

Film title

Return to dust

Tagline

Tender tale on the transformative nature of love

Short synopsis

The humble, unassuming Ma and timid Cao have been cast off by their families and forced into an arranged marriage. To survive, they have to come together and build a home for themselves.

Long synopsis

Ma and Guiying lead lives that are similarly sheltered and difficult. He is a reticent farmer, the last of his family to remain unmarried; she is disabled and infertile, and long past what is considered to be marrying age in rural China. Their arranged marriage, uniting two people who are accustomed to isolation and humiliation, would appear to force them into a relationship that will make life worse for both of them. But instead, they seize the opportunity to rise above themselves and discover their shared destiny. They learn how to become close companions, how to speak up, how to care for each other and even how to smile. All this in spite of the hard work required of them by their quintessential bond with the land and the trials that await them on their common path. Against a backdrop of topics such as the exploitation of farm workers, forced urbanisation, the uprooting of traditions and poverty, Li Ruijun – who returns to his birthplace of Gaotai, in the northern province of Gansu – prioritises the characters' worldview, with its inherent naivety and fragility, through an act of trust and love that infuses the film with subtle tenderness and profound humanity.

Technical information and credits

Original title: Yin ru chen yan
English title: Return to dust
Year: 2022
Country: China
Language: mandarin
Subtitles: cz
Running time: 133 min
Dostupnost: 15+

Genre: Drama, Poetic
Directed by: Li Ruijun
Written by: Li Ruijun
Edited by: Li Ruijun
Cinematography: Weihua Wang
Sound by: Changrui Wang

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Awards

Berlinale IFF - Main Competition - 2022
Udine Far East Film Festival - Audience Award, Black
Dragon Audience Award - 2022

Actors

Renlin Wu, Hai-Qing

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