

From: richard yelland <richardy@curtisbirch.com>
To: Ruifeng Liang <Ruifeng.Liang@mail.wvu.edu>
Date: 10/25/2011 4:05 PM
Subject: Re: speech

Hi Ray,

I decided to come last week. But I still was not able to make it a reality. It has been very difficult as I feel that I would like to honor the Hakka people for their gracious welcome -- for allowing us into their world without hesitation to film their lives and culture. This visit was the very least I could do to repay the generosity of their hospitality. So for that reason it is very hard on me.

But as I now confront my work this week, facing my biggest project of the year, it's very clear that there was no way that it was going to be humanly possible for me to be out of town. Last week I was still making calls about airlines and my visa. And it wasn't until late in the week, that I realized it would be impossible.

On one hand, it is good for me personally that it didn't work out. Because it would have been damaging to remove myself from a project that is 'make or break' for me this year -- a project that comes to a head, interestingly, at the end of this week.

I have thought deeply about this screening and feel strongly that my presence is still somewhat accounted for with it being played in my absence. At very least I was able to get you the corrected versions. In addition, I would like to write down my thoughts and experiences surrounding the project and describe my interactions with the Hakka people, which I cherished for what they taught me about life and how to look beyond one generation. I would be grateful to have you read these words to the audiences both at the Xiamen screening and Hakka screening. I would also express my apologies for not being there in person -- as you know that I have been wrestling with this for a long time (you know in my heart I would be there if I could).

Would it be possible for me to write this speech and for you to read in my place?

Another thought was that I would like to do a plaque for the people that we could deliver together for each of the Tulous that participated in our film. When do you think will be your next scheduled visit?

Ray, again I very much appreciated your offer to take care of the various things you could to get me over there. I also was glad for your persistence as it really made me push to the end to try to make it happen. On the other hand, perhaps there are some positives we can develop from my absence that could provide a longer lasting impression and relationship with you and the Hakka people based on my strong desire to continue our dialogue.

I look forward to hearing from you and thanks again, Richard

--

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