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Hong Kong filmmaker joins Chinese historical blockbuster



[caption id="attachment_5040" align="alignright" width="300"]

caption="Filmmaker John Woo at the 12th Shanghai International Film

Festival"]



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A-list filmmaker John Woo is the first celebrity to join the cast of the second major film in the leading Chinese state film studio's campaign to reform the propaganda genre with a heavy dose of star power.

Last year, China Film Group Corp. released "The Founding of a Republic" to mark the Chinese Communist Party's 60th year in power. Eager to beef up the party's image among audiences who favor commercial blockbusters or Hollywood fare, the studio stacked the historical epic with Chinese-language cinema's biggest stars. Actors like Jackie Chan, Jet Li and Andy Lau were happy to comply even though they were given mere cameos, mindful of the importance of cultivating relationships in the booming mainland market.

China Film Group is now following up the 60 million Chinese yuan (\$8.8 million) production with a second star-studded blockbuster that commemorates the 90th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party next year.

The first celebrity to sign on is "Mission: Impossible II" director Woo, China Film Group Film Production Corp. President Zhao Haicheng told The Associated Press in a phone interview on Wednesday. The veteran filmmaker will play Lin Sen, the former president of the ruling Nationalist government that the communists forced into exile in Taiwan in 1949, he said.

Shooting will start in mid- to late- August, Zhao said, declining to give further details.

The film called "The Founding of a Party" in Chinese will trace events between the 1911 revolution that overthrew imperial rule and the establishment of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, the Chinese news

website Sina.com reported on Wednesday. Directors Han Sanping — the chairman of China Film Group — and Huang Jianxin will shoot in Beijing, Shanghai, Paris and Moscow, the report said.

"The Founding of a Republic" raked in a massive 415 million yuan (\$61 million) at the box office, helped by politically correct theater operators who flooded their properties with screenings. "The Founding of a Party" is likely to receive similar treatment.

Woo made his name in the Hong Kong industry with action thrillers like "A Better Tomorrow," "The Killer" and "Hard Boiled" before moving to the U.S., where his credits also include "Broken Arrow," "Face/Off" and "Windtalkers." Woo also had a small role in "The Founding of a Republic" but his character was cut in the final edit.

But he has focused on Chinese-language productions in recent years, directing the two-part historical epic "Red Cliff" and producing the upcoming kung fu movie "Reign of Assassins." His next project will take on the so-called "Flying Tigers" — American fighter pilots who defended China against Japanese invaders during World War II.

Source: [Sina.com](#)

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