own failure.

Director's Statement

The message I want to convey is faith. The tone of this short film is oppressive and heavy. Through this story, I want to express that when faced with suffering beyond their control or endurance, people often place their hopes in illusory beliefs or external forces. However, escaping reality does not resolve difficulties—instead, it can lead to neglecting and losing what is most precious around them. And I intend to use ample medium and close-up shots to capture the characters' emotions while employing frame composition with elements like door frames and windows to create a visual metaphor for being trapped by reality. I would like to use two distinct color tones to differentiate between reality and past events: a golden hue for the past and a blue tone for the present, symbolizing the protagonist's journey from "illusory hope" to "harsh reality." The sound design wants to amplify this brutal contrast: the laughter and joy of the family in the past and the deathly silence when only Eleanor was at home.



Key Credits

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



Natasha Cheng is a multilingual Australian born Chinese actor and producer based in Sydney. She is an Australian Institute of Music graduate. She completed a Bachelor of Performance - Dramatic Arts with Distinctions. Since has been in a number of projects, notably KXT Theatre Company's production of Sensitive Guys as Amy/Pete in 2020, Lunch with Bernays at KXT in 2021, writing and producing her own play called We're All Terrible Let's Watch TV 2022 and playing Iago in Such Stuff Productions adaptation of Othello, Othello in La Fabrica de Microobios' adaptation of Othello and Athena in Upper Crass Theatre Production's of Death in the Pantheon.



Sean Hong Su is 9 years old and has loved performing since childhood. He joined Bubble Gum agency at age 7 and filmed a commercial for Parramatta Park. In May 2025, he participated in the filming of the short film *After School*, and in October of the same year, he starred in the short film *Obituary of a Tree*.

Sean is also very passionate about music, excelling in singing, piano, hip hop dance, and drumming, winning numerous awards in various Sydney competitions.



Blair Liu is a bilingual actor based in Canberra, with experience in film and theatre. He specialises in emotional realism and physical performance, bringing honesty and precision to every role.

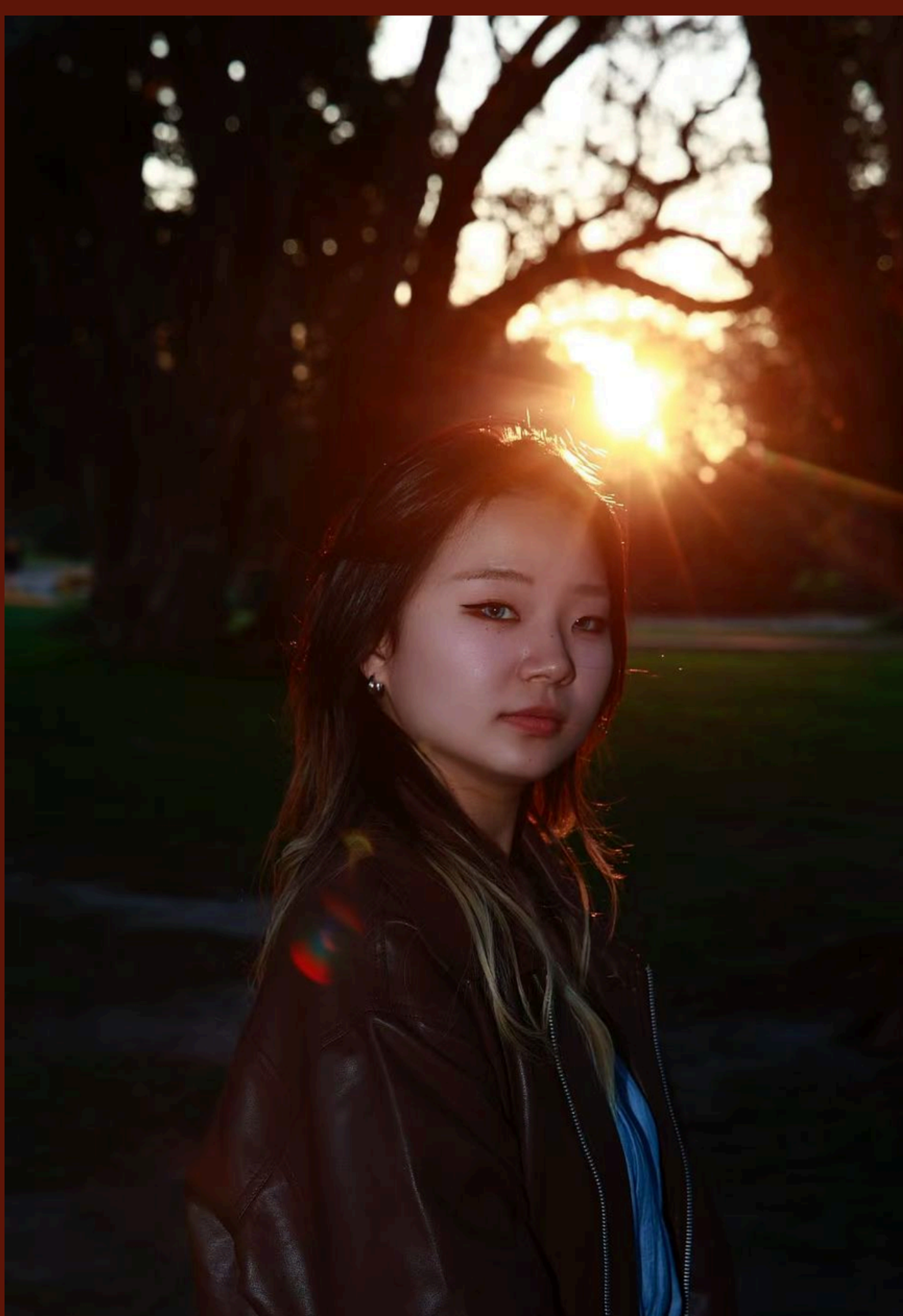
Key Credits

WRITER/DIRECTOR - Tiffany Mai



Tiffany Mai is a filmmaker from the University of Sydney, born in China. She excels in directing, screenwriting, and editing, and has created short narrative films, experimental films, music videos, and more. Her work combines keen insight with artistic expression, dedicated to highlighting social dilemmas and exposing social issues. Driven by a realist approach, she uses visual and textual storytelling to convey her perspectives on the world, aiming to provoke thought and inspire public consciousness regarding social matters. She has produced several short films, such as "The girl under the roof," "Who Killed My Future?," and "Rebirth." Her short films have won multiple awards and have been screened at international film festivals including the Sydney Independent Film Festival, Moscow Asian Film Festival, and the 12th Vancouver Chinese Film Festival "Maple Leaf Award."

PRODUCER - Jiayi Li



Jiayi Li is a filmmaker currently pursuing her Master of Film Production at the University of Sydney, building upon her bachelor's degree from UNSW. With experience in both directing and production, she has directed short films such as Wonderland and Doorlock and served as a producer on projects including Unspoken Hunger, Obituary Of the Tree, and Rhythm. As the Line Producer of this graduation film, she oversaw all aspects of scheduling, budgeting, and logistics, ensuring the project's creative vision was realized efficiently and to a high standard.

Key Credits

DOP- Leiwei Qiu



Lewei Qiu holds a Bachelor's degree in Media from UNSW and is currently pursuing a Master of Film and Screen Arts at the University of Sydney. Passionate about photography—particularly analogue—Lewei is captivated by the tactile qualities of color and grain. Their work often reflects on the materiality of media and the evolving perception of time shaped by technological change. Combining technical precision with artistic sensibility, Lewei's creations are marked by elegant visual composition and experimental aesthetics.

GAFFER - Qiyu Lin



Colin (Qiyu Lin) is a Sydney-based filmmaker and visual artist, currently studying at the University of Sydney. His work spans film, music videos, and club visuals, with a focus on practical lighting, coloured light, and reshaping natural light to enhance atmosphere and storytelling. His lighting work on short films has been selected for the 32nd Beijing College Student Film Festival and the FIRST International Film Festival.

Key Credits

SOUND RECODIST - Mingwei Lu



Lu Mingwei, a master's degree holder in film from the University of Sydney, specializes in capturing narrative moments through the language of the camera. His creations emphasize technical practice and visual aesthetics. His short films have won the first prize of the China University Television Award, the second and third prizes in Script Category of the 6th Gold Swan Film Festival, Best Organisation Award of 19th Hangzhou Asian Games Short Video Competition and have been shortlisted for the 21st Shanghai International Students Advertising Festival, the finals of the 2nd FBS New Youth Script Festival, and the 11th Jinsha Short Film Competition Week.

EDITOR - RuolinWang



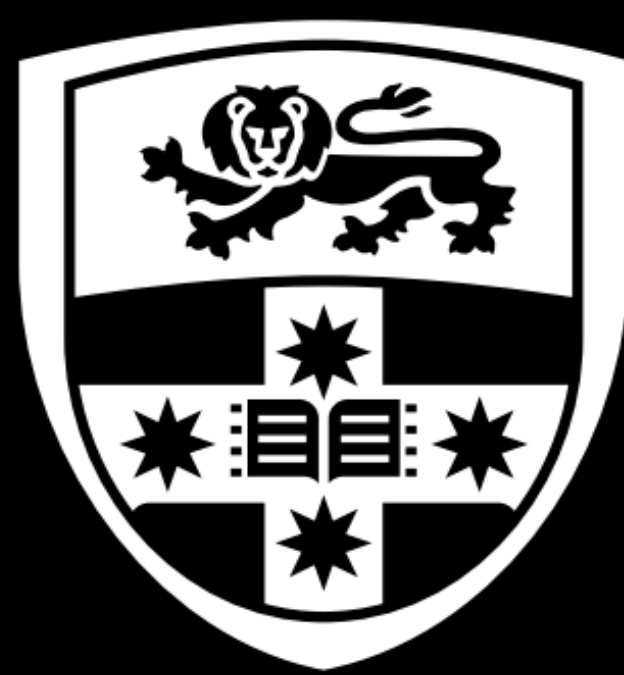
Ruolin Wang is an international student from the University of Sydney majoring in Film and Screen Arts, specializing in post-production. She has accumulated extensive experience in video editing and content operations. She is passionate about animated and fantasy films, and her favorite director is Tomm Moore, whose works are characterized by geometric shapes, fluid lines, and narratives inspired by Celtic mythology. Over the past few years, she has directed and edited several short films, including *From Bitterness to Sweetness*, *Escaping*, *Anti-Drug*, and *Blue*. She has worked in a number of media companies, and has a passion for video production, editing, and operations.

Key Credits

COLORIST - Mintian Xu



Mintian Xu is a postgraduate film and media practitioner specializing in editing, After Effects compositing, and color grading. Experienced in commercial advertising, VR content production, documentary editing, and broadcast news workflows, with strong skills in collaborative post-production environments. Professional credits include Internship Editor for the MQ Security commercial, Assistant Editor at Vaka VR, Editor for the documentary project *Girly Space*, Editor for Shandong TV News Station (Sports Edition), and Colorist for the short film *Obituary of A Tree*. My creative approach emphasizes rhythm, visual layering, and emotional detail, aiming to expand the expressive potential of moving images across different media formats.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

produced for the Master of Film and Screen Arts degree

Sydney College of the Arts

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