

KILL BILL VOL. 2



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SYNOPSIS

After dispensing with former colleagues O-Ren Ishii (LUCY LIU) and Vernita Green (VIVICA A. FOX) in KILL BILL VOL. 1, the Bride (UMA THURMAN) resumes her quest for justice in the series' second installment, KILL BILL VOL. 2. With those two down, the Bride has two remaining foes on her 'Death List' to pursue – Budd (MICHAEL MADSEN) and Elle Driver (DARYL HANNAH) – before moving on to her ultimate goal... to kill Bill (DAVID CARRADINE).

Miramax Films will release KILL BILL VOL. 2 in theaters on April 16, 2004

PRELIMINARY PRESS NOTES

It might be a slight exaggeration to describe *Kill Bill Vol. 2* as a “relationship movie.” But it may look like one, at times, in comparison with the wall-to-wall Asian swordplay action of *Vol. 1*. Both films are still, as Carradine says, “kung-fu samurai Spaghetti Western love stories.” But as the actor noted in a recent published interview: “The second one has got a lot more of what you’re used to from Quentin; the quirky character stuff, the surprises, the funny stuff.”

In *Kill Bill Vol. 1*, actor David Carradine was almost entirely a sinister presence behind the scenes, a familiar, seductive, baritone voice murmuring on the soundtrack—despite the fact that he played the movie’s title role. But along with Uma Thurman, who continues to cut a wide swath as the revenge-driven Bride, “David dominates *Vol. 2*,” according to writer-director Quentin Tarantino.

“When I tell people the name of the movie is *Kill Bill*,” Carradine says, “and that I’m Bill, they ask me: ‘Well, what are you, the bad guy?’ And I have to tell ‘em, ‘There are no good guys in a Quentin Tarantino movie. It’s *all* about the bad guys.’ The essence of a Tarantino movie is an inside look at the minds and hearts of violent people. That’s what we go to see his movies for. It’s climbing inside these people’s psyches and showing what makes them tick. There’s a nobility about Bill, yet you also know he’s one of the most evil people you’ve ever met in your life. “Bill is more fun than anything,” Carradine recently told The Associated Press. “Bill has virtually no human problems. He’s just kind of put himself above it all.”

In *Vol. 1* we learned that Bill, a broker of killers for hire, had assembled and trained a ruthless assortment of assassins, the so-called Deadly Viper Assassination Squad (DiVAS). Each of these gifted murderers was code-named for a different species of poisonous snake: O’Ren-Ishii (Lucy Liu) was Cottonmouth, Elle Driver (Daryl Hannah) was California Mountain Snake, Vernita Green (Vivica A. Fox) was Copperhead, and Budd (Michael Madsen), Bill’s kid brother and the only other male in the Viper Squad, was known as Sidewinder.

The lethal weapon known as Black Mamba, played by Thurman, the most talented of them all, was also Bill’s lover, and she became a fugitive from the assassination game when she learned that she was pregnant with his child. At that moment her worldview shifted on its axis. She no longer wanted to kill or to put her life in mortal danger. She changed her name, hid out in a small town, and found herself a kind and stable man to marry.

But Bill was not about to let this situation stand. We caught a few glimpses of the result early in *Kill Bill Vol. 1* with the wreckage left behind when Bill and the Vipers assaulted a tiny rural chapel

and slaughtered everyone in sight. *Vol. 2* gives us, for the first time, a full account of the wedding rehearsal massacre that sets the plot of this two-part epic in motion. After fending off attacks from Bill's trailer-trash kid brother Budd (Michael Madsen) and her chief rival within the Squad, Daryl Hannah's Elle Driver, The Bride tracks her ultimate quarry to his lair in Mexico.

"When you put the two parts of the movie together," David Carradine says, "it really is an epic, as big as the stuff that David Lean did. It's still the Quentin Tarantino world, but on a different scale."

The film's central relationships between hunter and prey, which Carradine describes simply as a love story, has one of its strongest expressions in Bill's deceptively serene introduction scene in *Vol. 2*: "I show up in Texas during her wedding rehearsal, outside on the porch, and I'm playing my flute. It's the sound that first tells you I'm about to appear. She hears this and comes out, and we have this very romantic reunion, which is also a goodbye. I mean, this scene just sings. The crew got choked up watching it. Quentin came over to me and said; 'I think this is the best scene in the picture for you.' And I said, 'I think it's the best scene of my career.'"

For a filmmaker as genre savvy as Tarantino, the touchstone for Bill's both Satanic and paternal character, and his intense relationships with The Bride and her sister Vipers, is not far to seek: "Bill is a pimp," Tarantino declares. "He's a procurer in every way, except for him it's about death, murder, and killing as opposed to sex: seeing a girl who he thinks has a prostitute hidden inside her, but she doesn't know it yet. All he has to do is bring it out, to turn her and make her part of his stable."

The relationships within the squad fit into the same psychological pattern, and one of the most fraught is the one that has been simmering for years between The Bride and Daryl Hannah's dramatically eye-patched Elle Driver (a.k.a. Sidewinder). Elle played a small but key role in *Vol. 1* – attempting to deliver a chemical coup de grace to the comatose and hospitalized Bride – but in *Vol. 2*, the rivalry comes to a head in an all-out "cat fight".

"In the hierarchy of the Deadly Vipers," Tarantino explains, "Uma's the top one. She's the one who has Bill's ear and heart. If Bill is the pimp, Uma's character is the number one lady in his stable, the girl who keeps the other whores in line, and Daryl Hannah is Uma's opposite number. They're both these amazons with long legs, long arms, and long whipping blonde hair. They've been at odds from the beginning, and when Uma went out, Daryl went in. She was The Bride's replacement in every sense."

In fact, Hannah worked on the assumption in her performance that Elle Driver was a former Interpol agent who at some point caught up with Bill and tried to arrest him, only to be seduced and “turned.” “The Bride used to be Bill’s girl and now Elle Driver is Bill’s girl,” Hannah says. “So Elle really wants to see The Bride go. She wants to be the one to finish her off.”

Hannah was performing on stage in London in director Michael Radford’s production of *The Seven Year Itch*, when Tarantino surprised her with a backstage visit, offering the role he’d written specifically for her. Hannah jumped at the chance to work with Tarantino, adding: “I’d never played a full-out villain before, so I was really excited when I realized what a bad ass Elle Driver was.”

One of Quentin Tarantino’s favorite actors, Michael Madsen, was asked to play Budd, a washed-up veteran of the Viper Squad who comes out a retirement and gets a new lease on life (at least briefly) in Bill’s fight against The Bride. Madsen had not worked with Tarantino since 1992, when he created one of the most memorable characters in the director’s debut movie *Reservoir Dogs*, the sardonic, ear-slicing Mr. Blonde. “He hasn’t changed at all,” Madsen happily reports of his reunion with the director. “He’s totally and absolutely the same guy he was before. But now he has bigger toys to play with.”

Budd is Bill’s wastrel younger brother, Madsen says, “and there’s nice progression of Budd as a character. There’s the younger Budd in the early Viper days, then there’s the older Budd that has gotten lost, who works as a bouncer in a strip club and lives in a trailer. We called him ‘Budd in a Bottle.’ He’s a character that I think is equally as memorable as Mr. Blonde.”

“My character’s relationship with his brother, with Bill, is very complex. I’ve got four sons myself, and David obviously grew up with several brothers, so I think we understood the dynamics of brothers. David has certain, uh, nuances of character, and I’m a bit of a quirky character myself. We had a sort of bantering relationship going on the set. So when they stick us together I think it’s easy to buy that we’re brothers.”

Kill Bill is still a movie strongly influenced by Asian martial arts films, and in that universe no relationship is more crucial than the one between student and teacher, master and disciple. In fact, *Kill Bill* has two masters. Each of the two volumes has its own tone and narrative strategies, and in terms of its Asian influences *Vol. 1* was clearly dominated by Japan and the code of *bushido*, as personified by Sonny Chiba (*The Streetfighter*), who played the samurai sword maker Hattori Hanzo and served as the film’s *kenjutsu* choreographer.

Vol. 2, on the other hand, is strongly influenced by the martial culture of China, as personified by martial arts movie legend Gordon Liu Jia-hui (*The Master Killer*). “My two favorite things in the course of making this movie,” he says, “as far as goose bump moments, was doing scenes with Sonny Chiba and Gordon Liu.”

Tarantino cast Liu initially only as Johnny Mo, a leather-clad leader of Lucy Liu's Crazy 88's bodyguard squadron in Tokyo in *Vol. 1*. Until well into pre-production he was intending to play the Bride's draconian martial arts instructor himself, a variation on a popular bad guy from several vintage Hong Kong martial arts films of the 1970s, the “white eyebrow monk” Pei Mei. Tarantino joined the rest of his cast on the training floor in the early days of the lengthy martial arts training camp sessions that were held during pre-production, working hard to get ready to play Pei Mei. “I had been watching these movies for years,” he says, “and admiring the performers and thinking how cool they were. There was no way I was going to let the girls have all the fun!”

But when he began to understand how demanding the pre-production chores on this complex film would be, Tarantino realized that he simply didn't have time to act on top of all that, much less to train arduously for eight hours a day. He turned to Gordon Liu as the obvious choice to assume the role, a performer who had, in effect, been in training all his life to portray a steely martial arts master.

In a sense, Tarantino was casting against type when he asked Gordon Liu to play Pei Mei. Liu had always portrayed stalwart, or occasionally comic, heroes in his classic Shaw Brothers films. He became an international martial arts star, second in fan status only to Bruce Lee, as the redoubtable shaven-head martial monk San Te in Liu Jia-liang's *The 36th Chamber of Shaolin* (1978), known as *Master Killer* in its English-dubbed incarnation.

Pei Mei, on the other hand, while also a monk, was one of the Shaw studio's darkest villains, betraying his martial brothers of the Shaolin Temple to the Manchu tyrants in pictures like Liu Jia-liang's *Executioners From Shaolin* (1977). Pei Mei was such a popular baddie, in fact, that several semi-sequels and prequels were quickly created, even though the evil one had died decisively in his very first screen outing. “But,” says Liu, “I understand why Quentin wanted me, even though I've always played righteous heroes. He was looking at me for my martial arts skills, and also I think because of my understanding of this very Chinese character.”

Liu admits that one thing he did not know much about when he was first approached to appear in *Kill Bill* was Quentin Tarantino or his films: “But I asked some friends in the entertainment business, and they recommended *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction*, and I watched them and I

was impressed. His work is unique and very interesting; something you have never seen before. And I heard that Quentin knew a lot of Hong Kong movies and martial arts movies.”

Tarantino continued to cast a wide net in *Kill Bill Vol. 2* using performers whose work he had been enjoying for years. He described Michael Parks, for example, as one of his favorite American movie actors. Parks won the young Tarantino’s allegiance when he starred in the classic ‘70s television series *Then Came Bronson*, and was later cast by writer-producer Tarantino in *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996), directed by Robert Rodriguez. Here, Tarantino has cast Parks in two more roles, one in each of the two volumes of *Kill Bill*. Parks is small town Texas Sheriff Edgar McGraw in *Vol. 1*, investigating the grisly wedding rehearsal crime scene. In *Vol. 2* he is the elderly Esteban Vieho, a brothel owner and Bill’s mentor who helps The Bride locate her arch-nemesis in Mexico.

Relationships matter in *Kill Bill Vol. 2*, both behind and in front of the camera. But it is worth pointing out that the new film still displays some signs of what Tarantino described as a “duck press” approach to absorbing the influence of his favorite “grindhouse” genre films.

“When I come to do a scene that’s like something you might see in an Italian *giallo* [slasher movie] or in a kung fu film,” he says, “I know how they would have done it over there, so I’m going to shoot it *that way*. This is why my films play so well all over the world. I don’t really think of myself as solely an American director. People in just about any country can see things in my films that they can understand and enjoy.”

This overall approach to the film was a key determining factor when it came to picking the crew for this unusual project. Academy Award winning Director of Photographer Robert Richardson was chosen for *Kill Bill* precisely because he had proven himself adept at achieving a wide variety of looks. He has been a frequent collaborator with Oliver Stone, on films such as *Natural Born Killers* and *JFK*, which cut back and forth between different looks and even film stocks within a single sequence. The concept of *Kill Bill* involved shifting the pictorial and cutting style of each episode, in keeping with its mix ‘n’ match genre roots, therefore Richardson was an obvious choice.

In *Vol. 2*, the impact of two particular genres is especially evident. “If my life had two sides,” Tarantino says, “one side would be the period martial arts pictures made by Shaw Brothers in the 1970s, and the other side would be Italian Westerns. Actually they both have influences on each other. During the 1970’s, movies from these two genres often used the same plots, similar

images and shots, *even* some of the same music. There are many things in Shaw Brothers movies which were borrowed from Italian Westerns. There's a fairly deep kinship."

The on-screen relationship between the film's two formative genre styles is straightforward: The present time sequences, set in the American Southwest and Mexico, adhere to the style of the Italian Westerns. The flashback sections, set mostly in China, where Bill takes The Bride for a period of training with his own former master, Pei Mei, have the "training-for-revenge" structure of a classic kung fu picture.

As befits the stress of the second *Kill Bill* film on western American and Mexican locations, the movie's soundtrack features a raucous number by the Southern rockabilly great Charlie Feathers, "Can't Hardly Stand It," along with classic cuts from Ennio Morricone's score for Sergio Leone's classic Spaghetti Western *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (1966), and "Urami Bushi" ("Love Song of a Warrior"), originally performed by leading lady Meiko Kaji in the Japanese samurai picture *Lady Snowblood 2: Love Song of Vengeance* (1974).

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Tarantino's fans know that he is almost as passionate about music as he is about movies. Tarantino has said that when he was a young film fan, before the advent of video, movie soundtrack albums were the only way available to re-capture the experience of a film. He says that re-imagining scenes from his favorite films, and sometimes improvising in his head as he listened to the music, was his first experience of thinking like a director. And now his choices about music enter into the creative process right from the beginning. "I can't really go forward with the writing," he says, "until I find out what the opening music is going to be, the music that will put people in the mood. It's the music that helps me find the rhythm of the movie, the beat the movie will play to."

This process continues on the set, as Tarantino plays music to put people in the mood for a scene, or in this case to set the beat for a fight. As Gordon Liu told *Ain't It Cool News.com*, "Quentin already has a music tempo in his head for each fight sequence."

For work on the score, Tarantino again turned to The RZA (pronounced "Riza"), the groundbreaking producer of several albums for the hip-hop group Wu-Tang Clan, an outfit that drew much of its inspiration (and many sound bites) from Chinese martial arts films. The RZA had also produced solo albums, including two under the name Bobby Digital. He created the score for the Jim Jarmusch film *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai* (1999) and for *Kill Bill Vol. 1* (2003).

Tarantino's friend and occasional collaborator, writer-director Robert Rodriguez, with whom he collaborated on the south of the Border vampire tale *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996), was recruited to compose some appropriate music for the Mexican sequences in *Kill Bill Vol. 2*. Rodriguez composed a full score for his 2003 action film *Once Upon a Time in Mexico*, with Antonio Banderas, and for all three films in his hugely popular *Spy Kids* trilogy (2001-2003).

MADE IN CHINA

For *Kill Bill* producer Lawrence Bender, "Going to China was the best thing that we did. Quentin felt very strongly that when he was in China, he wanted that input, to have a Chinese creative team. He didn't want an all-American crew to go over to China and say, 'This is how we're going to do it.' And as a result our Japanese and Chinese art teams did stuff together that no one could have ever dreamed of."

Bender, Tarantino, and the principle cast traveled to China in May, 2002, to continue training and action choreography, and to begin rehearsals. By mid-June line producer E. Bennett Walsh, associate producer Dede Nickerson, production supervisor Koko Maeda, and Academy Award-winning director of photography Robert Richardson had put together a multinational crew, with several teams of translators, and had settled into work at the Beijing Film Studios, located in the northern section of the Chinese capitol.

Kill Bill employed a Chinese, a Japanese and an American production designer, a Chinese and an American costume designer, and a Chinese and an American prop master. A team of Chinese and American assistant directors supervised the day-to-day operation of the production. American first assistant director Bill Clark, a veteran of Tarantino's films since *Pulp Fiction*, worked closely with Chinese first assistant director, Zhang Jin Zhan to coordinate the massive cast and crew.

"It's two very different ways of working," Bender explains. "The American way is very precise. You've generally got one or two guys on each piece of equipment, and they are quiet and orderly. But the Chinese way is to have twenty people making a ton of noise and all working to get it done. They use a lot more crew and they get things done very quickly."

On their first day in China, the *Kill Bill* crew completed twenty-two set ups, almost unheard of for a typical Hollywood production. After completing their work at the Beijing Studios, where the huge set for *Vol. 1*'s House of Blue Leaves was constructed, the cast and crew set out for a week of location shooting at an ancient temple in the town of Zhongwei.

First built in the 17th century the Gao Temple “is a magnificent jumble of buildings and styles covering an area of about four thousand square meters,” according to a Chinese tourist web sit. The arduous daily climb to the set, up a massive flight of stairs on the east side of Miao Gao Mountain, 240 meters high, was only a taste of the rigors involved in filming the Shaolin kung fu training sequences featuring Uma Thurman, Daryl Hannah, and Gordon Liu, “The Cruel Tutelage of Pei Mei.”

The action sequences in the *Kill Bill* script were already unusually detailed. Tarantino had been re-writing and refining them in the planning, training, and rehearsals phases for the better part of a year. In Beijing he continued the process, describing the scenes in even more detail and when necessary acting them out. Surrounded by a team of Japanese, Mandarin and Cantonese translators, he worked through each shot as the crew, the actors, Master Yuen, and the wirework team watched and walked through it alongside him. By the time they hit the ground on Miao Gao Mountain, they were ready to rumble.

Master Yuen Woo-ping, who brought his martial arts skills and unique “wire fu” expertise to the task, learned his craft from his famous father, the late Beijing opera veteran and film actor Simon Yuen Hsiao-tien. Working as director later in life, Woo-ping cast his father in the title role in the Jackie Chan vehicle *Drunken Master* (1978). Master Yuen makes a point of saying that the techniques he teaches are theatrical rather than combat oriented. “It’s Northern-style stage acrobatics or stage martial arts,” he says. “Totally different from combat kung fu, or even from *wushu*, the acrobatic Olympic-style sport they invented in China, which is what Jet Li studied. When you learn Beijing opera it seems almost the same as martial arts, but when you use it it’s completely different, because of the camera or the stage. It’s always primarily for display.”

Daryl Hannah put it well: “I’m pretty well-trained now at martial arts. But I’ve been trained to miss. So I could hit you, but I would hit you really hard about *that far* in front of your face. I have no idea what would happen if I actually made contact!”

Master Yuen’s action choreography has been featured to great acclaim in *The Matrix* and its sequels, and in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, as well as in dozens of Hong Kong productions. But Tarantino was a Yuen fan long before the Master achieved his Western breakthrough. In fact, Tarantino was instrumental in arranging the domestic release of Yuen’s directorial masterpiece *Iron Monkey* (1993), which was distributed by Miramax Films under the “Quentin Tarantino Presents” banner in 2000.

"I think the first film that I saw of Master Yuen's was a film with Jackie Chan called *Snake in the Eagle's Shadow*," Tarantino recalls. "It was around 1993 or 1994 that I started noticing his distinctive kung fu style, his choreography. I think he's most imaginative kung fu choreographer of all time. He has impeccable craftsmanship and also a wild imagination. He is my most admired director and action choreographer. In this movie, I did the basic design of the actions. Yuen Woo-ping said I didn't have to know too much about kung fu, understanding what kung-fu movies really were was enough. He would do the rest. After he joined in, I have felt more confident and I can make any of my thoughts come true."

Hong Kong cinema legend Gordon Liu came to his work with Master Yuen Woo-ping on a very different footing from some of the other performers. A student of Chinese martial arts from the age of seven, and a major Asian film and television star, Liu is a Master in his own right. So how do two masters interact on the same movie set? According to Liu, very cordially, indeed.

"Master Yuen knows where I come from," he says. "Although our backgrounds are in different styles he sees me as a master and treats me as a master. Master Yuen learned a Northern China style of martial arts, and I learned a Southern style, but there was no tension on the set because we have both done many movies, with many different kinds of performers and choreographers. I worked very happily with Master Yuen Woo-ping."

There is an even greater divergence in the kind of martial arts work the two men have done in movies. Most of Liu's work as a performer in Hong Kong was in films directed by his elder "god-brother," Liu Jia-liang, who placed a premium on authentic depictions of regional martial arts styles. Master Yuen Woo-ping, on the other hand, is most famous for a graceful, high-flying style of fantasy swordplay.

"Master Yuen's work in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*," Liu says, "was very beautiful, a work of art. But it was not real fighting. I knew that Quentin wanted something different. He wanted real fighting. And I knew that when those two approaches were put together, the result would be something unique."

He was also familiar with was the challenge of being the only actor in a fight sequence who has studied martial arts. "Most actors who do these films," he says, "even in Hong Kong, just learn the specific moves for the scene, as Uma did in *Kill Bill*. This is like learning lines in a foreign language phonetically. Very difficult to make it look as if you understand the meaning. Quentin and Master Yuen expected me to do well, because of my background, but they also wanted Uma

to be good, because she was the main actress. So I was the key person to make the fights look good.

"If I fight with one of my brothers or another martial artist," he explains, "they know what to expect, where to turn and stop. With a non-martial artist I have to make an extra effort or add an extra movement to make sure the routine ends up in the right place. I always have to cooperate and make the other person look their best. Also when both people know martial arts and your arms touch each other, they don't feel a thing. It's very natural. With a non-martial artist I'm always worried that if I hit them the wrong way, they will get hurt."

As a lifelong master of North Shaolin-style Hong Fist kung fu, Liu has a special appreciation of the challenges Thurman had to overcome: "The Chinese martial arts are especially difficult for someone who is a beginner, and for someone who is tall, because their center of gravity is too high. You will notice that most of the great martial artists are smaller in size: Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, Jet Li. If you are smaller, it is easier. Uma knew that this was not her expertise but she never gave up. She kept trying. I was very impressed by her spirit. Some people in her place would have let a bad take go by, they would have said it's good enough, but she didn't. She would re-do it again and again until it was up to her standard."

Gordon Liu was impressed when he learned that David Carradine has been cast in the movie's title role. He made a point of taking Carradine aside, when they were on location together in at the Temple, to tell him how much he had admired the internationally popular television program *Kung Fu*. "That series was a very important part of people in the West understanding kung fu," Liu explains. "I have great respect for Quentin, too, for helping spread kung fu and martial arts to audiences outside China and the Far East."

Yuen Woo-ping, generally regarded as the world's greatest living master of movie martial arts, was unequivocal in his praise for Thurman's accomplishments. As Tarantino recalls, "He came to me one day and said, 'Quentin, you don't know how truly good Uma has become.' He said with some actors who look good in movies it's like, one or two moves, very well executed, and then you have to cut. Uma was doing four and five move routines, picking them up on the spot. She does this move where she goes up in the air, does a somersault on the wires, lands, and kills two people. That's a big deal. She got so good and so confident at that Woo-ping and I could change the choreography any time we wanted."

"At the end of my training in Los Angeles," Thurman agrees, "I was starting to feel more capable. And during the last week or so I just basically drilled choreography every single day, learning

hundreds of moves and combinations that were part of that fight. And then when we went onto the set to start shooting the fight they introduced this new idea, that all that choreography could just go right out the window. We would change it on the spot and I would have to learn immediately five, ten, fifteen point fights on the spot, while the camera was waiting. And what I suddenly sort of realized was that the most important thing they taught me was how to learn."

One of the hard lessons the actors still had to learn is that no amount of training, even with true masters, can fully prepare any fighter for the reality. For Master Yuen Woo-ping, "It all depends what the camera demands. I have always used techniques like hiding the fist with camera placement. But sometimes when the point is how much force is behind the blow, we have to do it more realistically, with real contact. A lot depends on whether the actor who is being hit can 'sell' the blow, whether his or her reactions makes it look harder than it really is."

For Tarantino, filming in China offered a unique opportunity to commune with the spirit of one of his own moviemaking master. "The two film companies I have had the most affection for as a fan," he says, "are probably Roger Corman's New World Pictures in the 1970s, and Sir Run Run Shaw's Shaw Brothers. And the king of the Shaw Brothers directors, for my money, was Chang Cheh. He holds the place in Old School kung fu movies that John Ford holds in Westerns. He made a movie in 1967, *One-Armed Swordsman*, with Jimmy Wang Yu, that was really the first that we would recognize today as a martial arts film. He was a true pioneer. He died in 2002, but when I was shooting Kill Bill, I sometimes had the feeling that Chang Cheh was watching over us."

One particular production problem, Tarantino says, was solved directly by Chang; by adopting a technique he had invented. The current special effects devices for simulating blood flow are fairly complicated, "with tubes and wires. I wanted to forget that we were making this big budget movie and do it as if we were 13-year-olds shooting in the back yard. And then Yuen woo-ping says, 'You know how we did blood gags in kung fu movies in the 1970s? We'd take a Chinese condom, fill it with blood, and the actor who was to die would hold it in one hand. When the other guy sliced him he'd squeeze the condom and the blood would fly. And it looked great. And it was Chang Cheh who invented that.' So we tried it, and the effect was excellent. I wouldn't have been able to get half of the effects I wanted if we didn't have that gag."

BACK IN THE USA

In the Pei Mei flashback sequences, Tarantino honors a central convention of kung fu cinema: the "training for revenge" motif, in which we see a student acquiring skills that will pay off decisively in a later battle. Here the master passes on two top secret lethal techniques that The Bride has

occasion to use only years later, when her quest for revenge takes her back to the US for a reunion with her daughter, to climactic encounters with her bitter rival, Elle Driver, and to a final showdown with Bill himself.

The preliminary bout to these title card events is the surprisingly heartfelt and vicious encounter between Elle Driver and Sidewinder Budd, Bill's kid brother. Asked to account for the intensity of their battle, Hannah says: "Michael Madsen plays Budd, and Michael is a lovely guy, but Budd is sort of a despicable alcoholic. At least that's my character's opinion of him. He used to be a professional but now he just sits around in filth and drinks all day and does nothing. So we have to own up to our distaste for each other"

The scene includes a dramatic appearance by The Bride's namesake, an actual Black Mamba, the deadliest poisonous snake on earth. "I bring a little friend to visit Budd," Hannah agrees. "We had an actual Black Mamba on the set, which I guess they took the venom sacks out of."

"It's a creepy snake," admits Madsen, whose character was on the receiving end. "If you get that venom in your system, it's over. It's a slow suffocation. Reading that scene was one thing, but the actual scenes with the snake were a little harder to get through than I thought they would be. Although I also think that helped the energy of the scene."

Tarantino had something special planned for the showdown between archrivals Elle Driver and The Bride: "I wanted it to be the ultimate cinematic cat fight of all time. It's not a martial arts fight, alright, it's a catfight. I mean, it sounds exciting: Uma Thurman and Daryl Hannah having a fight to the death. I'd pay to see that. Daryl, you know, actually starred in a TV version of *Attack of the 50 Foot Woman*, and there was even something about the very idea of this fight that made it sound like a Japanese superhero movie. I almost wished there was a way I could feed them a pill that would make them both 60 feet tall so that they could have their fight in a city and destroy half of it. In terms of re-creating my favorite Asian film genres, that's really the only stone left unturned."

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Tarantino was able to give a nod to Japanese giant monster films: he used the actual scale model of Tokyo that was constructed at Toho studios for their Godzilla films as the backdrop for a shot in *Kill Bill Vol. 1* of The Bride's plane swooping down over the city.

Finally, it all comes down to Bill: David Carradine. As an undisputed global icon of the Kung Fu Craze of the 1970s, and a boyhood idol of Quentin Tarantino, Carradine clearly deserves a prime niche in a film designed, in large part, as the writer-director's loving tribute to one of his favorite

genres. Shaw Brothers great Gordon Liu has acknowledged the importance of Carradine's performance as Caine on the ABC-TV series *Kung Fu* in popularizing the Chinese fistic arts around the world.

The actor admits, however, that he didn't know what to expect when he was first asked to consider playing this thoroughly evil title character. "Quentin's pictures feel like they're improvised," he says, "So I wondered, 'When I open the script, what am I going to see?' But it's literature, and it worked out to the last possible detail. Nothing is left to chance.

"Quentin has got to be my favorite director, certainly my favorite living director. He's very delicate in the way that he deals with actors. Hal Ashby I dearly loved, but Quentin is more my kind of person, my kind of guy, and we have a lot to talk about."

A lifelong student of the martial arts, Carradine has often spoken modestly about his accomplishments in that area. "[When I was doing the TV show] I made no secret of my ignorance of kung fu," Carradine wrote, in his 1991 memoir *The Spirit of Shaolin: A Kung Fu Philosophy*. "When asked I'd say, 'I know nothing.' And then make some subtly dazzling move. I was being funny, sure. What I also meant was that what you see, what I do, although graceful, fast and effective, is nothing compared to what there is to be learned." Even so, Carradine admits, when it came to the martial arts training required for his role in *Kill Bill*, "I thought I had a leg up on all the other cast members. I thought, 'Well, hey, I don't need this training. I've been doing this stuff for forty years.' Well, no. It was tough. I had to re-learn everything I thought I knew."

The finale of *Kill Bill* involves a fair amount of violence, but it revolves around the tension filled meeting of two estranged parents in the presence of their child.

"One of my favorite scenes," Carradine says, "not just in Vol. 2 but in the entire movie, is a long, long dialog scene between Bill and The Bride. Really it's the main part of the love story. And all the time we know that these two people will have to fight to the death. So this movie is not just the violence, it's not the action. It's an inside look at the minds and hearts of violent people."

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

QUENTIN TARANTINO (Screenwriter/Director)

Born in 1963 in Knoxville, Tennessee, Tarantino was named, fittingly enough, after a character on a TV show, the half-breed blacksmith Quint played by Burt Reynolds on *Gunsmoke*. When he was two, the future filmmaker's single mom moved with him to the South Bay area of Orange County, California, south of Los Angeles, which was his home for the next two decades.

His neighborhood in the city of Torrance was a mixture of black and white, and he was exposed to a wide range of film and pop culture influences. Martial arts movies, for example, continued to play in black neighborhoods after the kung fu fad ended elsewhere. Tarantino was able to "cross the tracks" to continue watching them until well into the 1970s.

Tarantino quit school at 17 to take acting classes and support himself with odd jobs. At 22 he found a second home of sorts at Video Archives in Manhattan Beach, where his voluminous knowledge of old movies finally began to come in handy. With co-workers Roger Avery and Jerry Martinez, Tarantino turned Video Archives into an impromptu film school. He began writing as a way to supply himself with practice scenes for his acting classes.

After laboring for a time with Avery and some other friends on an abortive shoe string feature, *My Best Friends Wedding*, a raunchy buddy film on the scale of Kevin Smith's *Clerks*, Tarantino spent several frustrating years writing and trying to set up two scripts, each intended as his directorial debut. Partly out of frustration at the difficulty of setting up a "real movie" with an unknown writer attached to direct, Tarantino wrote *Reservoir Dogs* in 1991.

Dogs was intentionally written to be the most minimal movie project imaginable: a story of a heist in which the robbery occurred off screen, and in which many pages of dialog unfolded on a single set. It was intended to be a super-cheap 16 mm feature with Tarantino and his Video Archives buddies playing all the parts.

Luckily, aspiring producer Lawrence Bender read and loved the *Dogs* script. He begged Tarantino to give him a month to try to set it up as one of those "real movies." It was Bender who got the script to actor Harvey Keitel, and it was Keitel's enthusiasm that attracted several other good actors and a decent production budget.

Shot in less than a month on LA locations, with a standout cast that came to include Michael Madsen, Steve Buscemi, Tim Roth, Laurence Tierney, Chris Penn, and Tarantino himself in

addition to Keitel, *Dogs* was a phenomenal success, first at the Sundance Film Festival and then with the world at large. Suddenly Tarantino was hot, and both of the scripts he had been working on before *Dogs* quickly sold. They became *True Romance* (1992, directed by Tony Scott) and *Natural Born Killers* (1993, heavily re-written and directed by Oliver Stone).

1994's *Pulp Fiction* was a multi-layered, time-bending, crime fiction collage that wove the stories of several characters together with world-class narrative gusto. A 3-D chess game of a movie, *Pulp* single-handedly restored the career of '70s icon John Travolta to its proper eminence, cemented the A-List movie-star status of actor Samuel L. Jackson, and launched Tarantino's working relationship with the performer he has since described as "my actress," Uma Thurman.

After a three-year lay-off, Tarantino wrote and directed *Jackie Brown* in 1997, a crime caper movie based on Elmore Leonard's best-selling novel *Rum Punch*. Pam Grier garnered both Golden Globe and SAG Award nominations for her performance in the title role, and co-star Robert Forster who was nominated for an Academy Award as Best Supporting Actor for his performance as a world-weary bail bondsman. Filling out the once-in-a-lifetime cast were Samuel L. Jackson (also nominated for a Golden Globe), Robert De Niro, Bridget Fonda, and Michael Keaton.

Tarantino's first career goal was to become an actor, and he has continued to play roles in his own films and in the work of others. He was the thief known only as Mr. Brown ("That's a little too close to 'Mr. Shit,'"") in *Reservoir Dogs*, and the jittery Jimmie Dimmick, saddled with an unwanted fresh corpse, in *Pulp Fiction*. In his "Man From Hollywood" section of the anthology picture *Four Rooms*, Tarantino cast himself as a blow-hard movie director. He also played bandit George Clooney's loony brother, Richard Gecko, in Robert Rodriguez's *From Dusk Till Dawn*, the title role in Jack Baren's *Destiny Turns on the Radio* (1995), and appeared in Spike Lee's *Girl 6* (1996).

With his production partner, Lawrence Bender, through their company A Band Apart Productions, Tarantino served as executive producer on October Film's *Killing Zoe*, directed by Roger Avary. He presented the 2001 domestic release of Master Yuen Wo Ping's 1993 martial arts classic *Iron Monkey* and served as executive producer of Reb Braddock's black comedy *Curdled* (1996) and of Julia Sweeney's concert film *God Said, 'HA!'* (1999).

During the four years that elapsed between the release of *Jackie Brown* and the production of *Kill Bill*, Tarantino was hard at work on a script for a war movie, *Inglorious Bastards*.

LAWRENCE BENDER (Producer)

Lawrence Bender has produced all of Quentin Tarantino's feature films — *Reservoir Dogs*, *Pulp*

Fiction (for which he received an Academy Award nomination for Best Picture), *Jackie Brown*, and both volumes of *Kill Bill*. His additional producing credits include Boaz Yakim's *Fresh* and *A Price Above Rubies* (with Renee Zellweger), Gus Van Sant's *Good Will Hunting* (for which he also received an Academy Award nomination for Best Picture), Andy Tennant's *Anna and the King* (with Jodie Foster and Chow Yun Fat), Gore Verbinski's *The Mexican* (with Julia Roberts and Brad Pitt), Brian Koppelman and David Levien's *Knockaround Guys* and Guy Ferland's *Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights*.

Worlds away from Hollywood, Bender studied civil engineering at the University of Maine. He later was a dancer who toured Maine and Massachusetts with the Ralph Robertson Ballet Company. He earned a scholarship to study with *Fame* choreographer Louis Falco in New York, before his dancing career was cut short by a series of injuries. After dancing, he began acting classes with famed coach Sandra Seacat and appeared in several films and stage productions, including a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Ellen Burstyn and Christopher Walken.

Supporting himself with production jobs on New York-based film crews, Bender discovered that he enjoyed the work, and kept his eyes open for an opportunity to produce on his own. In 1987, working with an overall budget of \$125,000, he produced writer-director Scott Spiegel's *The Intruder*.

A year later, Bender met Quentin Tarantino at a BBQ at Scott Spiegel's house. They quickly became friends and started discussing making movies together. Soon after, Tarantino wrote *Reservoir Dogs*. It was Bender who made *Dogs* possible by securing the involvement of actor Harvey Keitel through his own acting teacher.

Tarantino and Bender formed a production company together, A Band Apart, in 1993. The partnership has produced films in which Tarantino was involved either as the director or as an actor or both, including *Four Rooms* (1995) and Robert Rodriguez's *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996). Bender was also an executive producer, with Tarantino, on Roger Avary's directorial debut *Killing Zoe*. In 1996 Bender launched a new division, A Band Apart Commercials, which makes ad spots and music videos.

Bender's films have been honored with nineteen Academy Award nominations. *Good Will Hunting* received a total of nine nominations, and won Oscars for Best Original Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor. Bender was nominated for a Producers Guild Award and a Golden Satellite Award for *Good Will Hunting*, and also received a Producers Guild Award

nomination for *Pulp Fiction*.

Bender recently completed production on *Casas de Carton*, a Spanish language film directed by Luis Mandoki. Another Bender production, *The Great Raid* will be an upcoming release by Miramax Films.

HARVEY WEINSTEIN and BOB WEINSTEIN (Executive Producers)

The Weinstein Brothers and their company, Miramax Films, have transformed the way movies are distributed and marketed in America, establishing that unconventional independent films can be solidly profitable if shrewdly marketed.

Raised in Flushing, Queens, the Weinsteins attended art movies avidly as teenagers. They cite Francois Truffaut's *The 400 Blows* (1959) as a key influence on their careers. They began promoting rock concerts in 1972, while still students at the University of Buffalo, and as owners of the Century Theater in that city spent five years booking bands such as Genesis, Billy Joel and The Grateful Dead. They also staged weekend film festivals at the theater, and it was their experience distributing a Genesis concert movie that convinced them to pursue their first love, by forming a film company of their own.

Miramax, launched in 1979, with its headquarters in Manhattan's Tribeca district, was named for the brothers' parents, Max and Miriam. The company's first release was the Monty Python concert film *The Secret Policeman's Other Ball* (1982), followed in short order by *Erendira* (1983), Bille August's *Twist and Shout* (1984), *I Heard the Mermaids Singing* (1987), *Working Girls* (1987), and *Aria* (1987). Their first major hit was the Errol Morris true-crime documentary *The Thin Blue Line* (1988), which effectively re-opened a murder investigation.

Highlights of the Miramax success story include the release of Neil Jordon's *The Crying Game*, along with Quentin Tarantino's startling directorial debut, *Reservoir Dogs*, both in 1992. In 1993, the Weinsteins sold Miramax to the Walt Disney Company, and have continued to run it as an autonomous entity ever since, moving from strength to strength, releasing *The Piano* (1993), *The Postman (Il Postino)* (1994), Woody Allen's *Bullets Over Broadway* (1994), Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction* (1994), and Danny Boyle's *Trainspotting* (1997).

Dimension Films, headed by Bob Weinstein, was created to produce and distribute innovative genre films: the unit had its biggest hit to date in 1996, with Wes Craven's trend-setting *Scream*. The Miramax book and record divisions have also had considerable success with projects tied to

the company's film releases, especially the soundtrack and script publications related to the films of Quentin Tarantino.

The company thrives on its close relationships with some of today's most talented filmmakers, including Kevin Smith, Quentin Tarantino, and Robert Rodriguez. The Weinsteins' sharp eye for high-quality material suitable for pick up has made them a leading distributor of films produced around the world, and they have become a defining presence at the annual Oscar celebration. Miramax recently announced that it has made a deal with the current rights holders, Celestial Pictures of Hong Kong, to distribute in the US 700 films from the library of the legendary Shaw Brothers studio, including over 200 classic martial arts films.

Recent Miramax hits include George Clooney's directorial debut, *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind* (2002), the multi-Oscared musical *Chicago* (2002), Martin Scorsese's *Gangs of New York* (2002), the Oscar-nominated *Iris* (2001), Anthony Minghella's *Cold Mountain* (2003), and the eye-opening HBO series *Project Greenlight* (2001-2003), produced by Ben Affleck and Matt Damon, a unique look behind the scenes at the film production process.

Miramax releases scheduled for 2004 include Martin Scorsese's *The Aviator*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio as Howard Hughes, and Lasse Hallström's *An Unfinished Life*, with Jennifer Lopez, Robert Redford, and Morgan Freeman.

ROBERT RICHARDSON (Director of Photography)

One of the most versatile cinematographers in Hollywood, four-time Academy Award nominee Robert Richardson is known for being able to adopt a wide variety of visual styles—a specialty he developed as a survival skill working on many films for director Oliver Stone.

Richardson's twelve collaborations with Stone include *Salvador* (1986), *Wall Street* (1987), *JFK* (1991), *Heaven & Earth* (1993), and *Natural Born Killers* (1994), from a script by Quentin Tarantino), Richardson garnered Oscar nominations for his work in *Platoon* (1986), *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989), and *Snow Falling on Cedars* (1999) and won in 1992 for his contribution to Stone's epic tapestry *JFK*.

Richardson has worked regularly with director John Sayles on *Eight Men Out* (1988) and *City of Hope* (1991), and with Martin Scorsese on *Casino* (1995), *Bringing Out the Dead* (1999), and *The Aviator*, the upcoming film biography of Howard Hughes, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Cate Blanchett. Additional credits include *Wag the Dog* (1997), *The Horse Whisperer* (1998), and *The Four Feathers* (2002).

SALLY MENKE (Editor)

Kill Bill is Sally Menke's fifth collaboration with Quentin Tarantino. She previously edited *Reservoir Dogs*, *Pulp Fiction* (for which she was nominated for an Academy Award) and *Jackie Brown*, as well as "The Man From Hollywood," Tarantino's segment of the anthology film *Four Rooms*.

Born in Mineola, New York, a graduate of Emory University and the NYU Film School, Menke worked extensively for PBS before editing the feature films *Cold Feet* (1984), *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1990), and *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe* (1991). Additional credits include Oliver Stone's *Heaven and Earth* (1993), Lee Tomahori's *Mulholland Falls* (1995), *All The Pretty Horses* (2000) and *Daddy and Them* (2001), both directed by Billy Bob Thornton, the animated adventure comedy *João Mata Sete* (2000), and Alexandra Valenti's *D.C. Smalls* (2001).

YOHEI TANEDA (Production Designer—China)

Yohei Taneda designs both conventional sets and also anime and video games, making him a perfect choice to create the mix of traditional Asian and pop-modern that *Kill Bill* required. Taneda is most famous in Japanese movie circles for designing large scale environments, including a reproduction of a large portion of the downtown Tokyo shopping district of Shinjuku for Lee Chi Ngai's festival favorite *Sleepless Town* (1999), which was impressive enough to make the national TV news—and win a Japanese Academy Award.

Taneda began working in movies while still a student at Musashino Art University in Tokyo. Soon after graduation he worked on Sogo Ishii's film *1/2 Mensch: Neubauten* (1986), before making his solo debut as Production Designer on *Futari-Botti (Just the Two of U)*, 1988, directed by Koshi Enokido. He formed his own company, Goal of Art, Ltd., in 1993, to pursue work on TV programs and commercials, promotional videos, and the design of exhibition spaces.

His creation of the imaginary Yen Town for Shunji Iwai's *Swallowtail Butterfly* (1997) earned him a Japan Academy Award nomination, and while working on a film in Hong Kong he took on a book design project with director Wong Kar-wei and cinematographer Christopher Doyle. Additional credits include Isao Na.k.a.e's *Calmi Cuori Appassionati* (2001) and two films directed by Jinsei Tsuji, *Sennen Tabito* (1999) and *Filament* (2002). He was also the overall "conceptual designer" of the hit TV series *The Private Detective: Mike Hama*, which debuted in Japan in 2002.

DAVID WASCO (Production Designer—United States, Mexico)

The husband and wife team of Production Designer David Wasco and Set decorator Sally Reynolds-Wasco have worked together on all of Quentin Tarantino's movies. Their work on *Pulp Fiction* was given credit for bringing Tarantino's unique vision to the screen. Sets like Jack Rabbit Slims nightclub introduced Los Angeles' Mid-Century and Google architectural styles as ripe for reinterpretation and adaptation into new and varied contemporary contexts.

Born in New Jersey and raised in Vermont, David Wasco moved to New York in 1972 to work as an industrial designer. He began working in movies as the First Assistant to the Production Designer on Don Coscarelli's *The Beastmaster* in 1983 and as Set Decorator on *Night of the Comet* (1984).

His films as a Production Designer include *El Norte* (1983), *Smooth Talk* (1984), *Stacking* (1986), *In A Shallow Grave* (1987), *Healing Hurts* (1991), *Oleanna* (1994), *Touch* (1995) and *She's So Lovely* (1997), directed by Nick Cassavetes and starring John Travolta

Through their film work together, the Wascos have become experts on Los Angeles architecture. In 1990 they contributed to the Museum of Contemporary Art's acclaimed installation "Case Study Exhibit: Blueprints for Modern Living."

Their association with writer-director Wes Anderson began with *Bottle Rocket* (1994) and continued in *Rushmore* (1998). Their work for the Anderson film *The Royal Tenenbaums* (2002) was included in the Smithsonian's National Design Triennial, celebrating the technical innovations, artistic evolution and cultural impact of design.

Their first joint effort for 2004 is an as-yet untitled project for director Michael Mann, written by Frank Darabont and starring Tom Cruise and Jamie Foxx.

YUEN WO-PING (Martial Arts Advisor)

Yuen Wo-ping first became widely known in the West for his work as a martial arts choreographer on high-profile productions such as *The Matrix* (1999) and *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000). But in Hong Kong, Master Yuen has been recognized for almost two decades as one of the best modern directors of martial arts movies—a truth that was born out for American moviegoers in 2001 when Quentin Tarantino presented the Miramax release of the Master's period kung fu classic *Iron Monkey*.

Born into a third-generation family of Beijing opera performers in 1945, in Guangzhou (Canton) China, Yuen Wo-ping learned stage-based martial arts techniques from his famous father, Simon

Yuen Hsiao-tien, alongside his eleven brothers and sisters. Simon brought his children with him into the Hong Kong film industry in the 1950s.

After working as a martial arts choreographer for several of Hong Kong's top directors, for Shaw Brothers and other companies, Master Yuen began directing films for innovative independent producer Ng Sze-yuen in the mid-1970s. He helped make Jackie Chan a movie star when he directed the kung fu comedian's first major hits, *Snake in the Eagle's Shadow* and *Drunken Master* (both 1978).

Yuen brought a new level of polished craftsmanship to period martial arts films such as *The Magnificent Butcher* (1979) and *Dreadnaught* (1981), and a lighter, jazzier flavor to the contemporary cop movie, notably in the popular *Tiger Cage* (1989) and its two sequels. He also served as a co-producer and Martial Arts choreographer in the mid-1990s on the first two films in Tsui Hark's *Once Upon a Time in China* series. His recent films as a director include *Tai Chi Master* (1993), *Wing Chun* (1994), and *Fist of Legend* (1994).

Before beginning work training the cast members and staging the action scenes for *Kill Bill*, Master Yuen Wo-ping choreographed the martial arts sequences for *The Matrix Reloaded* and *The Matrix Revolutions*, both of which were released in 2003. Since completing work on *Kill Bill*, Master Yuen Louis Leterrier's *Danny the Dog* (2004), produced by Luc Besson and starring Jet Li and Morgan Freeman.

THE RZA (Original Music)

Kill Bill marks the second soundtrack assignment for The RZA (born Robert Diggs), after his highly praised work on Jim Jarmusch's film *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai* (2000).

The RZA (pronounced "Riza") is best known as the groundbreaking producer for The Wu-Tang Clan, a hip-hop group that drew much of its inspiration (and many sound clips) from vintage Old School martial arts movies. RZA has also overseen projects by Cypress Hill, AZ, Big Punisher, and the Notorious B.I.G. Working under several names, including Prince Rakeem, The Abbott, Bobby Digital, and the Rzarector, the RZA has become one of hip-hop's most acclaimed and influential producers.

The RZA made his debut as a performer in 1991, with the self-produced Tommy Boy release *Ooh I Love You Rakeem*. He formed the group Gravediggaz with Prince Paul, Fruitkwan, and Poetic. He scored majors hit with *RZA as Bobby Digital in Stereo* in 1998, and in 1999 with the Wu-Tang

Clan compilation *The RZA Hits*, and in 2001 with *RZA as Bobby Digital: Digital Bullett*. His most recent album was 2003's *Birth of a Prince*.

ROBERT RODRIGUEZ (Original Music)

While a student at the University of Texas at Austin in 1991, Robert Rodriguez wrote the script to his first feature film while sequestered at a drug research facility as a paid subject in a clinical experiment. That paycheck covered the cost of shooting his film. He planned to make the money back by selling the film to the Mexican home video market.

The film was "El Mariachi" (1993), which Rodriguez wrote, directed, photographed, edited and sound-recorded – for \$7,000. While shopping it to the video market, Rodriguez signed with a powerful agent at ICM. Columbia Pictures then bought the rights and signed Rodriguez to a two-year writing and directing deal. "El Mariachi" went on to win the coveted Audience Award for best dramatic film at the Sundance Film Festival, and was honored at the Berlin, Munich, Edinburgh, Deauville and Yubari (Japan) festivals. "El Mariachi" became the lowest budget movie ever released by a major studio and the first American film released in Spanish. Rodriguez wrote about these experiences in Rebel Without a Crew, a book published by Dutton Press.

Although it was an astonishing debut for a 23-year-old, Rodriguez was already a seasoned filmmaker. The third of ten children born to Cecilio and Rebecca Rodriguez in San Antonio, Texas, he had prepared for film production classes at UT by making a series of his own home movies. Family members were recruited as cast and crew. His three youngest siblings starred in "Bedhead" (1991), a 16 mm short film which was honored at many national and international festivals. Rodriguez also blossomed as a cartoonist at UT with "Los Hooligans," a comic strip in the *Daily Texan* featuring characters based on his brothers and sisters.

Rodriguez went on to write, produce, direct and edit "Desperado" (1995), a sequel to "El Mariachi," for Columbia. The film introduced American audiences to Antonio Banderas as a leading man, opposite Salma Hayek. Rodriguez also wrote, directed and edited "The Misbehavers" again starring Antonio Banderas in 1995, one of the four segments of Miramax Films' "Four Rooms." He then teamed up with Quentin Tarantino on the outrageous "From Dusk Till Dawn" (1996) for Dimension Films. Rodriguez directed a cast including Tarantino, who wrote the script. He also edited the film and served as executive producer. Rodriguez's next directorial project was Dimension Films' "The Faculty" (1998) starring Josh Hartnett, Elijah Wood and Jordana Brewster.

In 2001, Robert fulfilled a lifelong dream and created the family adventure film. "Spy Kids," a critically acclaimed and box office success, went on to break 100 million domestically. He followed

that with "Spy Kids 2: The Island of Lost Dreams," which won rave reviews and "Spy Kids 3-D: Game Over," which hit theaters July 25th, 2003.

The third installment to the "El Mariachi" trilogy, "Once Upon a Time in Mexico" was released on September 12, 2003, which Robert shot, chopped and scored himself.

He also served as writer of this film.

Rodriguez and his wife, producer Elizabeth Avellan, make their home in Austin, Texas where they live with their three sons.

K.N.B. EFX GROUP (Special Make-Up Effects)

The K.N.B. EFX Group previously handled the Special Effects Make-Up assignment on Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction* (1994) and on *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996), which Tarantino wrote, acted in, and co-produced (with Lawrence Bender) for director Robert Rodriguez.

Formed in 1988 by ROBERT KURTZMAN, GREG NICOTERO, and HOWARD BERGER, when they were working together on Sam Raimi's *Evil Dead II: Dead by Dawn*, the Kurtzman, Nicotero and Berger EFX Group (K.N.B.) has become the effects house of choice for astute genre directors such as George A. Romero (*Monkey Shines*), John Woo (*Hard Target*), John Carpenter (*Ghosts of Mars*), and Wes Craven (*Scream*).

Their most demanding assignments were providing alien creatures for Tim Burton's *Mars Attacks* (1996) and Barry Sonnenfeld's *Men in Black* (1997), and creating both the superhero and the super villain appliances for *Spawn* (1997), an ambitious adaptation of Todd McFarlane's best selling comic book. They have also worked on James Cameron's *Aliens* (1986), Steven Spielberg's *Amistad* (1977), Rob Reiner's *Misery* (1990), Don Coscarelli's *Bubba Ho-Tep* (2003), and Ang Lee's *The Hulk* (2003), to name only a few.

Although most of their work is in features, KNB has also entered the television market, lending their talents to *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*, *Xena: Warrior Princess*, and *The X-Files*.

ABOUT THE CAST

UMA THURMAN ("The Bride"/ a.k.a. "Black Mamba")

Uma Thurman has proven herself to be one of the most versatile young actresses around, playing a wide variety of compelling characters. The daughter of a psychologist and a college professor, Thurman was raised in Amherst, Massachusetts and Woodstock, New York. She attended a preparatory school in New England, where at fifteen she was discovered by two New York agents. At sixteen she transferred to the Professional Children's School in New York City to pursue an acting career.

Thurman first came forcefully to public attention in 1988, when she segued from *Johnny Be Good*, opposite Anthony Michael Hall, to an eye-catching cameo as Venus on the half shell in Terry Gilliam's epic fantasy *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (1988). She went on to receive world-wide critical acclaim in her third movie, for her portrayal of a virginal 18th century convent girl, Cecile de Volanges, coldly seduced by a ruthless John Malkovich in Stephen Frears' *Dangerous Liaisons*.

Thurman's career has been defined from the beginning by a bold but highly selective choice of roles and collaborators: no commercial throwaways allowed. The following year she starred for adventurous director Philip Kaufman in *Henry & June* (1990), playing the neurotic and exotic bisexual spouse of archetypal bohemian novelist Henry Miller (Fred Ward).

In *Mad Dog and Glory*, 1993 she played a barmaid who becomes an indentured servant to Robert De Niro for saving Bill Murray's life. Her most eccentric movie to date is Gus Van Sant's film *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*, 1994 based upon the Tom Robbins novel, in which she starred as Sissy Hankshaw, a big-thumbed, bisexual hippie hitchhiker.

In 1996, Thurman received an Academy Award nomination for Quentin Tarantino's critically lauded *Pulp Fiction*, in which she played Mia Wallace, a sexy and comedic mobster's wife. Later that year, she was seen in the period romance *A Month by the Lake*, with Vanessa Redgrave, and the contemporary romance *Beautiful Girls*, directed by Ted Demme. Thurman next appeared in *The Truth About Cats And Dogs* (1996), *Batman & Robin* (1997), *Gattacca* (1997), *Les Misérables* (1998), and *The Avengers* (1998). In the spring of 1999, she made her stage debut in an updated version of Moliere's *The Misanthrope* at The Classic Stage Company in New York.

Her most recent films include Woody Allen's *Sweet And Lowdown*, opposite Sean Penn and Samantha Morton; *Vatel*, opposite Gerard Depardieu and Tim Roth; the Merchant/Ivory Henry

James adaptation *The Golden Bowl*, with Nick Nolte; and *Tape* with Ethan Hawke and Robert Sean Leonard, for which she was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award as Best Supporting Actress.

Thurman recently produced and acted in the HBO film, *Hysterical Blindness*, directed by Mira Nair, co-starring with Juliette Lewis and Gena Rowlands. She won a 2003 Golden Globe for Best Actress for her portrayal of Debby Miller in the film, and was nominated for a SAG Award. Her most recent feature release was John Woo's futuristic thriller *Paycheck* (2003), with Ben Affleck and Aaron Eckhart. Future projects include *Be Cool* (2004), F. Gary Grey's adaptation of Elmore Leonard's sequel to *Get Shorty*, with John Travolta returning as Chili Palmer, and Hugh Wilson's romantic comedy, *Accidental Husband*.

DAVID CARRADINE ("Bill")

Artist, musician, sculptor, writer, composer, Kung-Fu master, film and television icon David Carradine returns to the motion picture screen in what could be his most exciting role to date, playing the title role in Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill*.

Carradine is the eldest son of the legendary character actor John Carradine, and now presides over an acting family that includes brothers Keith, Robert, and Michael as well as his daughter Kansas and nieces Ever Carradine and Martha Plimpton. He was born in Hollywood and educated at San Francisco State College where he studied music theory and composition. It was while writing music for the Drama Department's annual revues that he discovered his own passion for the stage, joining a Shakespearian repertory company and learning his craft on his feet.

After a two-year stint in the Army, he found work in New York as a commercial artist and later found fame on Broadway in *The Deputy* and *The Royal Hunt of The Sun*, playing an Aztec prince opposite Christopher Plummer's Spanish conquistador. With that experience he returned to Hollywood, landing the short-lived TV series *Shane* before being tapped to star opposite Barbara Hershey in Martin Scorsese's first Hollywood film, *Boxcar Bertha* (1972).

The iconic TV series *Kung Fu* followed. It catapulted Carradine to superstardom for the next three years, until he left the series to pursue his film career.

Carradine received the Best Actor Award from the National Board of Film Review as well as a Golden Globe nomination for his portrayal of Woody Guthrie in Hal Ashby's *Bound for Glory*, (1976) and won critical acclaim for his work as Cole Younger in Walter Hill's *The Long Riders*, (1980) which many believe is his best work to date. *Kung Fu* also received seven Emmy

nominations in its first season including one for Carradine as Best Actor. In addition he won the People's Prize at the Cannes Film Festival's "Director's Fortnight" for his work on *Americana*, and a second Golden Globe nomination for his supporting role in *North and South*.

Among his other most notable film credits are *You and Me* (1972), Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets* (1973), Robert Altman's *The Long Goodbye* (1973), Paul Bartel's *Death Race 2000* (1975), Ingmar Bergman's *The Serpent's Egg* (1977), *Gray Lady Down* (1978), and *Bird on a Wire* (1990).

Carradine has also continued his devotion to music, and has recorded some 60 tracks in various musical genres and sung in several movies. He makes his home in Los Angeles with his girlfriend Annie, her four children and their three dogs.

GORDON LIU ("Pei Mai")

Gordon Liu Jia-hui (Lau Kar-fai in his native Cantonese) is one of the most recognizable and popular stars of Old School, Shaolin-style kung fu movies. He was a mainstay for over a decade at Hong Kong's legendary Shaw Brothers studio, where he established his close-shaven image as a populist martial monk from the legendary Shaolin Monastery, defending the downtrodden from imperialistic Manchu oppressors and helping to disseminate knowledge of the martial arts throughout China. He assumed this role for the first time when his older "godbrother" Liu Chia-liang (Lau Kar-leung) cast him in the international hit *The 36th Chamber of Shaolin* (1978), known in its dubbed American version as *The Master Killer*.

Liu was born in Guangdong (Canton) China in 1955. His real name is Xian Qixi, which he Anglicizes as Louis Sin. When his family moved to Hong Kong they lived for several years near the martial arts school run by the legendary Hong Gar style kung fu instructor Lau Charn, who traced his martial pedigree back to turn-of-century master (and frequent film subject) Wong Fei-hong. The future star began studying with Lau *sifu* at the age of seven, at first unbeknownst to his parents. The actor has been incorrectly identified as either a blood relative or the "adopted son" of his teacher Lau Charn. In fact, Lau became his favorite student's godfather in a private religious ceremony, and like many other martial arts and Peking opera performers, the performer later adopted his teacher's surname as his stage name. Gordon is thus both "god brother" and "martial brother" to Lau Charn's biological offspring, director/choreographer Lau Kar-leung and performers Lau Kar-wing and Lau Kar-ying.

The name he performs under has added to the confusion: Although the Cantonese form of his name, Lau Kar-fai, is more correct, Gordon has continued to use the Mandarin transliteration that appeared in the credits of his most successful films: Liu Jia-hui. He acquired the additional given

name Gordon during his student days at English elementary and high schools in Hong Kong in the 1960s.

After graduation from high school Liu worked for a time in an office as a file clerk before following elder godbrother Lau Kar-leung into the movie industry in the 1960s. He made his film debut as a leading in 1973 in director Chang Cheh's *Shaolin Martial Arts*, which enjoyed only limited success. He then spent several years playing small roles and working behind the scenes for the quasi-independent production company Chang Cheh had established in Taiwan under the Shaw Brothers banner. Liu was re-introduced as a leading man in 1976 when Lau Kar-leung returned to Hong Kong to launch his career as a director: Liu played the legendary turn-of-the-century martial arts master Wong Fei-hong in Lau's *Challenge of the Masters* (1976), and finally became a star when he shaved his head to portray martial monk San Te in *The 36th Chamber of Shaolin* (1978).

Gordon Liu appeared in such Old School classics as Lau Kar-leung's *Shaolin Challenges Ninja* (1978) and *Legendary Weapons of China* (1981). Liu is also a very deft and gifted comic actor, as witness his performances in Lau's landmark kung fu comedies *Dirty Ho* (1979) and *Return to the 36th Chamber* (1980). He also directed the highly regarded *Shaolin and Wutang* (1984), a revisionist look at one of the bitterest rivalries in all of martial arts.

Liu has continued to work regularly in Hong Kong cinema, in films such as *Peacock King* (1988), *Tiger on the Beat* (1988), *Last Hero in China* (1993), *Drunken Master III* (1994), and *Generation Pendragon* (1999). He has won a whole new generation of fans in Asia in recent years for his comedy and action roles in several successful television series, most recently in the 18-hour 2003 mini-series *Shaolin Dizi* (*Shaolin Disciples*).

Gordon Liu appeared last year in the first new period martial arts film produced by Shaw Brothers in over two decades, *Drunken Monkey*, with "big brother" Lau Kar-leung back in action behind the camera. His Shaw Brothers classics are in the process of becoming widely available again for the first time in decades, as re-mastered Hong Kong-market DVDs.

DARYL HANNAH ("Elle Driver" a.k.a. "California Mountain Snake")

Daryl Hannah's career has spanned over 20 years and she has appeared in over 40 feature films. From her early start as a teenager in Chicago in Brian De Palma's *The Fury*, starring Kirk Douglas, she set a pattern of working with some of the most talented and accomplished actors and directors of our time. Some of those include her turn as a gymnastic punk android in Ridley's Scott's cult classic *BladeRunner* starring Harrison Ford, to playing the innocent mermaid in Ron Howard's

"*Splash*" co starring Tom Hanks and John Candy. Hannah has worked with Woody Allen, Neil Jordan, Oliver Stone, John Sayles, and several times with Robert Altman to name just a few.

Some of her most memorable films, which have stood the test of time, include *Roxanne* with Steve Martin, *Steel Magnolias* with Shirley MacLaine and Dolly Parton, *The Pope of Greenwich Village* with Mickey Rourke, *Grumpy Old Men* and *Grumpier old Men* with the beloved Walter Matthau and the great Jack Lemmon.

As well as the big studio films, Hannah has become a strong supporter of independent cinema, acting in, and producing many films. She played a sadly comic stripper in the fully improvised "*Dancing at the Blue Iguana*" directed by Michael Radford, a hermaphrodite angel in the Polish Brothers' *Northfork* costar Nick Nolte and James Woods, and a woman struggling with adoption in John Sayles "*Casa de los babies*".

Hannah can soon be seen in *KILL BILL Vol. II*, the follow up to Quinton Tarantino's highly successful *KILL BILL*, in which she played the one eyed samurai assassin 'ELLE DRIVER'. She has also recently completed John Sayles' political satire "*Silver City*" co-starring Richard Dryfuss and Chris Cooper.

In 2001 Hannah made her stage debut in George Axelrod's SEVEN YEAR ITCH, directed by Michael Radford at the Queens Theatre in London's famed West End.

Hannah directed produced, and wrote a 12-minute short, entitled "*The Last Supper*," which received the Berlin International Film Festival's Jury Award for Best Short. Hannah also directed, produced and shot the documentary *Strip Notes* while researching her role in "*Dancing At The Blue Iguana*" that was shown on HBO and UK's Channel 4.

Hannah is an environmental activist who walks the walk, by living off the grid, adopting animals, and drives a clean burning vehicle.

MICHAEL MADSEN ("Budd" a.k.a. "Sidewinder")

Michael Madsen's credits run the gamut from the hippest of cult films to the biggest studio blockbusters. But he is probably best known for his hard-edged roles in genre films: The ear-slicing Mr. Blonde in Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*, a Mafia family capo in *Donnie Brasco*, a hard-core Special Ops officer in *Species*.

Yet, Madsen has also portrayed a lovable and caring father in *Free Willy* (1993), Susan Sarandon's supportive, understanding boyfriend in *Thelma and Louise* (1991), and the gentle Virgil

Earp opposite Kevin Costner in Lawrence Kasdan's *Wyatt Earp* (1994). He is nothing if not versatile.

Born in Chicago, Madsen and his two siblings, including actress Virginia Madsen, were reared in a close-knit family environment. As a rebellious teenager growing up in a big city, Madsen sought refuge in old films and live theater. He entered the world of acting after seeing the production of *Of Mice and Men* at Chicago's fabled Steppenwolf Theater.

After painting houses, repairing cars, working as an orderly in a hospital, and pumping gas in his late teens and early twenties, Madsen moved to Los Angeles and began landing guest spots on *Miami Vice*, *Cagney and Lacey*, *St. Elsewhere*, and other TV series.

Madsen made his feature debut in the thriller hit *WarGames* in 1983, and after appearing in *The Natural* (1984), *War and Remembrance* (1988) and *The Doors* (1991), among others, he became an "overnight success" when Ridley Scott cast him in *Thelma and Louise*. However, it was his riveting performance as Mr. Blonde in *Reservoir Dogs* that truly put Michael Madsen on the map.

In 2002 Madsen starred in the series *Big Apple*, as Miller the Killer in the TV remake of *High Noon*, in FX's controversial *44 Minutes: The North Hollywood Shootout*, opposite Ashton Kutcher in the Miramax release *My Boss's Daughter*, and in the epic Euro-Western *Muraya*, a film adaptation of Jean "Mobius" Giraud's classic French comic strip *Blueberry*. He will make his directorial debut in 2004, also playing the title role in *Pretty Boy*, a fact-based gangster thriller about notorious Chicago mobster Charles Floyd.

Madsen has published three collections of poetry, *Beer, Blood, and Ashes*, *Eat the Worm*, and *Burning in Paradise*, which won the Independent Book Publisher's Firecracker Poetry Book of the Year Award in 2001. His most recent book, *Blessing of the Hounds*, was published by 12 Gage Press in 2002.

MICHAEL PARKS ("Esteban Vihaio" / "Sheriff Earl McGraw")

Frequently cited by longtime fan Tarantino as "the world's greatest living actor," Parks' film credits include Larry Cohen's legendary scandal-mongering bio-pic *The Private Files of J. Edgar Hoover* (1977), *The Evictors* (1979), and *The Hitman* (1991), with Chuck Norris. He also co-starred in the David Lynch television series, *Twin Peaks*, and as a Western sheriff in the Quentin Tarantino/Robert Rodriguez vampire romp *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996).

BO SVENSON ("The Pastor")

Svenson feels that working with Q.T. was the most creatively rewarding experience of his thirty years in Hollywood.

While principally known as an actor, Bo Svenson is also an award-winning writer, producer, and director. Born in Sweden, he emigrated to the United States and joined the Marines at 17. Honorably discharged after six years of service, he was pursuing a Ph.D. in metaphysics when he was "discovered" by Hollywood.

Svenson has starred in over forty films and several hundred hours of network television, most recently the Mary Higgins Clark MOW *"I'll Be Seeing You"*. He hosts the PBS Television discussion program "The Di Palma Forum" which tapes in Las Vegas with celebrity panelists and covers important current national and international issues. He was nominated Best Actor at the 1997 Tokyo International Film Festival for his starring role in *"Solitude Point"*, a motion picture that co-stars Mitsuko Baisho (Kurosawa's *"Dreams"*). Co-produced by Mr. Svenson, *"Solitude Point"* premiered in Tokyo with a box office second only to *"Titanic"*.

Svenson's MagicQuest Entertainment produces feature films along with branded advertainment. Svenson most recently completed writing, producing and directing *"Legacy"*, a Subaru short movie featuring Dennis Hopper.

Svenson is the recipient of numerous awards and nominations, including the Italian Institute of Art Award of Merit, the American Culture Foundation Man Of The Year Award, Italy's *Legione Garibaldina Ruole D'Onore*, the NAACP Image Award, the Academy of Science Fiction and Fantasy Golden Scroll Award, and the Hollywood Women's Press Club Golden Apple Award.

Svenson has also competed at the world championship, Olympic trial, and/or international competition level in judo, ice hockey, one-design yachting, and track and field. He holds black belts in judo and aikido, and he is a licensed NASCAR driver.

MIRAMAX FILMS PRESENTS A BAND APART UMA THURMAN AND DAVID CARRADINE "KILL BILL VOL. 2" MICHAEL MADSEN DARYL HANNAH GORDON LIU MICHAEL PARKS
MARTIAL ARTS ADVISORY YUEN WOO-PING ORIGINAL MUSIC BY THE RZA ROBERT RODRIGUEZ EDITOR SALLY MENKE DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT RICHARDSON, A.S.C. PRODUCTION DESIGNER DAVID WASCO CAO JUI PING
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