

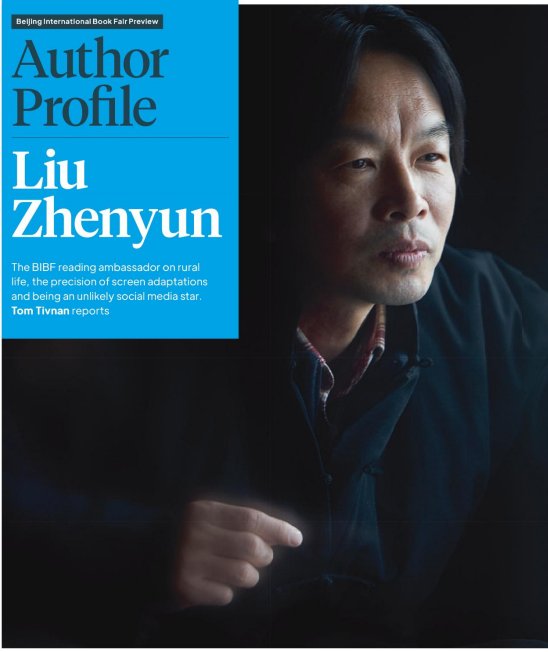
# 英国 THE BOOKSELLER 整版专访 (及译文)

Beijing International Book Fair Preview

Author Profile

Liu Zhenyun

The BIBF reading ambassador on rural life, the precision of screen adaptations and being an unlikely social media star.  
Tom Tivnan reports



Liu Zhenyun is one of China's most well-regarded and popular novelists. He has won a number of prizes, sold more than 15 million copies in the home market and his books have been translated into 30 languages. He is also a screenwriter of international repute (most famously in adapting his own novel, *I Did Not Kill My Husband*, for director Feng Xiaogang's 2011 film, released for Western audiences as *I Am Not Madame Bovary*) and a somewhat reluctant social media superstar that he suppose of his high points in his career has been his role as the Beijing International Book Fair's (BIBF) reading ambassador, beginning in 2017.

The ambassadorship is largely akin to other authors' literature laureates, with Liu promoting books and reading country-wide. His particular mission since taking up the post has been to "send the joy of reading" to China's rural communities. Liu says: "I grew up in a village myself, so I naturally feel a deep connection to rural life. At the same time, China's rural areas are still relatively underdeveloped and need specific kinds of support."

He gives an example of, in 2017, going to teach for a week in the Changji primary school in remote Xiangyang Town, Fujian Province, where he discussed texts from early 20th-century giant Lu Xun. His own writings and also shared stories of village life from his childhood. Liu developed a "deep bond" with those kids and a year later coordinated with BIBF to bring them to the fair, to see the historical sites of Beijing and have a literature class at Liu's alma mater, Peking University.

Liu says: "Going to Beijing made a big difference for them. Several children stood at Peking University and said firmly: 'I want to study here in the future.' That wasn't just a dream – it was a resolution. Those kids are now in middle school and still write to me regularly, telling me about their studies and lives. What I receive is not just letters – it's warmth and nourishment for life."

**66**

**A key task is to build a connection between China's rural villages and the wider world – this is an important mission of BIBF**

"Of course, more work needs to be done for rural China. One key task is to build a connection between villages and the wider world. This is also an important mission of BIBF. While my strength is limited, I will continue to do what I can."

Liu knows first-hand what a chance to study at a top-tier university can mean for a kid from the sticks. He was born in 1968, grew up in the small town of Laoshang in the Henan Province's Xuyi County and, after a five-year stint in the army beginning at the tender age of 15, took China's national college entrance exam – and

bagged the highest score in the entire province. That led him to Peking University after his degree, he worked as a journalist while writing fiction in his spare time. Liu's debut, *Tugu*, was published in 1985. A semi-autobiographical story that circles back to Laoshang, *Tugu* revolves around the lives of students from a remote village studying for their college entrance exams.

He has continued to keep the home fires burning in his work, as more than half his 23 books are set in rural Henan, including *Someone to Talk To*. To his biggest-selling novel (more than three million copies shifted domestically) and a 2011 winner of the quadrennial Mao Dun Literary Prize, China's most prestigious books going.

Liu's work often encompasses heavyweight issues, from the epic – *Remembering 2042* looks at the Henan famine of that titular year that killed up to 4.5 million people – to the intimate (*Someone to Talk To*'s overarching theme is loneliness in pre- and post-Mao China), yet most of them are deeply funny, using humour as a way by which to examine these difficult topics. Yet he resists the label of a comic writer: "I don't think I'm humorous, nor do I see myself as a satirical writer. I've said this before: I'm the least humorous person in my village."

That said, he admits that his upcoming release in China, which roughly translates into English as *Sally Joker*, is a "black comedy triggered by a scandal" revolving around a man and a woman's inappropriate relationship becoming viral Internet fodder with "one person's pain becoming everyone's entertainment. A joke becomes more and more serious. The man tries to explain himself, but no one listens. Everyone is throwing stones at him, trying to destroy him – not for what happened, but for the sake of the spectacle".

He says: "Humorous language is of little value in literature. If you use clever quips, readers might find the author slick or trying to be smart. What's more useful in literature is humour in the details, more useful than that is humour in the plot, better is humour in the story itself, and even better is humour in the story structure or character structure. The highest form of humour is the absurdity behind those structures".

Eleven of Liu's books have been adapted for the big and small screen, three of which were collaborations with Feng, including *Remember 2042* – which was released in 2012 as back to read with a cast that included Hollywood stars Adrien Brody and Tim Robbins – and *Someone to Talk To* (2016), directed by his daughter Liu Yulin, one of China's hottest young filmmakers.

Liu has written the screenplay for most of them, but is wary of adapting other's work or creating original screenplays. He explains: "Screenwriting is a specialised craft. Good writers aren't necessarily good screenwriters. I've come to understand that deeply. Screenplays and novels have completely different structures – screenplay has to tell a complete story in a limited word count, with dramatic plot, relationship conflicts and twists. I admire professional screenwriters. In comparison, novelists are freer."

Key backlist



**Someone to Talk To**  
Howard Goldblatt, Translated by Liu Zhenyun  
Someone to Talk To  
Owen Brown Press, 216 pp  
£16.99  
The difficulty of personal connections laid through three interconnected perspectives over 10 years, beginning with the period 'Yang Baofan'.



**I Did Not Kill My Husband**  
Howard Goldblatt, Translated by Liu Zhenyun  
Owen Brown Press, 216 pp  
£16.99  
A look at the economic extremes of contemporary China with a wealth of corruption begins to be exposed with each and small-time that Tugu finds an increasingly bleak view.



**Remembering 2042**  
Howard Goldblatt, Translated by Liu Zhenyun  
Owen Brown Press, 216 pp  
£16.99  
Liu is politically charged. His debut literature prize winner has Liu Zhenyun getting engaged with his second child against China's one-child policy. If the director, her husband Qian Zhenyun the new baby, and the director, their first child, they will both they marry. Problems, Qian Zhenyun someone else shortly after the divorce...

如下是译文：

## 北京国际图书博览会预览

### 作者专访

#### 刘震云

BIBF 阅读大使谈论乡村生活、影视改变的精准性以及他如何成为一位出人意料的社交媒体明星。

Tom Tivnan 报道

刘震云是中国最受推崇和欢迎的小说家之一。他斩获多项大奖，作品国内销量超过 1500 万册，被翻译成 30 种语言。同时，他还是一位享有国

际声誉的编剧(最著名的是将自己的小说《我不是潘金莲》改编成冯小刚 2016 年的电影，该片面向西方观众发行时名为《我不是包法利夫人》)，刘震云也是一位出人意料的社交媒体超级明星。但他表示，职业生涯的高光时刻之一是从 2017 年开始担任北京国际图书博览会(BIBF)阅读大使。

这一大使身份在很大程度上类似于其他国家的文学桂冠作家，刘震云在全国范围内推广书籍和阅读。自担任该职位以来，他曾在中国农村社区“颂扬阅读的乐趣”。刘震云说：“我自己在农村长大，所以自然与乡村生活有着深厚的联系。与此同时，中国农村地区仍相对欠发达，需要特定类型的支持。”

他举了一个例子，2017 年，他去福建偏远的下洋镇初溪小学教了一周书，在那里他探讨了 20 世纪初文学巨匠鲁迅的作品、自己的作品，还分享了童年时期的乡村生活故事。刘震云与那些孩子建立了“深厚的纽带”，一年后，他与 BIBF 合作，把他们带到博览会上，参观北京的历史古迹，并在刘震云的母校北京大学上了一堂文学课。

刘震云说：“去北京对他们产生了重大影响。几个孩子站在北京大学，坚定地说：‘我将来想在这里学习。’那不仅仅是一个梦想，更是一个决心。那些孩子现在上中学了，仍然定期给我写信，告诉我他们的学习和生活情况。我收到的不仅仅是信件，更是生命的温暖和滋养。”

“当然，中国农村还有更多工作要做。一项关键任务是在村庄和更广阔的世界之间建立联系。这也是 BIBF 的重要使命。虽然我的力量有限，但我会继续尽我所能。”

刘震云亲身体验过，对于一个来自偏远地区的孩子来说，有机会在顶尖大学学习意味着什么。他出生于 1958 年，在河南省延津县老张镇长大，从 15 岁开始在军队服役五年，之后参加了中国的全国高考，并取得了全省最高分。这使他进入了北京大学；毕业后，他当了一名记者，同时在业余时间写小说。刘震云的处女作《塔铺》于 1987 年出版。这是一部半自传体小说，故事背景回到老张镇，围绕着一个偏远村庄的学生备考的生活展开。



**“一项关键任务是将中国农村与更广阔的世界之间建立联系 —— 这是 BIBF 的重要使命”**

在他的作品中，他继续关注家乡，22 本书中有一半以上以河南农村为背景，包括他最畅销的小说《一句顶一万句》(国内销量超过 300 万册)，该书于 2011 年获得每四年颁发一次的中国最负盛名的文学奖项之一 —— 茅盾文学奖。

刘震云的作品常常涵盖重大主题，从史诗般的《温故 1942》(讲述了 1942 年河南饥荒，这场饥荒导致多达 150 万人死亡)到个人化的《一句顶一万句》(其核心主题是新中国成立前后中国社会的孤独)，但他的大多数作品都极具幽默感，通过幽默来审视这些棘手的话题。然而，他拒绝

被贴上喜剧作家的标签：“我不认为自己幽默，也不认为自己是讽刺作家。我以前说过：我是我们村最不幽默的人。”

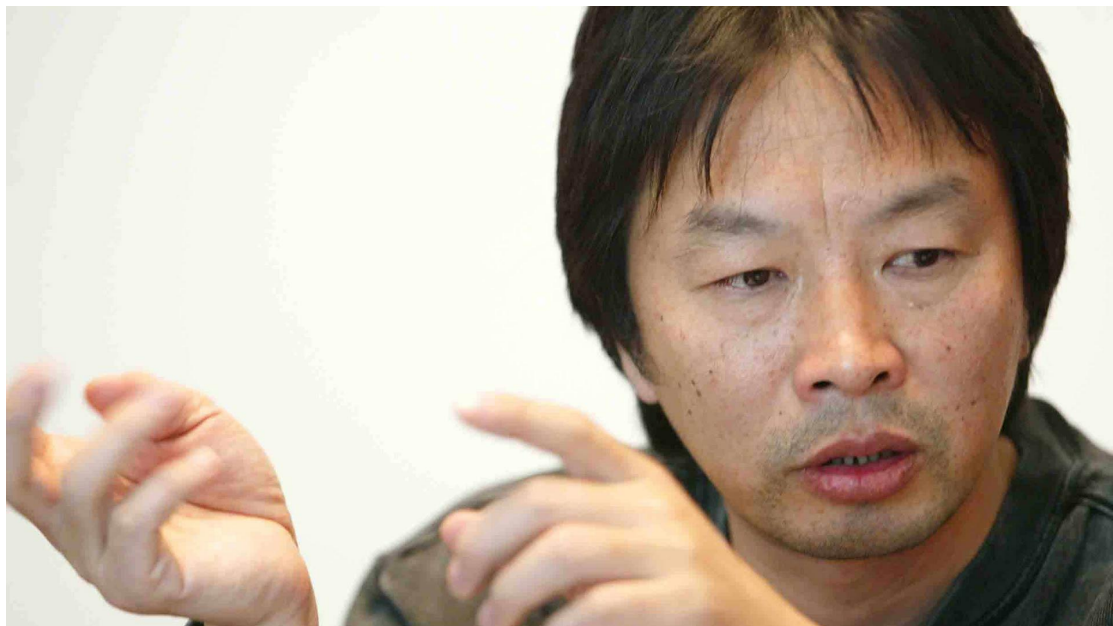
尽管如此，他承认自己即将在中国出版的作品(大致翻译为《咸笑话》)是一部“由丑闻引发的黑色喜剧”，讲述的是一男一女的不当关系在网上疯传，“一个人的痛苦变成了所有人的娱乐。一个笑话变得越来越严重。这个男人试图为自己辩解，但没有人听。每个人都在向他扔石头，试图摧毁他——不是因为发生了什么，而是为了看热闹”。

他表示：“幽默语言在文学中价值甚微。若使用巧妙俏皮话，读者或许会觉得作者油滑或刻意耍小聪明。文学中更有价值的是细节里的幽默，比这更有价值的是情节中的幽默，更好的是故事本身的幽默，而更胜一筹的是故事结构或人物结构中的幽默。幽默的最高形式，是这些结构背后的荒诞感。”

刘震云有 11 部作品被改编为影视剧，其中 3 部与冯小刚合作，包括 2012 年上映的《一九四二》(英文名 Back to 1942，主演包括好莱坞

明星阿德里安·布洛迪和蒂姆·罗宾斯)，以及2016 年由其女儿刘雨霖执导的《一句顶一万句》——刘雨霖是中国炙手可热的青年导演之一。

他为大部分改编作品撰写了剧本，但对改编他人作品或创作原创剧本持谨慎态度。他解释道：“编剧是门专业技艺。优秀作家未必是优秀编剧，这一点我深有体会。剧本和小说的结构完全不同——剧本必须在有限篇幅内讲述完整故事，包含戏剧性情节、关系冲突和反转。我敬佩专业编剧。相较之下，小说家更自由，写作时可以不受约束地延展。不过，电影对白的精准性让我在创作下一部小说时，对白更加简练——绝不赘言。”



刘震云在中国社交媒体上收获了新一代粉丝，仅其在抖音(中国版 TikTok)的内容播放量就超过1 亿次。但他补充说：“与其说我主动参与社交媒体，不如说我是‘被参与’。比如去年我在伦敦一家河南面馆吃烩面，刚吃完就有人发给我一个小红书链接。原来有读者在那里认出我，拍了照片并配文‘刘震云坐过的座位’发布到网上，那条帖子就火了。”

不过他确实享受社交媒体带来的互动：“这能帮助读者了解我日常生活的样子。当然，我更希望他们通过作品与我交流。因为生活和文学是两回事：生活停止之处，文学开始。生活何时停止？思考之时。文学何时开始？思考之时。文学的根基是哲学。人们在生活中太过忙碌，被推着向前，无暇思考。但文学给了我们思考的空间——这个角色为何这样行动？必须想透。这正是我们阅读的原因：在书中，我们能找到被生活落儿下的道理。”