

SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL™ REVEALS INTIMATE STORIES OF LIFE  
NEAR EPICENTER OF CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

## COVID: OUR LOCKDOWN IN SHANGHAI



**DOCUMENTARY SPECIAL FOLLOWS RESIDENTS IN ONE BUILDING LIVING  
UNDER EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES, PREMIERING MAY 25**

**NEW YORK – May 15, 2020** – In January 2020, a deadly new coronavirus was spreading quickly through central China. Soon British advertising creative and filmmaker, Yu Kung and his wife, Crystal Liu, found themselves losing their income and locked down in their apartment block in Shanghai. They decided to use their skills to capture the impact of the epidemic and sudden confinement on the lives of their neighbors. The powerful and moving one-hour documentary **COVID: OUR LOCKDOWN IN SHANGHAI** offers a rare glimpse into the lives of a diverse group of people grappling with the same unprecedented situation. It premieres Monday, May 25 at 9 p.m. ET/PT on Smithsonian Channel.

**COVID: OUR LOCKDOWN IN SHANGHAI** reveals the challenges, tensions and sometimes life-affirming moments among the residents. Scenes of handling stress and developing coping mechanisms turn to surprising moments of affirmation and joy. From the first moments of lockdown to the relief several weeks later, viewers will witness the journey to life after lockdown as they begin to regain a semblance of normality and reunite with loved ones.

Like many citizens in all parts of the world, initially Yu Kung did not recognize the full threat of the outbreak. “I remember seeing people putting on social media funny memes about the virus, making fun of the corona name with the Corona beer and stuff like that,” he says in the film. That changed dramatically on January 23, 2020 when the Chinese government announced a full lockdown for 11 million residents of Wuhan, a city just four hours by train from Shanghai.

Soon, everyone in Yu Kung’s Shanghai apartment building found themselves locked down in an eerily deserted city, with no sense of when the situation might change. Having spent weeks in isolation, the filmmakers began recognizing the significance of this extraordinary, historic situation, and started reaching out to neighbors – many of whom they had never truly met – to see if they would be willing to have their experiences captured.

Alongside portraying the compelling personal detail of life in domestic lockdown for neighbors of diverse backgrounds, professions, ages and nationalities, Yu and Crystal document the ground-breaking technological measures the government put into place to try to fight the virus - from thermal imaging scanners to temperature guns and virus tracking apps. This personal, intimate film reveals both fascinating, rare insights into one country’s experience of the sudden emergence of COVID-19 and the personal, relatable daily realities of the people first experiencing the world in lockdown.

The neighbors include:

- Tiffany D. White is an American kindergarten school teacher who left the States to start a new life after the death of her father. She faces the impossible dilemma of whether to leave or stay as the outbreak takes hold - and her summer wedding plans with her partner Yoan Rigart-Lenisa, a French entrepreneur, are ultimately thrown into question.
- Jasmine is a doctor who has to send her four-year-old son and husband away due to her higher risk of exposure, as she identifies potential coronavirus patients at a city hospital. She works gruelling 24-hour shifts and is in contact with fellow medics who have volunteered to go to the epicenter of the virus in Wuhan.
- The Yu family owns a wedding shop which provided dresses for up to 30 brides a month until the virus hit. Nervous brides arrive for dress fittings and photo sessions wearing masks, but soon all orders dry up. At home, business pressures start to bleed into daily life with three generations confined under the same roof.
- Self-confessed workaholic lawyer Wu Ming finds himself alone on the domestic front for the first time to parent his 10-year-old son Diego due to his wife’s increased workload as a civil servant. Father and son find that lockdown brings them closer together.

COVID: OUR LOCKDOWN IN SHANGHAI offers a unique insight into the lessons learned from Shanghai’s lockdown - lessons that will strike a chord with many still under lockdown today in other parts of the world. Neighbors, once strangers, now find

themselves stepping back outside with new connections and a fresh appreciation for the things that really matter. The lockdown has, in many cases, brought families and neighbors closer together, offering hope for the rest of the world. The program reveals a unified resilience, reminding us that we're all in this together.

COVID: OUR LOCKDOWN IN SHANGHAI is produced, directed and filmed by Yu Kung and Crystal Liu of Campfire Productions. Executive producers for Wonderhood Studios are Rebecca Templar and Samantha Anstiss and Wonderhood's producer/director is Luke Korzun Martin. Charles Poe and David Royle serve as executive producers for Smithsonian Channel.

Smithsonian Channel™, a ViacomCBS Inc. network, is where curiosity lives, inspiration strikes and wonders never cease. This is the place for awe-inspiring stories, powerful documentaries and amazing factual entertainment, available in HD and 4K Ultra HD across multiple platforms. Smithsonian Channel, winner of Emmy® and Peabody awards for its programming, is the home of popular genres such as air and space, travel, history, science, nature and pop culture. Among the network's offerings are hit series including *Aerial America*, *America in Color*, *America's Hidden Stories*, *Apollo's Moon Shot*, *The Pacific War in Color* and *Air Disasters*, as well as critically-acclaimed specials that include *The Green Book: Guide to Freedom*, *Black Hole Hunters* and *Princess Diana's Wicked Stepmother*. Smithsonian Networks also operates Smithsonian Channel Plus™, a subscription video streaming service delivering over a thousand hours of the Channel's stunning and diverse library of documentaries and series in HD and 4K Ultra HD. Smithsonian Channel is also available internationally in Canada, Singapore, Latin America, the UK and Ireland. To learn more, go to [smithsonianchannel.com](https://smithsonianchannel.com), or connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

###

## CONTACT:

### **Nicole Bamber**

Director, Communications | ViacomCBS – Smithsonian Channel  
(646) 965-2775 | [Nicole.Bamber@smithsonianchannel.com](mailto:Nicole.Bamber@smithsonianchannel.com)