

# Mao's Last Dancer—breathhtakingly beautiful



Loved [Mao's Last Dancer](#), a new film based on the true story of ballet dancer Li Cunxin, who, as a child, was pulled from his poor family in the Chinese countryside to train in Beijing during the Cultural Revolution—and through his own quest for freedom wound up an international star.

Directed by Bruce Beresford (*Driving Miss Daisy*, *Tender Mercies*) the movie was filmed in China, Houston and Australia—and stars [Birmingham Royal Ballet](#) Principal Dancer Chi Cao, Australian Ballet dancer Chengwu Guo and Huang Wen Bin, who play Cunxin at different ages.

Mao's Last Dancer showcases many beautiful—even breathtaking—ballet sequences from acclaimed Australian choreographer Graeme Murphy and co stars co-stars Bruce Greenwood, Kyle MacLachlan and Joan Chen.

The story is so moving that I even teared up at times—despite a bit of clunky acting (foregivable because the artists are dancers, first, of course).

Mao's Last Dancer premiered on 13rd September 2009, at the [Toronto International Film Festival](#) and will be opening in theaters Oct. 1, 2010. I'd give it 3 and 3/4 stars—and a great recommendation for anyone who likes dance and US patriotism.

—Anita Harris