

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

As U.S.–China Tensions Persist, Nautilus Gold-Winning Author & Filmmaker J.J. Cheng's **PHOENIXA: THE NEST** Explores Power and Peace Through Chinese Myth

A cinematic mythic literary saga of Mystical Realism exploring Chinese cosmology, ancestral memory, and humanity's search for peace in a fractured world

NEW YORK, NY — May 28, 2026 — As geopolitical tensions persist between the United States and China and the world confronts growing instability, Nautilus Gold-winning Chinese American author and filmmaker J.J. Cheng's **PHOENIXA: THE NEST** emerges as a mythic literary response to a fractured age — blending Chinese mythology, ancestral remembrance, mystical realism, and cinematic storytelling into a visionary exploration of power, peace, and humanity's future.

Winner of the 2026 Nautilus Gold Book Award and the Literary Titan Gold Book Award, and a Somerset Book Award Semi-Finalist, **PHOENIXA: THE NEST** is the first installment of the larger **PHOENIXA** Saga — a mythic literary universe rooted in Chinese cosmology, historical consciousness, and spiritual imagination.

Blending mythic fiction, ancestral memory, and cinematic narrative, the novel follows Phoenixa, a young girl guided by her Renaissance grandfather through the turbulent storms of Maoist China. At the heart of the story lies an increasingly urgent question for the modern world: how can humanity rediscover balance between power and peace, remembrance and amnesia, material progress and spiritual awakening?

Unlike Western phoenix myths centered on fire and rebirth, the Feng Huang in **PHOENIXA** represents peace, virtue, and cosmic harmony — a deliberate reintroduction of authentic Chinese cosmology into contemporary global storytelling.

"Power is the Dragon. Peace is the Feng Huang," says Cheng. "Between the Dragon's power and the Feng Huang's peace lies the destiny of humankind."

Presented as both literary saga and immersive cinematic experience, **PHOENIXA: THE NEST** features approximately 75 illustrations and a fully soundscaped 15.5-hour audiobook narrated by the author, creating what Cheng describes as "a mystical quest for peace."

Expanding beyond conventional literary categories, **PHOENIXA** blends mythic fiction, ancestral memoir, historical reflection, philosophical inquiry, visual art, and immersive audio storytelling into a new hybrid form of cross-media narrative. Through what Cheng describes as "Mystical Realism," the work bridges literature, cinema, mythology, and spiritual imagination for a globally interconnected age.

The work also emerges from Cheng's decades-long exploration of Chinese history, identity, and East–West cultural dialogue. A former journalist at China Central Television and longtime

intercultural filmmaker, Cheng traces part of the inspiration behind PHOENIXA to her ancestral lineage connected to the Cheng Brothers (程) of the Song Dynasty — foundational Neo-Confucian philosophers whose intellectual legacy shaped Chinese civilization for centuries.

Simultaneously, Cheng is completing **CHENG LEGACY: An Ancestral Quest for Modern China**, an interconnected documentary series examining the civilizational pulse of China through the life and legacy of her grandfather, Cheng Zhen Jun (程振鈞, 1888–1932), a Republican-era modernizer devoted to rebuilding China during one of its most pivotal historical transitions.

Together, the PHOENIXA Saga and CHENG LEGACY form an interconnected creative vision where myth meets history, ancestry meets modernity, and personal memory intersects with civilizational transformation.

“As the tide of global conflict rises and the world turns toward the Dragon of power, PHOENIXA summons the Feng Huang — the Chinese Phoenix, an ancient force of peace,” Cheng says.

Cheng’s work arrives at a critical cultural moment. As narratives surrounding China become increasingly polarized, **PHOENIXA** offers a rare and deeply personal lens into China’s spiritual and historical imagination — bridging civilizations not through politics, but through myth, memory, and shared humanity.

ABOUT J.J. CHENG

J.J. Cheng is an award-winning Chinese American author, filmmaker, intercultural commentator, and creator of the PHOENIXA Saga & Universe. Born in Beijing and based between New York and China, Cheng was among the earliest English-language journalists at China Central Television before later becoming an Associate Professor of Cinema & Television in both the United States and China.

Her acclaimed documentary works, including *China Gold Rush*, *Mama’s Gold: The Orphans of Shangri-La*, *Golden Lotus: The Legacy of Bound Feet*, and the experimental film *c/o Butterfly: A Rhapsody of the Womb*, explore China’s evolving social landscape, hidden histories, cultural taboos, and the lived realities of women within patriarchal structures — while examining the human body itself as a site of transformation, memory, and sovereignty.

With *PHOENIXA*, Cheng expands that lifelong exploration of East–West dynamics, memory, and myth into a multi-disciplinary canon of globally resonant works.

BOOK INFORMATION

Title: PHOENIXA: THE NEST

Author: J.J. Cheng

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Awards: 2026 Nautilus Gold Book Award; Literary Titan Gold Book Award; Somerset Book Award Semi-Finalist

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Website: <https://phoenixacheng.com>

Media Hub: <https://phoenixacheng.com/media-hub-2/>

Download Press Kit: <https://phoenixacheng.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/PHOENIXA-PRESS-KIT-JJCHENG-MAY-2026.zip>

SELECTED REVIEWS & INTERVIEWS

Publishers Weekly BookLife Review

<https://booklife.com/project/phoenixa-the-nest-103525>

Literary Titan Review

<https://literarytitan.com/2026/01/11/phoenixa-the-nest-a-mystical-quest-for-the-cheng-legacy/>

Literary Titan Author Interview

<https://literarytitan.com/2026/01/26/the-love-for-truth/>

PURCHASE LINKS

Amazon

<https://www.amazon.com/PHOENIXA-Mystical-Quest-Cheng-Legacy/dp/1956427058>

Barnes & Noble

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/phoenixa-j-j-cheng/1149494287>

Audiobook

<https://www.amazon.com/Audible-Phoenixa-The-Nest/dp/B0C87F5NFY/>

PHOENIXA® — A Mystical Quest for Peace

Human endeavor toward cosmic peace.

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