

# KUNG FU CINEMA

SCREEN FIGHTING NEWS & REVIEW



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## SHORT FILMS

### Introduction

Martial arts action and general screen fighting are not exclusive to feature-length films. Amateur and aspiring filmmakers from around the world are shooting and cutting action short films, more so than ever before with the ease and low cost that digital video cameras and home computer editing software provide.

Martial arts and action-oriented short films are varied, both in quality and purpose. Some are promotional in nature such as **Double Blade** (2003), a glossy Hollywood-produced short designed to repackage Asian pop star Jay Chou as an actor. It was featured on one of his music CD releases. Others are designed to showcase the screen fighting and stunt work of the actors like **Escapee** (2004), a Hong Kong-grade short from Eric Jacobus and fellow members of The Stunt People. Directors are also able to display balanced filmmaking skills with story-driven action shorts such as Tran Quoc-bao's **Carmen's Virtue** (2003) and Russ Emanuel's **Girl with Gun** (2005). Fan-based action shorts have also become popular on the internet, such as those based on comic books or **Star Wars**, where costumed fighting and elaborate lightsaber duels are featured. Other themes have been explored such as fighting games in **Kung Fu Legends 2** (2002).

With traditionally few options for exhibition, short films are generally not considered a commercial venture. One exception has been the **Everyone Is Kung Fu Fighting** multi-volume DVD series from A55 Films that features a collection of martial arts-themed shorts packaged with interactive games and bonus features. Film festivals and online sites such as iFilms.com have provided other non-commercial avenues for short filmmakers to share their work with the general public. The future of video distribution, which increasingly points to on-demand internet services like Google's video search, could offer short film makers the greatest potential for finding commercial and screening success.

Although action short films may not always be readily available to the public and may lack the polish of commercial work, Kung Fu Cinema is committed to covering the latest and greatest of these, some of which are surprisingly entertaining by any standard. One hope is in the possibility that tomorrow's Yuen Wo-ping or Bruce Lee is making today's short film. With the ongoing and dramatic evolution of distribution and filmmaking in the digital age, coupled with the boundless potential of the human mind and body, the short film could play an increasingly important role in the future of screen fighting movies.

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