



## Love Talk

**Feature 35mm 100min.**

**Budget**

US\$1,500,000  
(HK\$11,700,000)

**Funds Secured**

US\$1,000,000  
(HK\$7,800,000)

**Producer**

LEE Seung-jae

**Production Company**

LJ Film Co., Ltd

**Partner Attached**

CJ Entertainment, South Korea

**HAF Goals**

Co-producers, Funds

### ■ Introduction ■

Since Lee Yoon-ki's debut feature *This Charming Girl* won the most prestigious New Currents Award at Pusan IFF 2005, all eyes are turned expectantly on the next venture by this startlingly talented director.

Set among an immigrant community in LA, which is "more Korean than Seoul", the story evolves around the lives of three Koreans in their early thirties who try to connect with each other while suffering through their dislocation from their native country and their own past. A poignant tale about the ambivalent human urge to search for and escape from love. It is about lethargy in life and faith in dreams.

### ■ Director ■

LEE Yoon-ki was born in Daejeon, Korea, in 1965. He left his hometown after high school and attended the University of Southern California, graduating with a major in Business Administration. He produced Kim Jin-han's awardwinning short film *Contempt* (1994), and his own short, *My Kind of Love* (1995) was invited to the 2nd Seoul Short Film Festival.

Lee Yoon-ki's feature debut *This Charming Girl* (2004) won the Pusan International Film Festival's top honor, the New Currents Award. The film has since attracted many offers from international festivals and different markets. It was selected for the Sundance World Cinema Competition and Berlin's Forum section.

Lee Yoon-ki is currently in pre-production of his awardwinning script, *Love Talk*, which deals with the lonely lives of Korean immigrants in America.

### ■ Producer ■

LEE Seung-jae is recognized for his ability to find and develop young and almost unexpected talent. He founded LJ Film Co., Ltd in 2000 and consecutively produced four of Kim Ki-duk's highly acclaimed films - *Address Unknown* (2000), screened in Competition in Venice, *Bad Guy* (2001), selected for Berlinale Competition and a watershed success at the domestic box office; *Coast Guard* (2002), invited to Karlovy Vary Competition, and *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter... and Spring* (2003), much lauded at Locarno Competition and the highest grossing Korean film in the US.

Before establishing LJ Film, Lee Seung-jae produced *Inshala* (1996), directed by Lee Min-yong, starring Korea's top star of the time, Choi

Min-soo. In 1997, he produced his first film with Kim Ki-duk, *Birdcage Inn*, which launched Kim onto the international scene. He was also producer for Shin Seung-soo's *Face* (1998), and the semi-experimental *Interview* (1999) by Daniel H. Byun.

With a background in publishing, Lee started out in the film industry in 1994 as Marketing Supervisor at ShinCine Communication, then one of the most influential production houses in Korea. He was responsible for the marketing of Kang Je-kyu's *The Gingko Bed* (1996), a film that contributed to the Korean cinema boom, and a hit in Hong Kong and Japan.

### ■ Production Company ■

LJ Film Co., Ltd is the production company that brought Kim Ki-duk to the world with the booklet "Kim Ki-duk: from Crocodile to Address Unknown". With *Address Unknown* (2000), *Bad Guy* (2001), *Coast Guard* (2002), and *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter... and Spring* (2003), LJ Film successively produced 4 of the most significant films of the director's career.

Coupling low-budget film production know-how with domestic and international promotion, LJ Film has provided the Korean film community with a significant precedent and inspiration. With the screening of two characteristically different films at the 9th Pusan Int'l Film Festival - the closing film *The Scarlet Letter* (2004), which became a commercial success, and *This Charming Girl* which won the New Currents Award and has been selected to the 2005 Sundance World Cinema Competition as well as the Berlinale Forum - LJ Film again displayed its production capabilities as well as its vision for its second cycle of directors.

LJ Film is counted as one of the most promising production companies in the changing and prospering Korean film industry. This is owed to its ability to develop important filmmakers internationally, its capability to produce well-made commercial films which appeal to the domestic market, and its global projects which link the U.S., Europe, and Asia.

### ■ Synopsis ■

Ji-seok, Sunny and Chae-won are immigrants in their late thirties living lonely and precarious existences in LA'S Koreatown.

Ji-seok works in a Korean video store. He rents a room in Sunny's house. He came to LA with the vague thought that it is where his former lover Chae-won lives.

Sunny, his landlady, runs a massage parlor cum brothel. She wants to make a lot of money for the daughter she has left in Korea, but tries to retain some of her cultural roots. She has a Caucasian lover, Randy.

Chae-won, Ji-seok's ex-lover, is a Ph.D. student having an affair with a married fellow student. She moonlights as a love-counselor on a radio show under the pseudonym of "Helen Jeong."

We see various scenes from the streets of LA through Ji-seok's eyes, still unaccustomed to the city.

One day, Sunny calls in to 'Helen Jeong's Love Talk,' but instead of talking about her own problems, she asks about Chae-won. Normally a skilled counselor, Chae-won is caught off guard and is unable to answer.

Chae-won goes to the airport to pick up her father. He is visiting with a young girlfriend. Chae-won worries about her mother who lives a lonely life with her, but she seems used to it.

Ji-seok apologizes to Sunny for his late, accumulating rent. Sunny, on the other hand, feels apologetic to Ji-seok, who does so much of the housework.

Chae-won comes to the video store where Ji-seok works. It's a chance meeting for the former lovers, but they have little to say to each other. A few days later they meet again and they gradually get back into the groove of daily conversation.

Lately, Sunny often gets into fights with people, and harasses Ji-seok in a drunken state, contrary to how she really feels. Sunny calls up the Love Talk show again. Chae-won talks about herself for the first time.

Chae-won is invited to a party at Sunny's house, but feels uncomfortable about the 'girls.' She thought Ji-seok and Sunny are a couple and leaves in haste. Yet, later on, Chae-won and Sunny have a heart-to-heart talk about how good they feel about each other despite their differences.

Chae-won and Ji-seok talk about why they left each other in the past. One thing they have in common is that they have both been waiting for someone to approach them.

Sunny's ex-husband has finally caught up with her after she ran away with his money. She runs away again, but when she finds out that it got Ji-seok in trouble, she comes back. Ji-seok makes plans to leave LA and go to New York.

Chae-won's mother leaves for Miami, but not before sending a letter to the Love Talk show. She says she doesn't want a weak mother's shadow to overcast her daughter any longer.

As the end credits go up, we see photos of the daily lives of the characters. Sunny sits with her little girl on the wooden patio of a traditional house in Korea, and Chae-won and Ji-seok have taken a commemorative photo of their newly-opened dry cleaner's in New

York. We see images of Korean stores, including the massage parlor, elderly Koreans sitting on MacDonald's benches in a Western street, and a "Welcome to Los Angeles" sign at the airport.

## ■ Director's Statement ■

*Lost angels...*

A land of dreams that has lost its angels. Strangeness, familiarity, and confusion; dreams and escape from reality all co-exist in this place. The flutters of expectation only last a little while, and the moment you take your first step on the land of dreams, the dreams in your heart are already gone, hidden on the other side of your memory. Set in LA's Koreatown, more Korean than Seoul, *Love Talk* is a work that questions the meaning of love.

Up until now, Sunny has always fallen in love with the wrong guy in the wrong place... We learn love from this woman who says that, despite knowing that they like each other, people always keep an adequate distance and in the same way, wait hoping that someone will approach them.

Unable to erase the memory of a woman he had broken up with long ago, Ji-seok has come to the city where she lives. Lethargy towards love bears another kind of vertigo for him in reality. Without knowing what went wrong or when, he tries to find closure to a love that has perhaps hasn't even started.

Using an alter ego "Helen Jeong," Chae-won talks about love through the medium of radio. She believes that the radio still exist is because we love with our hearts. To her, the radio is still a personal tool for making contact and confirming love.

To people living in someone else's country, LA is a strange city. This is because love from the past and love of the future co-exist ingeniously there. However, finding love in the present is as difficult as saying the words "I love you" out loud. If we could find our lost loves at this, their terminus...

*We go to LA where there is desert and the ocean.*

If one can make a film that has the characteristics of a work of art, that in itself is a choice and a challenge. Through images combined of light and shadow, *Love Talk* is a film that can share a candid conversation about contemporary love with people who speak different languages.

*"An unfamiliar love is waiting for us."*

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