

# Yuan Quan and The First Half of My Life

By Geng Yuan

The TV series, *The First Half of My Life*, has caused heated discussion online. The series centers around the heroine, Luo Zijun, who becomes independent and professionally successful after an unexpected divorce with the help of her friend, Tang Jing, and Tang's boyfriend, He Han.

Luo is a carefree and affluent full-time housewife until her divorce changes her life and compels her to head into the workforce.

Tang Jing, portrayed by Yuan Quan, a Hubei-born actress, has attracted many fans. She has become one of the most popular characters of the series.

Yuan says that she "enjoys playing this role tremendously." The character of Tang, who is an ambitious career woman, is a departure for Yuan, as she usually plays people that are sentimental and fragile. "People seldom see such personality

(toughness) from my previous roles or from the interviews with me. But I do have one type of my personality traits that overlaps with Tang in my personal life."

In the play, Tang's clothing is basically black, white, grey and beige. Yuan revealed that all the TV crew did a lot of meticulous work on her clothing. Most of the costumes used in the play are her private clothes, the rest are provided by the studio. Professional stylists did a lot of work to match her clothes and hair.

Apart from her appearances in this TV series, Yuan has not been seen much on TV or movies recently. When asked about how she would review the first half of her own life, she said, "Fast pace is not the keynote of the first half of my own life. I will do things my own way and move forward in a steady and relaxed pace."



## Wuhan to appear on *China from Above*

Scenes from season II of *China from Above*, a documentary co-filmed by the China Intercontinental Communication Center (CICC) and the National Geographic Channel (NGC), were shot in Wuhan between July 14 and 16.

Landmarks in Wuhan such as East Lake, the Qintai Concert Hall, Chu River and Han Street, the Yellow Crane Tower and the Wuhan Yangtze River Bridge were captured by the documentary's cameras. The Wuhan Yangtze River crossing

on July 15 and the competition on July 16 were the highlights for the documentary film shot.

The documentary maker, Zhang Bo, said that *China from Above* (Season II) has two episodes entitled "Grand Rivers" and "Long Coast" respectively. The annual Yangtze River crossing has a long history and it made for a great fit in the "Grand Rivers" segment. The film crew was excited and satisfied when filming the scene of the river crossing competition on July 16 thanks to the

frequent suspense in the competition and the fierce and tense atmosphere.

*China from Above* (Season I) has already won the Award for Best Cinematography at the New York International Film and TV Festival and the Award for Best Documentary Series at the Asian Television Awards.

The production of Season II will be finished at the end of the year and will be broadcast on NGC in the U.S. and the CCTV Documentary Channel next spring or summer.

## Exhibitions during the Beihu Lotus Festival

By Peng Zhong



Two exhibitions, the "Lotus Pond in Moonlight Painting and Calligraphy Exhibition," the "Graceful Lotus Photography Exhibition," will be held on Liuzhi Street of Huangpi District during the first Beihu Lotus Festival.

The festival kicked off on July 15 and will continue until August 31. Besides the exhibitions, visitors can also experience the special features of Beihu by appreciating the lotus flower, picking seeds and tasting lotus products.

Liuzhi Street is the largest lotus-planting garden in Wuhan, covering an area of 8,237 acres with a great variety of lotuses.

## Wuhan Philharmonic Orchestra performs at Qingdao Music Festival

By Liu Mengyu

The Wuhan Philharmonic Orchestra opened the finals of the 5th German Irmeler Piano Competition in Qingdao on July 21.

In cooperation with the great German pianist, Jacob Leuschner, and the renowned Chinese conductor Fu Renchang, musicians from the Wuhan Philharmonic Orchestra performed the classic piano piece, "Ode to the Yellow River" from *the Yellow River Concerto*.

Zhang Shouzhou, the leader of the Wuhan Philharmonic Orchestra, said that earlier this year, the orchestra received an invitation from the highly-impressed organizer of the Irmeler Piano Competition to perform in Qingdao.

The orchestra also performed live accompaniments for professional players of the competition.