

# The Red Race

Spotlight: China

These children endlessly jump, roll, and stand on ends upon the red path with only ceaseless criticism and the burden to succeed. Coming from poor families, their destitute parents expect only one thing from them: to become famous in the gymnastic field. The 6 year-old children of the Shanghai Luwan gymnastic team build their personalities under the Chinese sport and education system. This is the road of no retreat.

Director Chao's observational documentary captures the paradoxes and myths of the

Chinese sport's juggernaut in its training regimes for children. Seeing the toll on the small faces of exhausted, crying children is a revelatory snapshot of a nation's insistence on dominance and a testimony to its poor citizens and their obligations to the state. The children carry all of these expectations on their proud little shoulders and, through tears and injury, manage to maintain their dignity, striving above all else to make their parents proud, and to realize their potential.

Despite the slender odds and ceaseless criticism from instructors, they stand firm and behave well beyond their years to exemplify courage and perseverance. This detailed insight captures the contradictions of modern China and the cost paid for the country's dreams.

**"NEVER HAVE I WANTED TO GIVE CHILDREN A HUG MORE."**

Caitlin Murphy, The Reelists

## NEW ZEALAND PREMIERE

### SCREENING TIMES

#### AUCKLAND

Sun 28/2 3.30pm  
Sun 7/3 2.10pm  
Tue 9/3 7.15pm

#### WELLINGTON

Sun 14/3 3.35pm  
Sun 21/3 1.25pm  
Tue 23/3 6.55pm



China, Germany | 2008 | 70mins | Mandarin | Dir. Gan Chao

Festivals: Silverdocs, CIFF, Guangzhou IFF