



# CHAMPIONS OF THE DRUM AND BELL

by Martin Gronemeyer, Michaela Kirst



## SYNOPSIS

From the days of celestial emperors to a booming state capitalism, Beijing's skyline was reshaped completely. But the people still love pigeons. Everyday the flocks circle above. Following three pigeon breeders in one of the last historic quarters, we see a country's dramatic change, reflected in a traditional pastime. 52 year old Bao Jianhua has been raising show pigeons since he was a boy. Behind the loft above his small courtyard home loom the imperial Bell Tower. Bao's greatest joy are pigeon whistles, tiny flutes light enough for a bird to carry. When the pigeons fly, music fills the air. But times are a-changing. Nobody makes the whistles anymore. And many of his friends abandon the beautiful old breeds to raise plain grey homing pigeons, fit for racing. Like shrewd Hou Yuzhi, who hopes to win money and fame in the competitions. And young Song Chen, the wunderkind of Beijings pigeon races, who must work hard to defend his champion-status.

## CAST AND CREW

DIRECTOR Martin Gronemeyer, Michaela Kirst

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43 min

FORMAL CATEGORIES

Nature/Animals

ORIGINAL LANGUAGES

Chinese

PREMIERE

Germany (2014)

PRODUCTION COMPANY

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FILM LOCATION

China