

Title: 3D Sex and Zen: Extreme Ecstasy (3D 肉蒲团之极乐宝鉴)
Director: Christopher Sun (孙立基)
Cast: Hiro Hayama, Leni Lan, Saori Hara, Suo Yukiko
Language: Mandarin (with English and Chinese subtitles)

'3D Sex and Zen: Extreme Ecstasy' is a film about a scholar of the Ming Dynasty, Wei Yangsheng, who marries a beautiful woman, Yuxiang, but continues to pursue happiness through sexual encounters, divorcing his wife in the process. He even undergoes an operation to change the size of his penis. He befriends a prince who tempts him with an array of women but who is actually out to exact revenge. The prince imprisons Yangsheng after shooting him in the leg, and when Yuxiang pleads for her husband's release, the prince castrates Yangsheng and locks a chastity belt onto his wife, depriving the young couple of sex for the rest of their lives. The film ends with Yangsheng and his wife living happily as an elderly couple, affirming that love goes beyond sex.

2 The film "Sex and Zen" is a sexually erotic film. It has been shown in several Asian countries, with most of them requiring edits. Edited versions of the film have been shown in countries like Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and Thailand.

3 For Singapore, the film distributor worked with the producer to edit the film to meet with R21 classification guidelines, after which the film was submitted to the BFC (Singapore's classification board) for classification.

4 The BFC assessed the film and also referred it to the Films Consultative Panel (FCP), a community advisory panel made up of a cross section of Singapore society.

5 The FCP's views were mixed. Chairman, FCP, advised disallowing the film stating that soft porn raises the bar with regards to what is considered allowable in local cinemas. He also commented that the demeaning depiction of women, an obsession with sex and very thin plot lines were all elements synonymous with pornographic films. Another member felt that the film is sado-masochistic with deviant sexual activities.

6 The rest of the FCP felt that the film can be passed under R21 for its sexual scenes, frontal nudity and sadistic violence. They observed that the sexual scenes were not prolonged or pornographic and were within the R21 film classification guidelines. They also noted the positive message of love at the end of the film. Some opined that the violence came across as being more prevalent than the sexual scenes.

7 The BFC considered the views and concerns of the FCP before arriving at its decision. The BFC notes that the sexual theme and depiction of sexual scenes and nudity in the film

fall within R21 film classification guidelines which state that “strong portrayal of mature theme is allowed”, “simulated sexual activities are allowed if they are not excessive” and “explicit images of sexual activity need to be justified by context”. It agrees with FCP members that the sexual scenes are not prolonged, and while women are portrayed in a demeaning way and there are elements of sadistic violence, these are not sufficient to merit a “Not for all Ratings” decision. There are also comic elements in the film, such as when a donkey’s penis is transplanted on to the protagonist, and he shows off his new-found sexual prowess to the women in the prince’s harem, which lightens the tone and impact of the film.

8 Hence the BFC has given an R21 rating for ‘3D Sex and Zen: Extreme Ecstasy’ with the advisory “Nudity, Sexual Scenes and Graphic Violence”.