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## 'Touch of the Light' Touches Hearts

By Sophie Braccini



Photo provided

portrays the reserved, small woman tactfully; the relationship between mother and son, their subtle links, are suggested in very authentic and restful ways.

It is also with a very light touch that the director shows the efforts of the young pianist towards independence and the difficulties represented in simple everyday tasks, such as finding one's class in a world that's made by and for those who can see. But there is no pity for Huang. As he struggles to cross a street, the audience is elated instead by his desire to know what he is capable of doing. "How would I know if I don't try?" he asks.

Even if the story with Jie seems a bit contrived, there are some very beautiful moments, such as the day she teaches him to dance, or when she takes him to the beach and gets him to free up his stride because he is on a limitless space where he can feel the ground with his feet. She describes his world as "a world without light where every step requires great courage."

His great courage inspires her to get out of her mediocre existence and to try to live her dream - a message we all can understand: If he has the courage to do it, why can't we?

"Touch of the Light" will play for one week beginning Oct. 18 at the Orinda Theatre. This is the first U.S. commercial premiere of this Taiwanese film. For more information, visit [www.lamorindatheatres.com](http://www.lamorindatheatres.com).

It starts with sounds. Little everyday sounds that one hardly notices, but that carry a lot of meaning to someone who cannot see. To someone who is blind. It is quite challenging to create a film that portrays the life of Huang Yu-Siang, a sightless musician, but Taiwanese director Chang Jung-Chi does it well in "Touch of the Light."

Loosely based on the real life of the blind Taiwanese pianist Huang, who plays himself in the film, "Touch of the Light" is almost as precisely descriptive as a documentary, yet the movie is also a cross portrait between this musical prodigy and Xiao Jie (Sandrine Pinna), the dancer who does not believe in herself. This sensitive film can be raw at times, but underscores the incredible courage of Huang.

The script takes us into the challenges faced by the young man who leaves his rural life to enter a musical college in Taipei. It also touches on the blossoming, yet platonic relationship with life-challenged dancer Jie.

While the interaction with Jie feels fabricated, it does not negatively impact the beautiful story of the pianist. When we meet Huang for the first time, he has never lived without the help of his family, especially his mother. Chang

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[back](#)

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