



# *The Drummer*

**Director Kenneth Bi**

“Superb! Spectacular! A genuine crowd-pleaser”  
-Stephen Farber, **The Hollywood Reporter**



**Hong Kong/Taiwan/Germany / Action - Drama /  
2007 / In Mandarin and Cantonese  
with English subtitles / 115 min.**

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## SYNOPSIS

Sid (played by Jackie Chan's son Jaycee), the rebellious son of a controlling and savage crime boss in Hong Kong, has to flee to Taiwan upon enraging his father's adversary, a powerful tycoon and underground business leader. Hiding out in the mountains, Sid discovers a group of Zen drummers whose mesmerizing art, rigorous physical training, and austere way of life pique his interest, and he requests to join them. Immersed in the world of the Zen drumming, Sid morphs into a firm and focused young man. His independence from the crime life and his father is profoundly challenged, however, when a twist of fate awaits him back home in Hong Kong and forces him to choose between loyalty to his family and his new found faith in himself.

## FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

WINNER – Best Supporting Actor, **Golden Horse FF**

Nominated – Outstanding Taiwanese Film of the Year, **Golden Horse FF**

Nominated – Best Original Film Score, Best Sound Design, **Hong Kong Film Awards**

Official Selection – **Sundance FF, Locarno FF, Antalya Int'l FF, Tokyo FilmEx, Gijon Int'l FF, Miami Int'l FF, Sofia Int'l FF, Seattle Int'l FF, Sydney FF, Munich FF, Moscow FF, Melbourne Int'l FF, Riga Int'l FF, Zagreb FF, Toronto Reel Asian Int'l FF, Palm Springs Int'l FF, Febio FF, Washington D.C. Int'l FF, Muestra Internacional de Cine**

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT: Kenneth Bi

In December of 2000, I saw a performance in Hong Kong by a drumming troupe from Taiwan that changed my view of life completely. Not one word was spoken throughout the entire performance, yet they seemed to have spoken volumes. In the two and half hours of drumming, they exuded a graceful energy of inner calm that was extremely powerful. Merely a few minutes into the performance, the audience realized that they were watching men and women who have truly made sacrifices for their art.

I learned that the troupe of twelve men and women train and practice at the top of a mountain in Taiwan. In the idyllic setting of the mountain, they practice Tai Chi, martial arts, meditation, and drumming. Initially there was no electricity, running water or transportation up the peak, so only those who were absolutely determined and committed had the mental and physical stamina to remain in the group.

Greatly inspired and affected by their performance, I made my journey up the mountain to meet them, interview them and to witness people who were willing to take the long road in today's world of ease and convenience. One of the drummers said, without pretension, "If you drum for one week, you will have one week's worth of skill. If you drum for three years, you will have three years worth of skill. There is no short cut."

In interviewing them, I found them to be sincere, passionate and open-minded. They were a group of people with diverse backgrounds. Most were local Taiwanese and Taiwanese aborigines, a couple hailed from Malaysia, and a few came from Hong Kong. After researching their philosophies and daily routines, I began writing THE DRUMMER. My last few scripts had been comedies and in THE DRUMMER I found myself preoccupied in a serious subject matter.

I began looking at different aspects of myself and how they collided with one another. The animal in me colliding with my rational self, and the philosophical thrusting against my emotional side. Which one of these aspects defines us and how do we come to terms with all our different facets? Even if we find peace in a peaceful place, it seems that nirvana is elusive and we can never truly be in a state of perfect happiness because the next trial to test us is always around the corner.

THE DRUMMER therefore, is one such journey of self-discovery.

## PRODUCTION STORY

Filmed on location in Hong Kong and Taiwan, and co-produced by Hong Kong's Kenbiroli Films, Taiwan's Arc Light Films and Twenty Twenty Vision of Germany, THE DRUMMER is the first film to combine an engaging character-driven story with the magnificent art of Chinese Zen drumming.

U Theatre was founded in 1988. At their creative headquarters atop Laochuan Shan, surrounded by the bustling metropolis of Taipei, Taiwan, members of U Theatre devote themselves to enriching the spirit and mastering ever more complex percussion skills. Members maintain a strict daily training regimen that includes a full menu of martial arts, meditation, percussion practice, and Tai Chi. The comparative rigors of the U

Theatre training gives troupe members levels of stamina, energy, and personal wellbeing unmatched by other performance groups.

Bringing together exquisite Zen drumming, the search for the meaning of existence, and the integration of art into life in all their performances, U Theatre has become a highly sought after marquee player at numerous international arts events.

U Theatre was not only the inspiration for Kenneth Bi's story, but also a major attraction for the stellar cast. *THE DRUMMER* stars some of the most celebrated actors and actresses in Chinese cinema today.

## SELECT BIOGRAPHIES

### **KENNETH BI / Writer / Director**

Born in Hong Kong, Kenneth Bi graduated with honors in Theatre / Film from Brock University, Canada, in 1989. He has written, acted, and directed numerous theatre and film productions both in Canada and Hong Kong. Besides being an experienced TV and film writer, Bi also boasts art direction and directing credits for music videos. His feature film debut, *RICE RHAPSODY* (Hainan Chicken Rice, 2004), won several prestigious awards, such as the Platinum Award for Theatrical Feature Film at the 2005 Worldfest in Houston, Best New Director Award at the 2006 Hong Kong Film Awards, as well as being named Top Ten Chinese Language Films of 2005 by the Chinese Film Critics Association. *THE DRUMMER* is his second feature film.

### **JAYCEE CHAN / Sid**

As the son of one of the most beloved icons of Hong Kong cinema, Jaycee Chan has a lot to prove following in the footsteps of his legendary father, Jackie Chan. In the four years since his big screen debut in the big-budget actioner, *TWINS EFFECT II*, for which he received a nomination as Best New Performer at the 2005 Hong Kong Film Awards, Chan has confirmed that he is as versatile a performer as his father, while establishing himself in a different arena from the one the senior Chan is so famously known for. He has since appeared in director Derek Yee's *2 YOUNG*, Benny Chan's *INVISIBLE TARGET* and *THE SUN ALSO RISES*, a 2007 Venice Film Festival competition title by renowned Chinese director, Jiang Wen.

### **TONY LEUNG KA FAI / Kwan**

Tony has been in the film industry for nearly 20 years, with a variety of roles under his belt. His first film was in 1983's *The Burning of Imperial Palace*, where he played the Emperor Xianfeng. He would later work with Chow Yun-Fat in three films, *Prison on Fire* in 1987, *A Better Tomorrow 3* in 1989, and *God of Gamblers' Return* in 1994. He also appeared as Joyce Godenzi's husband in *She Shoots Straight*, Joyce's trademark film. In 1994, Tony went to France to appear in Jean-Jacques Annaud's *The Lover*, based on Marguerite Duras's novel, as the older lover of a young teen schoolgirl, who was played by British actress Jane March. After so many performances and roles, he starred in the international horror feature *Double Vision* with American actor David Morse. Since then, Leung's career has skyrocketed as he continues to make movies in Hong Kong, such as *The Myth* (2005) and *Everlasting Regret* (2005).

### **LEE SINJE aka ANGELICA LEE / Hong Dou**

Malaysian-born Lee Sinje proved herself to be a force to be reckoned with by winning the Piper Heidsieck Best New Talent award at the 2001 Berlin Int'l Film Festival in her first starring role in BETELNUT BEAUTY. Since then her popularity and body of work have grown immensely with the international success of films such as the 2006 Cannes Film Festival, Directors' Fortnight Closing Film, RE-CYCLE, and THE EYE, a Hong Kong horror classic in which her dramatic turn as a blind woman won her the Best Actress award at the 2002 Golden Horse Awards, 2003 Hong Kong Film Awards as well as the 2003 Chinese Film Media Awards. Produced by Cruise/Wagner Productions and Vertigo Entertainment, the Hollywood remake of THE EYE, starring Jessica Alba, is scheduled for release in early 2008.

### **JOSIE HO / Sina**

Equally daring and fearless in real life as her on-screen persona, Josie Ho has won critical acclaim for her diverse roles in a wide range of films, from the high-octane action films PURPLE STORM and HOUSE OF FURY to the intimate family drama FOREVER AND EVER, which won her the 2002 Golden Bauhinia Best Supporting Actress award, to BUTTERFLY, the edgy lesbian story which opened Critics' Week of the 2004 Venice Film Festival, and the comedy NAKED AMBITION, in which her dazzling performance gained her a Best Supporting Actress award at the 2004 Hong Kong Film Awards. Ho most recently starred in Johnnie To's 2006 Venice Film Festival competition title, EXILED.

### **ROY CHEUNG / Ah Chiu**

Roy Cheung has been active in the Hong Kong filmmaking scene since the 1980's. His first breakthrough role was in Ringo Lam's classic PRISON ON FIRE, which earned him a Best Supporting Actor nomination at the Hong Kong Film Awards. He has made mesmerizing turns in films such as YOUNG AND DANGEROUS III, BEAST COPS and THE MISSION, which won him a Golden Bauhinia Award for Best Supporting Actor. In 2005, he was once again nominated for Best Supporting Actor at the Hong Kong Film Awards for his role in JIANG HU – THE TRIAD ZONE. Cheung's most recent credits include INFERNAL AFFAIRS II and Johnnie To's 2006 Venice competition film, EXILED.

### **KENNETH TSANG / Stephen Ma**

Kenneth Tsang is one of the most respected veteran actors in Hong Kong. A regular stable in Hong Kong films since the 1960's, Tsang appeared in an array of films from detective, kung fu, comedy to drama in the 1960's and 1970's. He worked on John Woo's A BETTER TOMORROW trilogy as well as THE KILLER, and made his Hollywood debut in 1998 alongside Chow Yun-Fat in THE REPLACEMENT KILLERS. He has since co-starred in several high profile Hollywood films including ANNA AND THE KING, RUSH HOUR 2, DIE ANOTHER DAY, and MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA.

# CREDITS

## CREW

Director/ Writer	Kenneth Bi
Producer	Rosa Li
	Peggy Chiao
	Thanassis Karathanos
Director of photography	Sam Koa
Editing	Isabel Meier
	Kenneth Bi
Production Designer	Alex Mok Siu Chung
Costume Designer	Cindy Cheung
Sound Designer	Tu Duu-Chih

## CAST

Sid	Jaycee Chan
Kwan	Tony Leung Ka Fai
Hong Dou	Lee Sinje
Ah Chiu	Roy Cheung
Sina	Josie Ho
Stephen Ma	Kenneth Tsang
Chinese Zen Drummers	U Theatre
Lan Jie	Li Rou –Yu
Sifu	Huang Chih-Chun
Carmen	Yumiko Cheng