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POV's "Last Train Home" Goes Inside the Promise and Chaos of China's Booming Economy; Award-winning Film Premieres on PBS on Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2011

Part of the World's Largest Migrant Work Force, Members of One Family Discover That Opportunity and Hard Work Also Bring Social and Domestic Turmoil

*An EyeSteelFilm Production in Association with ITVS International;
A co-presentation with the Center for Asian American Media*

"A beautifully shot, haunting and haunted large-scale portrait by Lixin Fan about an astonishing migration involving . . . millions [of] Chinese workers who each year travel by train, boat and foot to return home for New Year's." — Manohla Dargis, *The New York Times*

MEDIA ALERT – FACT SHEET

National Dates: Lixin Fan's **Last Train Home**, has its national broadcast premiere on **Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2011** at 10 p.m. on PBS' **POV (Point of View)** series. (Check local listings.) The film will stream on the POV website, www.pbs.org/pov/lasttrainhome, **Sept. 28 – Oct. 27**. POV, winner of a Special Emmy for Excellence in Television Documentary Filmmaking and the IDA Award for Best Continuing Series, closes its 24th season with special broadcasts on Thursday, Nov. 10, 2011 and in winter/spring 2012.

Last Train Home has the distinction of being selected for [The Economist Film Project](#), which presents documentary films in partnership with *PBS NewsHour*. Watch the [conversation with filmmaker Lixin Fan](#).

The Film: Every spring, China's cities are plunged into chaos as 240 million migrant workers journey to their home villages for the New Year in the world's largest human migration. **Last Train Home** takes viewers on a heart-stopping journey with the Zhangs, a couple who left infant children behind for factory jobs 16 years ago, hoping their wages would lift their children to a better life. They return to a family growing distant and a daughter longing to leave school for unskilled work. As the Zhangs navigate their new world, **Last Train Home** paints a rich, human portrait of China's rush to economic development.

An Official Selection of the 2010 Sundance Film Festival, the film won the Best Feature-Length Documentary Award at the 2009 International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, among other prizes.

Last Train Home is a production of EyeSteelFilm in association with Telefilm Canada and the Rogers Group of Funds via the Theatrical Documentary Program.

Embed a trailer, download press materials and learn more at www.pbs.org/pressroom.

POV Website: POV's website for **Last Train Home** — www.pbs.org/pov/lasttrainhome/ — features additional scenes from the film, a photo gallery of the largest recurring migrations around the globe (for events as diverse as the Chinese New Year to the Glastonbury Music Festival), a compilation of must-see documentaries about modern China and updates on the Zhang family. Educators may record and show the film in their classrooms for a year following the premiere broadcast. Selected clips are available for streaming along with a free lesson plan. Viewers may download and print a free discussion guide.

Outreach: POV works with public television stations and national and community groups across the country to foster dialogue around the issues presented in our films. For a list of upcoming screening events go to <http://www.pbs.org/pov/outreach>. POV and nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow are developing a discussion guide with background information to help event organizers. Cari Ladd, M.Ed., is creating a lesson plan. Educators may record and show **Last Train Home** in their classrooms for one year following the premiere broadcast.

Filmmaker's Statement: "I used to work at television stations in China and traveled to different parts of the country for my job," says director Lixin Fan. "The sharp contrast between the lives in cities and the countryside always struck me. Submerged under the glamour of the modern metropolis, the poverty in the vast rural area is overwhelming. I started to focus on the migrant workers, who I believe have contributed the most to China's prosperity but benefited the least. Aside from many hardships in life, they also have to bear constant separation from their families, who are left behind. I decided to document the lives of this group in a unique position in China (and the world's) history.

"The annual migrant exodus between cities and countryside during the week of the Chinese New Year provided me a perfect background for the film. The Zhang family's story speaks for millions. By observing the fate of one family, the smallest and seemingly stable cell in a quickly evolving society, I hope to articulate the complexities of a nation's ambition to rise and its impact on culture, society and the individual."

Bio: **Lixin Fan (Director/Director of Photography)**
Lixin Fan, based in Montreal, was born in China, where he grew up as his country was modernizing and rapidly integrating with the world. Starting off as a journalist with the national television broadcaster CCTV, he traveled the country and experienced first-hand the inequality caused by China's rapid economic expansion. This inspired him to become a documentary filmmaker with a focus on social issues.

Last Train Home is Fan's debut feature documentary as a director. In 2006, he worked as associate producer/soundman on the acclaimed feature documentary [Up the Yangtze](#) (POV 2008), about the world's largest hydroelectric project, the Three Gorges Dam. The film was an Official Selection of the 2008 Sundance Film Festival, won the Genie Award as Canada's top documentary feature and was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award. In 2003, he edited the Peabody and Grierson award-winning documentary "To Live Is Better Than to Die," a breakthrough film on China's AIDS epidemic.

Related Stories: China's migrant workers expect more," by John Gapper, *Financial Times*, Sept. 7, 2011.
<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/78d7af1e-d93a-11e0-884e-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1Z4gsM9KL>

"Privatization with Chinese Characteristics," *The Economist*, Sept. 3, 2011.
<http://www.economist.com/node/21528264>

“China Takes Aim at Rural Influx,” by Andrew Jacobs, *The New York Times*, Aug. 29, 2011.
www.nytimes.com/2011/08/30/world/asia/30china.html?_r=1

“Repress or Reform: With Protests on Rise, Beijing Faces Choice,” by Stanley Lubman, *The Wall Street Journal*, July 5, 2011.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2011/07/05/repress-or-reform-with-protests-on-rise-beijing-faces-choice/>

“Painful Lunar New Year for China’s Migrant Workers,” by Ian Johnson and Loretta Chao, *The Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 23, 2009.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123265353594507099.html>

“China’s Way Forward,” by James Fallows, *The Atlantic*, April 2009.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2009/04/china-apos-s-way-forward/7331/>

Credits:

Director:	Lixin Fan
Editors:	Mary Stephens, Lixin Fan
Director of Photography:	Lixin Fan
Camera:	Shaoguang Sun
Producers:	Mila Aung-Thwin, Daniel Cross
Executive Producer:	Zhao Qi
Co-Producer:	Bob Moore
Original Music:	Olivier Alary
Total running time:	86:46

POV Series Credits:

Executive Producer:	Simon Kilmurry
Co-Executive Producer:	Cynthia López
Vice President, Production & Programming:	Chris White
Series Producer:	Yance Ford

Awards and

Festivals:

- Best Feature-Length Documentary Award, International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, 2009
- Cinémathèque Québécoise Award for Best Film from Quebec/Canada, RIDM, 2009
- Best Documentary Award, Whistler Film Festival, 2009
- Best Documentary Award, RiverRun International Film Festival, 2010
- Grand Jury Prize for Outstanding Documentary and Special Jury Prize for Documentary Cinematography, Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, 2010
- Golden Gate Award: Investigative Documentary Prize, San Francisco International Film Festival, 2010
- Best Documentary Award, Victoria Film Festival, 2010
- Official Selection, Sundance Film Festival, 2010
- Official Selection, New Directors/New Films, 2010

(For a complete list of awards and festivals, visit www.eyesteelfilm.com/lasttrainhome.)

Pressroom: Visit POV’s pressroom, www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom, for press releases, downloadable art, filmmaker biographies, transcripts and special features.

POV: Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and now in its 24th season on PBS, the award-winning **POV** series is the longest-running showcase on American television to feature the work of today’s best independent documentary filmmakers. Airing June through September,

with primetime specials during the year, **POV** has brought more than 300 acclaimed documentaries to millions nationwide and has a Webby Award-winning online series, *POV's Borders*. Since 1988, POV has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information is available at www.pbs.org/pov.

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