

KILL BILL-VOL. 1**SYNOPSIS**

The fourth movie by Quentin Tarantino is an epic tale of one woman's quest for justice presented in two installments. In *Kill Bill—Vol. 1* the title character, played by DAVID CARRADINE, is a mostly unseen sinister figure looming over the story who has organized an elite group called the Deadly Viper Assassination Squad (or DiVAS).

All of the vipers are code-named after poisonous serpents and the deadliest of them all is Black Mamba (UMA THURMAN), who is also Bill's former lover.

Early in *Vol. 1* a Texas Ranger (MICHAEL PARKS) surveys a grisly scene: an entire wedding party slaughtered during a dress rehearsal in a rural chapel. The pregnant woman in the blood-splattered wedding dress is Black Mamba, better known as The Bride.

Bill and The Vipers left The Bride for dead, but unluckily for them she was merely comatose. The Viper assassin California Mountain Snake, a.k.a. Elle Driver (DARYL HANNAH), creeps into The Bride's hospital room, disguised as a nurse and brandishing a syringe—only to be called off at the last possible moment by Bill himself.

Four years later, The Bride suddenly awakens and realizes what has been done to her. She disposes of the hospital orderly (MICHAEL BOWEN) who has been auctioning off her (immobile) sexual favors, confiscates his garish "Pussy Wagon," and sets off on a ferociously focused mission.

Her first target among the wedding massacre participants is the Viper known as Cottonmouth, O-Ren Ishii (LUCY LIU). At seven O-Ren hid only inches away as her parents were killed. At age eleven she took her own bloody revenge, and has since become the first female boss-of-all-bosses of the Japanese *yakuza* underworld.

In Okinawa, The Bride acquires a legendary bladed weapon from the last of the world's great samurai sword-smiths, the legendary *ninjitsu* master Hattori Honzo (SONNY CHIBA).

In Tokyo, O-Ren Ishii is surrounded by her lethal henchmen and holds court in a massive nightclub/restaurant complex, the House of Blue Leaves. The Bride's assault upon this

stronghold is a pitched martial arts battle with hundreds of black clad soldiers of O-Ren's personal shock squad, The Crazy 88s. The assault also includes personal showdowns with two of O-Ren's top aides, her personal assistant, Sophie Fatale (JULIE DREYFUSS), and her private bodyguard Go Go Yubari (CHIAKI KURIYAMA).

The assault culminates in a classic, tragic snowy standoff between these two formidable warriors, O-Ren Ishii and The Bride. We begin to sense that the quest for justice could exact a heavy emotional toll upon The Bride.

A few days later, in Pasadena, California, The Bride has moved on to her second knock-down-drag-out battle with a Viper target, Copperhead, a.k.a. Vernita Green (VIVICA A. FOX). The presence of Vernita's young daughter at the scene adds a note of grim irony to the tale of a widowed mother's quest for retribution.

In the aftermath of the epic Tokyo battle, Bill appears on screen for the first time to question the fight's sole survivor, Sophie Fatale, about The Bride's intentions.

"Does she know," Bill asks Sophie, "that her daughter is still alive?"

In *Kill Bill—Vol. 2* the emotional momentum that builds throughout *Vol. 1* will achieve its cathartic resolution, as The Bride goes through the remaining Vipers (including MICHAEL MADSEN's Sidewinder) to reach the man himself, the father of her child, and make a deeply poignant discovery.

INTRODUCTION

KILL BILL is both an homage and a reimagining of the genre films that Quentin Tarantino has seen and loved: spaghetti westerns, Chinese martial arts films, Japanese samurai movies as well as anime. Put simply, Tarantino describes the movie as a "duck press" of all the grindhouse cinema he's absorbed over the past 35 years. The film is conceived in chapters, each with the characteristic look and pulse of a specific genre and then interwoven with references from pop culture and other genres.

When a rebut sequence from a *yakuza* film is presented in Japanese anime imagery with a score lifted from an Italian Western what comes through is a sense of the thematic and

emotional binding energy that gives all of these forms their enduring power. Tarantino evokes not just the gaudy, engaging surface of genre cinema but also its rebel spirit.

As a result the archetypal characters of *Vol 1*. have a surprising undercurrent of emotional conviction that pulls us toward the ultimate confrontations of *Vol. 2*.

.*Kill Bill-Vol. 1* opens nationwide on October 10, 2003, with *Kill Bill Vol. 2* following on February 20, 2004.

SOUTH BAY DAYS

Strange as it may sound, some of the origin of *Kill Bill* is geographical. Tarantino spent his youth in the South Bay, the region south of Los Angeles in Orange County that includes Manhattan Beach. His previous movie, *Jackie Brown* (1997) is set in that vicinity and is a showcase for the area's many charms.

The South Bay was an area that still had second-run "grind houses," showing blaxploitation and kung fu films, long after the market had dried up in more northerly sections of the city.

"I was a little kid when the kung fu explosion hit in the early '70's," Tarantino recalls, of his schooling in Old School Martial Arts Cinema. "For about two years they were showing all these kung fu films all the time. And even after the kung fu craze died out everywhere else, it was kept alive in the late 70's and early 80's in areas like the South Bay, in grind houses and ghetto theaters. I think it's one of the greatest genres of cinema that ever existed."

On television, Tarantino watched *The Green Hornet*, which featured a young Bruce Lee as the title hero's masked sidekick, and later followed the exploits of David Carradine's Eurasian kung fu master, Caine, on the ABC-TV series *Kung Fu*. A few years later he extended his interest in Asian action genres, tuning in a local Japanese-language UHF station to follow the subtitled exploits of Sonny Chiba's ninja-detective, Hattori Hanzo, on the imported series *Shadow Warriors*. When the new wave of Hong Kong action cinema hit in the mid-1980s, Tarantino, by then a video store clerk in Manhattan Beach, was one of its earliest and most vociferous boosters.

Knowledgeable Tarantino-philes have been spotting the influence of these punchy films on the writer/director's work right from the beginning: Sonny Chiba's ultra-violent *Streetfighter* films influenced the screenplay for *True Romance* and the Hong Kong action movie *City of Fire* was given a nod in his thunderous directorial debut, *Reservoir Dogs* (1992). "Sonny

Chiba was to me right up there in the 1970s with Charles Bronson and Clint Eastwood as one of the greatest action stars," Tarantino says.

"I'm a huge fan of the period martial pictures made in the '70s by the Shaw Brothers in Hong Kong," he says. "If my life had two sides, one side would be Shaw Brothers and the other side would be Italian westerns. Actually they all have influences on each other. There are many things in Shaw Brothers movies which were borrowed from Italian westerns. During the 1970's, movies from these two genres often used similar plots, images and shots. There's a fairly deep kinship."

ASIAN INFLUENCE

The influence of Asian cinema on *Kill Bill* extends well beyond its storylines and visual style: Tarantino also created roles in the film for three of the martial arts genre's legendary actors.

For Japanese cinema's renowned sword master Sonny Chiba, he revived the Ninja character Hattori Hanzo, from the series *Shadow Warriors*.

Tarantino cast Chinese martial artist/actor Gordon Liu Chia-hui as both Johnny Mo, his *Reservoir Dogs* black suit-clad leader of the Crazy 88 bodyguard squad in Tokyo, and as Pei Mei, a popular "white eyebrowed monk" character from several vintage Shaw Brothers films (featured in *Kill Bill – Vol. 2*). In this case he was casting against type: Liu always played stalwart (or occasionally comic) heroes in his Shaw films, while Pei Mei (often portrayed by actor Lo Lieh) was one of the studio's darkest villains, betraying his martial brothers to the Manchu tyrants in pictures like Liu Jia-liang's *Executioners From Shaolin* (1977).

Liu was impressed when he learned that David Carradine had been cast in the movie's title role. During filming in China, he made a point of taking the actor aside to tell him how much he had admired the program. "That series was a very important part of people in the West understanding kung fu," Liu explains.

ANOTHER WORLD

It is important to point out that Tarantino has not merely duplicated his genre sources in *Kill Bill*. He has transformed them; filtered them through the sensibility of a devoted American fan whose imagination functions as a melting pot (or as he would say, a duck press) that reveals the kinships between seemingly unrelated genres.

"I have said many times," he explains, "that there are two different worlds that my movies take place in. One of them is the 'Quentin Universe' of *Pulp Fiction* and *Jackie Brown* — it's

heightened but more or less realistic. The other is the Movie World. When characters in the Quentin Universe go to the movies, the stuff they see takes place in the Movie World. They act as a window into that world. *Kill Bill* is the first film I've made that takes place in the Movie World. This is me imagining what would happen if that world really existed, and I could take a film crew in there and make a Quentin Tarantino movie about those characters.

"This movie does not take place in the universe that we live in. In this world women are not the weaker sex. They have exactly the same predatory hunting instincts as the men, the same drive to kill or be killed."

The challenge of living inside Tarantino's alternate B-movie universe, Uma Thurman says, "is walking an incredible line of finding the humanity inside this unreal, insane, mad, epic."

TWO VOLUMES

Originally planned as a single film, the movie will be presented in two installments, *Kill Bill-Vol. 1* and *Kill Bill-Vol. 2*.

"If I had thought while I was writing it," Tarantino says, "that [Miramax co-chairman] Harvey Weinstein would be willing to release it in two parts, I would have suggested it then. But I frankly never thought he would. Later on, when he himself said he didn't want to cut a thing and would we consider releasing it as two movies, I said, 'What an interesting idea!' Within an hour, I had figured out exactly how to do it."

When the time to make the final decision rolled around, in the summer of 2003, Tarantino showed Weinstein his cut of what would soon be designated *Kill Bill-Vol. 1*. He introduced the screening by saying: "This is either the first movie, or it's the first half of the movie". Weinstein's response was unequivocal: "This is a *terrific* ending! So that's it! It's two movies!"

There is certainly more precedent in American film distribution now than ever before for planning films from the outset in terms of a series of several installments. And in Europe and Asia this has been common practice for decades. In fact, one of the key influences upon *Kill Bill*, Kinji Fukasaku's *Battles Without Honor and Humanity*, was an epic gangster drama about the decline of a *yakuza* clan, which was released in several installments from 1973 to 1976.

TWO VOLUMES, TWO MASTERS

As it happens, each of the two volumes of *Kill Bill* has its own tone and mood and employs quite different narrative strategies. In terms of its Asian influences, for example, *Vol. 1* is dominated by Japan, as personified by Sonny Chiba (*The Streetfighter*), who plays the samurai sword maker Hattori Hanzo and who served as the film's kenjutsu choreographer. *Vol. 2*, on the other hand, is dominated by China, as personified by martial arts movie legend Gordon Liu Chia-hui (*The Master Killer*), who plays the Bride's implacable Shaolin Five Animals kung fu instructor, the "white eyebrow" monk Pei Mei. (Liu also has a small role in *Vol. 1* as *yakuza* boss O-Ren Ishii's top enforcer, Johnny Mo).

The numerous Spaghetti Western references in *Vol. 1*, particularly in the haunting strains of some of Tarantino's musical choices, will pay off powerfully in *Vol. 2*, when The Bride encounters Michael Madsen's Budd (aka Sidewinder) in El Paso, Texas, and tracks Bill to Mexico.

And then there is the odd fact that the title character, David Carradine's Bill, barely appears at all in *Vol. 1*. His spirit certainly looms large, and his inimitable murmuring voice can be heard the soundtrack on several occasions. "He is all over *Vol. 2*," Tarantino says, "which is really all about the confrontation between the two of them."

There was also a much simpler practical consideration, Tarantino says, for dolling out *Kill Bill* in smaller, measured doses:

After all, the final fight sequence in *Vol. 1*, "The Showdown at the House of Blue Leaves," is a 20-minute samurai sword battle between The Bride and the minions of killer-turned-*yakuza* boss O-Ren Ishii (Liu), that took a full eight weeks to shoot, on a soundstage at the Beijing Film Studio—only two weeks less than the entire production schedule of *Pulp Fiction*. "When you get to the end of *Vol. 1*," Tarantino says, "you're exhausted. You're ready to take a break."

On a more philosophical level, Tarantino suggests, "This is supposed to be my version of a grindhouse movie, and the very idea of a three hour grindhouse movie is a contradiction in terms. It seemed pretentious, whereas two 90-minute grind house movies seems more app."

SERVED COLD

Kill Bill has the basic plot structure of a kung fu film, a format that has been central to the genre right from the beginning, from seminal early Shaw Brothers films such as Chang Cheh's *One-Armed Swordsman* (1967) to American derivatives like *The Karate Kid* (1984). One thing that is clearly not missing, however, is the traditional samurai swordsman or kung fu hero's do-gooding code of honor.

Says Uma Thurman "For me the important thing is that the character has a certain nobility. She's not just sneaking up on people and trying to knock them off. She goes to each of the other Vipers, meets them on their own turf, gives them the choice of weapons, and basically challenges them to a duel. So there is a code of ethics that she follows—the Viper Rules of Honor that Quentin laid out for me."

"Once I got going, I just wrote and re-wrote for a whole year," Tarantino says. "If I hit a snag I would just stop and go watch a martial arts movie. I basically watched at least one Hong Kong movie a day, and sometimes two or three a day. I also watched Japanese samurai movies and anime. So images from these movies just filled my head until they were second nature, and that became the raw material of *Kill Bill*. I knew absolutely nothing about any of the Hollywood movies that had been released during that year."

Tarantino consulted often with his designated leading lady during the writing process: "I even left the character as written somewhat more open than I usually do, so that she could continue to contribute."

He also began the process that Thurman calls "his genre film schooling of me. Way back when the idea was first created he screened John Woo's *The Killer*, and the Pam Grier film *Coffy*, the Sergio Leone/Clint Eastwood films, John Flynn's *Rolling Thunder*, and *Lady Snowblood*, a Japanese female-samurai film was a big inspiration. Just piles and piles of stuff, these action movies that were all sort of terrifying to me. It was like, 'What *is* he writing for me?'"

SOUNDTRACK

As the movie slowly took shape on paper, the soundtrack was also taking shape in Tarantino's head, and on his stereo.

Tarantino is almost as passionate about music as movies. His choices about music enter into the thought process about a movie right at 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. One of the first things I knew about *Kill Bill* was that opening music would be ‘Bang Bang (My Baby Shot Me Down).’ And I had the flamenco music for the snow garden fight scene before I wrote the scene. It’s the music that helps me find the rhythm of the movie, the beat the movie will play to.”

Many of the cuts that wind up in Quentin Tarantino movies are drawn from the director’s labor-of-love collection of thousands of movie soundtrack albums. So in addition to tracks by Sinatra, Southern rockabilly great Charlie Feathers, Japanese surf guitar trio The 5.6.7.8’s (who also appear on screen as the house band at Tokyo’s House of Blue Leaves), and the ultra-obscure German neo-lounge band Neu!, the *Kill Bill* soundtrack also includes several generically apt choices from some classic grindhouse soundtracks:

A section of Luis Bacalov’s score for the 1972 spaghetti western *The Grand Duel* is used during the anime flashback to the death of O-Ren Ishii’s father. And a clip from 1968 thriller *Twisted Nerve*, a vintage Bernard Herrmann screw-tightener, is effectively employed in the films’ early hospital sequence. Perfect examples of the Duck Press Effect.

Also: the soulful Enka theme from Kinji Fukasaku’s yakuza gangster blow-out *Battles Without Honor or Humanity*, the Isaac Hayes’s track "Run Fay Run" from the Italian blaxploitation classic *Three Tough Guys*, and an uplifting number called "The Flower of Carnage," written and performed by Japanese film star Meiko Kaji, whose trademark character *Lady Snowblood*, a samurai widow, was a key influence upon the portrayal of O-Ren Ishii in *Kill Bill*.

Theme elements from two vintage 70s TV shows round out the mix: Al Hirt’s insectile trumpet riff from *The Green Hornet* (in which kung fu great Bruce Lee played the hero’s sidekick, Kato) and a sting from the Quincy Jones title track for *Ironsides*, which becomes the Bride’s main theme.

“If the albums for my movies seem to do okay,” Tarantino says, “I think it’s because they really are personal to me and to the movie. It isn’t just music we pick to sell CDs. Apart from the professional sound quality they are very much what you get if I just made a mix tape of some of my favorite stuff and handed it to you.”

For assistance in selecting songs, as well as for the composition of original music, Tarantino turned to The RZA (pronounced “Rizza”), 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. RZA had also produced several solo albums (including two under the name Bobby Digital) and had created the score for the Jim Jarmusch film *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai* (1999).

CASTING

"One of the great things about Quentin's is he's very particular about casting because he knows how to use people's qualities extremely well," comments actress Julie Dreyfus, who plays the trilingual *yakuza* functionary Sophie Fatale. This certainly proved to be true in her case: Tarantino met the English, French and Japanese-speaking actress several years ago at the Toronto International Film Festival and devised this unique role especially for her. And she was not the only one.

LUCY LIU

For O-Ren Ishii, the samurai-sword wielding ex-Viper who becomes the first female boss-of-all-bosses of the Japanese underworld, Tarantino sought out Lucy Liu, whose performance as a Manchu princess in Jackie Chan's *Shanghai Noon* (2000) had knocked his socks off. Her flair in hard-bitten action roles was then confirmed by her scene-stealing turns in *Payback* (1999), *Charlie's Angels* (2000), and *Ballistic: Eks vs. Sever* (2001).

Tarantino had originally intended to cast an actress from Japan or China as O-Ren, but when he realized that Liu had exactly the qualities he always wanted in the character, the role itself was reconceived: "O-Ren's not just going to be Japanese, alright, she's going to be a half Japanese, half Chinese, Asian-American. And she's still going to rule the crime world in Tokyo. And I wrote a scene to deal with her background, the Boss Tanaka scene.

Tarantino had initially imagined O-Ren as somewhat cold and androgynous. As Liu learned more about the language and culture of Japan, however, she suggested making her character more apparently feminine: "I like the idea of her being feminine," Liu says, "if only on the surface. She is superficially very doll-like, not what you would expect of a ruthless killer. This is a form of camouflage for her. It puts her enemies off guard."

One of the things that makes O-Ren Ishii different from other on-screen killers, Liu believes, is the way the character has been written, the insight Tarantino offers into her horrendous formative years. "You see where she comes from," Liu says, "and how she develops emotionally and why it was that she became so cold. Usually you just get the darker side of a character like this. Quentin reminds you that she's a human being who has been transformed, hardened, by what has happened to her."

O-REN ANIME

This information is provided with one of Tarantino's most strikingly stylistic flourishes: an interpolated Japanese anime sequence in which O-Ren witnesses the bloody rub out of her gangster father. The sequence was sub-contracted to one of Japan's leading animation studios, Production I.G., which has been associated with some of the most original anime of the past decade, including Mamoru Oshii's *Ghost in the Shell* (1995) and Hiroyuki Okiura's *Jin-Roh: The Wolf Brigade* (1999). But Tarantino was closely involved at every stage.

"I love anime," he says, "so there was no way I was going to just turn my script over to these guys, as great as I think they are. I wanted to have the fun of directing anime." Tarantino wrote a very detailed shot-by-shot script for the sequence, then in meetings with the animators he acted out the movements in every shot ("Every little bit, every gesture; it took six hours."), and worked with the animators to produce a final set of detailed storyboards.

Tarantino's close involvement with the process helps makes the transition to a new medium effective. "One of the things that helps it to work," he suggests, "is that if I had shot the sequence in live action it wouldn't be all that different. It's basically the same movie that you're watching."

DAVID CARRADINE

As an undisputed global icon of the Kung Fu Craze of the 1970s, and a boyhood idol of Quentin Tarantino, David Carradine clearly deserves a prime niche in a film designed, in large part, as the writer-director's tribute to the martial arts genre. No less an authority than 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 Marshall arts around the world.

Although he plays the title role, however, Carradine's role in *Kill Bill-Vol. 1* is mostly a matter of a familiar, lulling, murmurous voice on the soundtrack that sets the movie's ominous mood. He is seen only briefly here but dominates *Vol. 2*, along with Thurman. "He is all over *Vol. 2*," Tarantino says, "which is really all about the confrontation between the two of them."

For co-star Julie Dreyfus (Sophie Fatale), Carradine was a fascinating, understated presence on the set. "He has this incredibly calm and wise aura about him," Dreyfus says. "He speaks slowly and calmly and tells the most interesting stories."

CASTING THE VIPERS

"She gave my favorite female performance of 2001," Tarantino declares, recalling Vivica A. Fox's performance in the hit comedy *Two Can Play That Game*. "She carried that picture on her shoulders, and as funny as the movie was, I couldn't imagine it without her." He had originally planned to cast an unknown in the crucial, scene-setting role of Vernita Green, aka Copperhead. The first ex-Deadly Viper The Bride fights on film in *Kill Bill-Vol. 1*. The audition process was already well underway when he realized that Fox was perfect for the role.

Tarantino was amazed by how hard the actress worked to prepare for a role with a relatively modest amount of screen time. "It's one scene," Tarantino says, "and she studied for it for three months. She went to China even though her scene wasn't shot there, just so she could continue training with us. She trained five days a week, eight hours a day, for three months."

Daryl 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 a 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. I just loved the idea of getting to play such a tough and physical character."

Michael Madsen, a Tarantino favorite, 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. "It's a character every bit as memorable as Mr. Blonde in *Reservoir Dogs*," Madsen says, "but it's a hundred and eighty degrees a different way."

LAWMAN

Another veteran actor in *Kill Bill*, Michael Parks, starred in the classic '70s television series *Then Came Bronson*, had appeared in writer-producer Tarantino's *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996), directed by Robert Rodriguez. Parks was cast by Tarantino in two roles, one each in the two volumes of *Kill Bill*. He reprises his role as Texas Ranger Edgar McGraw from the Tarantino-scripted *From Dusk Till Dawn*, investigating the grisly wedding rehearsal crime scene, and as an elderly Mexican pimp who helps the Bride to locate her arch nemesis in *Vol. 2*.

THE YAKUZA

Tarantino's view of the Tokyo underworld would not be complete without Go Go Yubari, the fetching and ferocious teenaged bodyguard to O-Ren Ishii. Tarantino had written the role for

actress Chiaki Kuriyama after seeing her in the cult classic action film *Battle Royale* (2000), the final film directed by the late Kinji Fukasaku. (A song from an earlier Fukasaku film, the gangster drama *Battles Without Honor and Humanity*, is featured on the *Kill Bill* soundtrack.) *Battle Royale* is a black satire about a near-future Japan in which teams of uniformed high school students are forced to fight to the death.

Tarantino's underworld also has its male bosses: men resisting the threat to the patriarchal structure that O-Ren, Go Go and Sophie Fatale represent. Tarantino handpicked some of his favorite Japanese film actors for these key roles, including Jun Kunimura (from Takeshi Miike's *Audition* and *Ichii: The Killer*) as the headstrong Boss Tanaka, and Kazuki Kitamura as Boss Koji. For additional casting, Tarantino relied on his Japanese producer, Koko Maeda.

One of the recalcitrant patriarchal bosses ended up being played by Zhang Jin Zhan, who also served as the film's Chinese first assistant director. This was an appropriate development, since Zhang was one of the true bosses on the Beijing set of *Kill Bill*, a crucial liaison between the various linguistic groups and working styles.

ASIAN CREW

It was also in this period that Tarantino began traveling to China to scout locations, and to hire Asian department heads. One of the first to sign on was the widely admired Japanese production designer Yohei Taneda (*Sleepless Town*, *Swallowtail Butterfly*), who would build a full sized nightclub/restaurant set, the future arena for one of the most ambitious action sequences ever filmed, on a mammoth soundstage in Beijing.

"I started talking with Quentin in January 2001," Taneda says. "We began constructing the sets in April of that year. It took about 2 months to complete all the sets that we wanted. I was impressed by Quentin's rough sketch of the House of Blue Leaves. It was like a child's drawing and our design gradually deviated from it. Yet, eventually, the final version became close to his original idea."

THE PREGNANCY

Kill Bill was ready to get under way. It was at the Cannes film festival in 2001, when Miramax was poised to make the announcement about the imminent commencement of production, when Tarantino broke the news to Harvey Weinstein and Lawrence Bender that Uma Thurman was pregnant.

With a major production all set up and ready to go, with crew hired and sets built, the normal reaction would be to re-cast the role and move on. But this was not a normal situation.

"I've said that this was my grindhouse movie," Tarantino explains. "But it's also my Josef Von Sternberg movie. If you're Josef Von Sternberg, and you're about to start shooting *Morocco* in 1930, and Marlene Dietrich gets pregnant, what do you do? Do you go ahead and make the movie with someone else? Of course not. You wait for Dietrich. And film history will thank you."

In the end, the director says, the delay was probably good for the movie. "We probably *shouldn't* have gone at that earlier date," Tarantino says now. "With a movie that was shot in China, Japan, and the US, we really needed the extra pre-production time. In the end I think Uma's son did us a favor. He made the movie better."

Thurman gave birth to her baby right on schedule, in January of 2002, and reported for duty at the *Kill Bill* training center on March 2, right on schedule.

TRAINING

"[When I was doing the TV show] I made no secret of my ignorance of kung fu. 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 as nothing compared to what there is to be learned."

-- David Carradine, *The Spirit of Shaolin: A Kung Fu Philosophy* (Tuttle, 1991).

The *Kill Bill* training center was set up in a warehouse near the production offices of the brand new company Super Cool Man Chu Productions in Culver City, south of Los Angeles. Training was to proceed on several fronts: The performers would study the Japanese language from instructional CDs while learning Kenjutsu samurai sword technique from fellow cast member (and veteran Japanese film star) Sonny Chiba, and Chinese movie martial arts from the celebrated martial arts choreographer and film director Yuen Woo-ping (*Drunken Master*).

Master Yuen's action choreography has been featured to great acclaim in *The Matrix* and its sequels, and in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. But Tarantino had been a Yuen fan long before he achieved his Hollywood breakthrough. In fact, Tarantino was instrumental in arranging the domestic release of Yuen's *Iron Monkey* (1993) — which was distributed under the "Quentin Tarantino Presents" banner by Miramax Films in 2000.

"The first film that I saw of Master Yuen's,' Tarantino remembers, "was his first film as a director, 'Snake in the Eagle's Shadow,' starring Jackie Chan. It was around 1993 or 1994 that I started noticing his kung fu style. I noticed his choreography. I could tell it from this guy's or that guy's. I thought his was the most imaginative kung fu choreography of all time. He has this craftsmanship and also a wild imagination."

In the first stage of their work, Master Yuen and his crew would function as trainers, teaching the actors the unique form of Hong Kong film craft known as "wire work"—the hands on gymnastic specialty that allowed the characters in *The Matrix* and *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* to become airborne.

It was tough even for the one guy who thought he had it locked. "I thought I had a leg up on all the other cast members," David Carradine admits, shaking his head over his own foolishness. "I thought, 'Well, hey, I don't need this training. I've been doing this stuff for forty years, ever since I did that TV show.' Well, no. It was tough. I had to re-learn everything I thought I knew."

Early morning stretching classes were followed by martial arts workouts and action choreography rehearsals. In the afternoons, the cast would attach themselves to the devices that David Carradine lovingly referred to as "hamster machines:" bicycles and treadmills and elliptical trainers.

One problem was that each of the new art forms they were studying called upon a different set of muscles: "Chinese martial arts and Japanese samurai sword training are completely different," says Lucy Liu. "Samurai swords are heavy and you constantly have to fight the tendency to bend over. It's an intensive workout on your thighs and forearms because of the weight of the sword. But in Chinese martial arts you bend your upper body. Each of them requires you to teach your body a new language."

Carradine, a life long practitioner of Chinese Shaolin-style kung fu, says he "especially took to the samurai training. I had never gotten into it before and I just love it. I think I'll probably continue studying it for the rest of my life."

"Sword fighting is intimate," explains *sensei* Sonny Chiba. "It involves control of breath and eye contact. You must know your competitor, how he breathes, what he's thinking. Sword-

fighting is person-to-person, based on human relationships and emotional, spiritual expression. It is about the heart and soul."

"Uma had to learn more than anyone else in the film and fight alongside people who had been doing it their entire lives," Sonny Chiba says. "I was especially struck by how she was willing to do something over and over until she got it down. She was absolutely professional."

Lucy Liu and Daryl Hannah also received high marks from their respective trainers. "Lucy has excellent body movement and is very smart and hard working," Chiba says. "Her concentration and speed give her an edge. She's done a lot of action films, and it shows. She's got an excellent technique."

Despite all of her physical agility, Hannah's instructors were perhaps most impressed with the stillness and determination expressed in her eyes. "Daryl has the piercing eyes of a Samurai," Chiba says. "Very good and serious concentration. I nick-named her 'blue-eye samurai.'"

In addition to learning a new body language, some of the actors also had to learn a few lines of Japanese. "My hat's off to both Lucy and Uma," says co-star Julie Dreyfus, who was already fluent in Japanese as well as in French and English. "It took me years to learn Japanese, and here they are learning this new language in a few months, on top of all the physical training. And they sound completely fluent."

Thurman isn't willing to go quite that far: "I was trying to get to the point where I could say my Japanese lines with feeling and conviction, as if I knew what I was saying. They tell me my Japanese is comprehensible. That's what I was going for."

In the meantime, Tarantino was assembling his crew. Academy Award winning Director of Photographer Robert Richardson was chosen for *Kill Bill* precisely because he had proved 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 genre roots.

Master Yuen Woo-ping, who brought his martial arts skills and unique "wire fu" expertise to the production, 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 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 may have explained it best: “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!”

CHINA – BEIJING FILM STUDIO

Quentin Tarantino, Lawrence Bender 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 producers Dede Nickerson and Koko Maeda, and Academy Award-winning director of photography Robert Richardson had put together a multinational crew, with several teams of translator, and had settled into work at the Beijing Film Studios, located in the northern section of the Chinese capitol.

Built in 1949, the Beijing Film Studios soon became the China’s leading filmmaking center. More than 50 years later the studio was still the only facility in China with sound stages large enough to accommodate *Kill Bill’s* two-story set for the House of Blue Leaves, the enormous nightclub and restaurant complex that is gang boss O-Ren Ishii’s de facto headquarters.

“The Beijing Film Studio is this fantastic studio that Mao built,” Tarantino says. “It was built to make propaganda films, and it was the personal project of Mao’s wife, who was one of the Gang of Four. And what’s really cool about this studio is, it’s not just a studio, it’s a community. It’s like a village, because the technicians who work there sign lifetime contracts, and this is their home. They have a school, and apartment buildings, and stores. It is a complete village run by people whose job for life is to make movies.”

For 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."

Kill Bill employed a Chinese, a Japanese and an American production designer, a Chinese and an American costume designer, a Chinese and an American prop master. A team of Chinese and American assistant directors oversaw 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.

"There were multiple translators running around the set at all times," Uma Thurman recalls. "There was the Japanese to English translator, the Chinese to English translator, the Japanese to Chinese translator. It was kind of a mad house."

"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.

The design team of Yohei Taneda (Japan) and David Wasco (America) coordinated the look of the film through Tarantino's vision. "Quentin is very particular about every detail on the set," says Taneda, "the blue color of the backdrop, the brightness of the red blood, the way the yellow pops against the blanket of white snow. He is very visual and describes what he wants. He designs the set with the shots he wants to do already in mind.

"He said that he wanted the House of Blue Leaves to be a space for 'a symphony of actions'," Taneda recalls. "So each part of the set contrasted with the others, color-wise. I used really red tones for the hallway in which the sequence begins, then a traditional Japanese green in the main dining area. The expression 'blue leaves' actually evokes a very fresh shade of green, and I explained that to Quentin. The outdoor Snow Garden has a blue tone, like moonlight. That's the last scene, the setting for the final fight."

STAGING ACTION

Faced with a beautiful huge set designed specifically to serve as a staging area for as many different kinds and combinations of swordfights as possible, Tarantino acknowledged a sense of responsibility: I love action, I think it may be the purest form of cinema. But I had not really directed action before. I'd *written* action, and my movies had action in them, but for me as a director it had been always been about something else. I knew that in *Kill Bill* I was going to have to raise the bar."

The action sequences in the *Kill Bill* script were already unusually detailed. Tarantino had been re-writing and refining them 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, Tarantino worked through each shot as the crew, the actors, Master Yuen, and the wirework team watched and walked through it alongside him.

"For almost an entire day," Bender recalls, "Quentin basically acted out the entire 'House of Blue Leaves' scene for Master Yuen Woo-ping and his crew. He'd jump up, then fall flat on his back. He'd flounder on a chair. These poor guys were watching Quentin do his thing. They had never seen anything like it! But the end result was that they understood each other very well, and the action is sort of a hybrid between Quentin and Master Yuen. It's got this kind of Quentin humor mixed in with the Master's slam-bang style. They had a great chemistry. It's a ballet in the way it works."

The classic samurai sword battles between The Bride and the Crazy 88 fighters, and especially the principled showdown between the Bride and O-Ren Ishii herself, are often graceful enough to fit that description. But her knock-down-drag-out with killer teen princess Go Go Yubari looks more like a form of anime come to life, and it showcases one of Quentin Tarantino's patented multi-leveled pop culture references:

Go Go's weapon resembles both the lethal yo-yos wielded by the schoolgirl super-heroines on the long-running Japanese TV series *Sukeban Deka*, and also the title tool in one of Tarantino's all-time favorite martial arts movies, *Master of the Flying Guillotine* (1976). Here this bizarre weapon, like a mace that has mated with a buzz saw, acquires a sense of weight and terror its never had before, thanks to the high-impact staging of Master Yuen Woo-ping and the ferocious conviction of Chiaki Kuriyama's performance.

"It all depends what the camera demands," Master Yuen explains. "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."

One of the hard lessons the actors still had to learn is that no amount of training, even with true master, can fully prepare any fighter for the reality.

"At the end of my training," Thurman says, "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, Quentin 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."

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 that Woo-ping and I could change choreography any time we wanted."

Thurman's climactic showdown with Lucy Liu's O-Ren Ishii, in the beautifully proportioned formal Japanese Snow Garden of the House of Blue Leaves, showcases the depth of the production design, which could produce both hip contemporary environments and elegant traditional ones.

"The snow garden was a beautiful, beautiful set that was very difficult to work in," Lawrence Bender recalls, "because of the heat and the constant snow, which was actually a mixture of soap, Styrofoam and paper.."

Another distinctive visual in the House of Blue Leaves are the costumes worn by the Crazy 88s, a twist on the white shirt, black ties, and black suits that Tarantino made famous in *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction*. In *Kill Bill* a small black mask is added to the ensemble, an

homage to the outfit worn by Bruce Lee's character Cato on *The Green Hornet*. But then these characters designed to echo the earliest stages of Lee's career square off against Thurman's Bride, who sports a familiar-looking yellow jump suit with a black side "racing stripe"—an exact copy of the track suit Lee wore in *Game of Death*, the film he left unfinished at his death in 1973.

After completing the majority of their work at the Beijing Film Studios, the cast and crew set out for a week of location shooting at a Buddhist temple, clambering daily up a massive flight of stairs on the east side of Miao Gao Mountain, 240 meters high. The arduous climb to the tomb set was only a taste of the rigors involved in filming the Shaolin kung fu training sequences with Gordon Liu, "The Cruel Tutelage of Pei Mei," which will appear in *Kill Bill* (vol. 2).

When cast and crew returned from the mountaintop location, they moved back into the Beijing Film Studios for a few more days. On stage, small sets for the Hattori Hanzo sequences had been constructed in their absence, including the Okinawa sushi parlor that the retired sword-smith now operates, and the attic living space above it. These sets, like much larger *The House of Blue Leaves*, were made of bamboo, stone, wood and other organic materials, giving the place a solid, real world feel that enhanced the plausibility of the scene.

The sushi restaurant has a small bar and a couple of tables. The attic houses Hanzo's extensive sword collection and serves as the backdrop for a couple of key scenes between *The Bride* and Sony Chiba's Hattori Hanzo. He's a master samurai swordmaker who has sworn never to produce another "killing machine" as long as he lives; she is a potential customer who has to persuade him to change his mind. In the scene, Thurman finally got to repeat her carefully mastered lines dialogue in Japanese.

"He had been my sword teacher in Los Angeles," Thurman recalls, "and then we finally got to act together. I was using the Japanese that I had studied for months. And he was struggling with English, so we had this incredible kind of balance of language handicaps in our scene."

One of Tarantino's signature shots, which has appeared in some form in all of his films to date, is a POV from inside the trunk of a car, preferably as the lid is being slammed shut. Whether by design or by happy accident, the trunk shot in *Kill Bill* (Uma Thurman looming over Julie Dreyfus) was the last scene to be filmed in China.

"It was a very, very late night," Bender recalls, "but it was wonderful. We knew it was going to be hard to leave."

JAPAN

Filming in China ended a little after 1:00am on September 1, 2002, and over the next two days fifty members of the *Kill Bill* cast and crew flew to Tokyo to begin night shoots. "We all had some form of culture shock at that point," Bender recalls, "because Tokyo and Beijing are so incredibly different. And Tokyo is a very difficult place to shoot. They had recently installed a film commission, which had really specific rules. I love Tokyo, and we got a wonderful looks there, some great shots of the city, but it was difficult."

The exterior shots to be filmed in Tokyo comprised a street chase in which The Bride, on a motorcycle, shadows O-Ren Ishii's arrogant caravan of luxury cars and elaborate bikes. It was the sort of sequence that is actually more elaborate than it looks, a carefully choreographed dance for several gleaming motor vehicles, with the Tokyo skyline as a looming backdrop. This brief transitional episode took several nights to complete, on the Rainbow Bridge and surrounding island roadways.

PASADENA

After three months of demanding filmmaking on location in China and Japan, Thurman, for one, had no problem re-adjusting to life at home. When the actress walked onto *Kill Bill's* first American set after returning from the Far East, it was the simple things that caught her eye:

"I have never been so happy to see wall-to-wall carpeting in my life!" Thurman says. "While it was great to be home, and it was so different that it felt almost like another movie, I knew it was the same movie, because we never left a set until we'd trashed it."

And shortly thereafter, Thurman and co-star Vivica A. Fox proceeded to tear up the newly-painted storybook home in suburban Pasadena—demolishing furniture, ripping through walls, sending knives and insults flying, as two former colleagues in an elite international assassination squad settled an old score.

And *Vol. 1* is only the beginning...

ABOUT THE CAST

UMA THURMAN (“The Bride”/”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 starred in the HBO film, *Hysterical Blindness*, directed by Mira Nair, 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.

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. Originally developed by and for Bruce Lee, 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.

THE DEADLY VIPER ASSASINATION SQUAD:

LUCY LIU (“O-Ren Ishii”/”Cottonmouth”)

A native of Queens, New York, Lucy Liu attended NYU and later received a Bachelor of Science degree in Asian Languages and Cultures from the University of Michigan. During her senior year at Michigan, she auditioned for a student theater production of Andre Gregory's *Alice in Wonderland*. Hoping to be cast in a supporting role, Lucy was instead cast as the lead, and her acting career was born.

On television, Lucy appeared as the unforgettable Ling Woo in the hit Fox series *Ally McBeal*. (1998-2001) That immensely popular role brought Lucy a great deal of industry recognition and fan support. In 1999, she was nominated for an Emmy Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series and, in 2000, a Screen Actors Guild Award for Best Actress in a Comedy Series. She guest-starred on HBO's *Sex and the City* and has lent her voice to such popular animated series as *The Simpsons*, *Futurama*, and *King of the Hill*.

After playing significant supporting roles in several films, including *Jerry Maguire* (1996), *City of Industry* (1997), and *Gridlock'd* (1997), Liu made a strong impression on the big screen playing a snide dominatrix opposite Mel Gibson in the box office hit *Payback* (1999) and in a sassy starring role with Antonio Banderas and Woody Harrelson in Touchstone Pictures *Play It To The Bone* (1999).

Her blossoming film career was thrust into over-drive in 2000 when she joined Cameron Diaz and Drew Barrymore in the blockbuster hit *Charlie's Angels*. She also appeared that year opposite martial arts legend Jackie Chan in Universal's hit comedy *Shanghai Noon*. In 2002

Liu starred opposite Antonio Banderas in Warner Bros.' action-thriller *Ballistic: Ecks vs. Sever* and in the Oscar-winning Miramax movie musical *Chicago*. She can currently be seen flying high in *Charlie's Angels 2: Full Throttle*.

She recently signed a deal to executive produce and star in a contemporary big-screen version of Charlie Chan for 20th Century Fox.

DARYL HANNAH (“Elle Driver”/”California Mountain Snake”)

Daryl Hannah was born and raised in Chicago, where she was selected while still in school to play a victim of lethal telekinesis in Brian De Palma's psycho-thriller *The Fury* (1978).

She made her first made a strong individual impression on audiences after re-locating to Los Angeles, when she was cast the acrobatic android Pris in Ridley Scott's science fiction classic *Blade Runner* (1982). The erotic melodrama *Summer Lovers* (1982), James Foley's *Reckless* (1984), and above all Ron Howard's *Splash* (1984), as a mermaid named Madison who captivates Tom Hanks, established the willowy actress as one the definitive Hollywood icons of the 1980s.

Since then, Hannah has appeared in more than 30 feature films including *The Clan of the Cave Bear* (1986), *Wall Street* (1987), *Roxanne* (1987), *Steel Magnolias* (1989), *At Play In The Fields of the Lord* (1991), and *Grumpy Old Men* (1993).

She recently made her stage debut in London in *The Seven Year Itch*, a revival of the George Axelrod play directed by Michael Radford. She subsequently acted in Radford's semi-improvised film about Hollywood strippers, *Dancing At The Blue Iguana* (2000). She also directed, produced and shot the documentary *Strip Notes*, based upon her research for the role; the 30-minute film appears as a special feature on the *Blue Iguana* DVD. She received the Berlin International Film Festival's Jury Award for Best Short for *The Last Supper*, a film that she wrote, produced and directed.

Daryl Hannah can currently be seen the Polish Bros' *Northfork*, and this fall in John Sayles' *Casa De Los Babys*, playing a woman who travels to South American to adopt a child.

VIVICA A. FOX (“Vernita Green”/”Copperhead”)

Originally from Indianapolis, Vivica A. Fox came to California in to pursue her dream of becoming an actress. In classic Hollywood style, she was actually discovered by a producer while eating lunch one day in a Sunset Boulevard restaurant.

Fox first gained fame as a series regular playing the role of Patti LaBelle's feisty fashion designer daughter in the NBC television series *Out All Night*. Notable among her other numerous television appearances are her work as a series regular on ABC's *Arsenio*, in which she portrayed Arsenio Hall's wife, and her two seasons as a regular co-star on the Fox Television sitcom *Getting Personal*, with John Cryer and Duane Martin.

Fox received critical acclaim for her multi-dimensional, emotional and often comedic performance in the Warner Bros. movie *Why Do Fools Fall In Love* (1998), the story of the singer Frankie Lymon. Fox lit up the big screen in the smash hit *Independence Day* (1996), co-starring opposite Will Smith as Smith's sexy, heroic girlfriend. They generated enough sparks to win the MTV Movie Award for Best Kiss.

Fox's stirring performance opposite Nia Long and Vanessa L. Williams in the family drama and surprise hit *Soul Food* (1997) won her MTV Movie Award and Image Award nominations for Best Actress.

Fox's recent credits include the romantic comedies *Two Can Play That Game* (2001) and *Juwanna Man* (2002). She recently completed work on *Ride Or Die* (2003), a revisionist Western, and *Ella Enchanted* (2004), based on the popular Young Adult novel.

MICHAEL MADSEN (“Budd”/”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).

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 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*, and *St. Elsewhere*, to name a few.

Madsen made his feature debut in the hit *WarGames* (1983) and after appearing *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.

Last year Madsen starred in the series *Big Apple*, as Miller the Killer in the TV remake of *High Noon*, and in FX's controversial *44 Minutes: The North Hollywood Shootout*. He can currently be seen opposite Aston 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*.

Madsen's collection of short stories and poems, *Burning in Paradise*, won the Independent Book Publisher's Firecracker Poetry Book of the Year Award. His most recent book of poetry, *Blessing of the Hounds*, was published by 12 Gage Press in December, 2002.

IN TEXAS:

MICHAEL PARKS (“Sheriff”)

When Michael Parks made his film debut as a vagabond loner in the 1965 film, *The Wild Seed*, he seemed poised to become one of Hollywood's biggest stars. Subsequent appearances as a troubled ex-serviceman in the William Inge adaptation *Bus Riley's Back in Town* (1965), as Adam in John Huston's *The Bible* (1966), as an amoral seducer in *The Idol* 1966 and as a hippy kidnapper in *The Happening* (1968) seemed to confirm that promise.

In 1969, Parks reprised his *Wild Seed* wandering hipster persona in the hit television series *Then Came Bronson*. His theme song for the series, “Long Lonesome Highway,” which he composed and sang, became a chart-topping hit in the early seventies.

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).

Parks will also appear, playing a different character, in *Kill Bill (Vol. 2)*.

IN JAPAN:

SONNY CHIBA (“Hattori Hanzo”/Fight Choreographer: Kenjutsu)

Quentin Tarantino has described Shinichi “Sonny” Chiba as “the greatest actor to ever work in martial arts films.” References to Chiba’s work appear in several earlier Tarantino pictures. The central characters in *True Romance*, for example, attend a retro double feature of Chiba’s signature *Streetfighter* films of the 1970s. And the sonorous Biblical speeches delivered by Samuel L. Jackson in *Pulp Fiction* were inspired by the assassin-for-hire character played by Chiba on the Japanese television series *Shadow Warriors*, a formative influence on the future filmmaker when it was shown with subtitles on LA’s International Channel.

Sonny Chiba is one of Japan's best-known and most successful film and television stars. His prolific 40-year career has also earned him a significant international following. He rocketed to international fame in 1975 when a film known in Japan as *Sudden Attack: The Killing Fist*, was released internationally as *The Streetfighter*. Chiba made a strong impression in the title role as the ruthless mercenary Terry Surugy. Distributed in the United States by New Line Cinema, *The Streetfighter* quickly became a drive-in and grindhouse cult classic, one of the first movies ever to be rated X for violence alone.

Born in Fukuoka, Japan, Chiba became interested at an early age in traditional Japanese theater, gymnastics, and traditional *kyokushinkai* karate, described as “one of the harshest forms of an already harsh art.” At Nippon Taiiku University he studied under grandmaster Mas Oyama Koncho and was considered a contender for the Japanese Olympic team, until he was sidelined by a back injury.

Chiba entered the movie business in 1961, the winner of a New Faces contest at Toei Studios. The violent action film *The Bodyguard* (1970) was his first major hit and set the tone for his future career. He brought an animal ferocity to his fight scenes that eclipsed even Bruce Lee. Until well into the 1980s he specialized in playing amoral technicians of violence in long-running film series such as the *Gambler Cop*, *Golgo 13*, *Lone Wolf Gambler*, and *Streetfighter* franchises.

Apart from his appearances as the Streetfighter, Sonny Chiba is probably best known in the US for his role as a tough talking space captain in *Message From Space* (1978), director Kinji Fukasaku's Japanese *Star Wars* clone.

In recent years Chiba's screen image has mellowed considerably, beginning with his first-ever period samurai role, in *Shogun's Ninja*, in 1982. Subsequent successes include *Dragon Princess*, *Virus*, and *Legend of the Eight Samurai*. Chiba has starred in more than 125 films at Toei Studios and has won numerous acting awards in Japan for his dramatic film roles. He also starred in several long-running Japanese television series, including *Key Hunter*, and *Juubei Yagyu*.

CHIAKI KURIYAMA ("Go Go Yubari")

American fans of Asian action cinema will recognize Chiaki Kuriyama instantly from Kinji Fukasaku's 2000 cult classic *Battle Royale*, a savage SF satire in which teams of school-uniformed teens are pitted against each other in lethal elimination games. Kuriyama made an indelible impression as the fetching but ruthless flick-knife fighter Takako Chigusa.

Kuriyama was a successful child model who began acting in films and on television at age 11. A recent high school graduate with only four feature films and a handful of TV appearances to her credit, at nineteen she is a full-fledged teen idol in Japan, with all that implies in terms of custom-produced record albums and coffee-table photo collections..

Feature film appearances include *Toire no Hanako-san* (1995), the popular horror thriller *Shikoku (Dead Country)*, 1999), and the upcoming *Kamen gakuen (Persona)*. Her TV successes include the series *Multiple Personality Detective Psycho* (2000). Chiaki Kuriyama has studied classical ballet and gymnastics and cites *Trainspotting* and Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction* as her favorite movies.

JULIE DREYFUS ("Sofie Fatale")

Born in Paris, Julie Dreyfus is fluent not only French but also in English and Japanese, and works regularly in all three languages. She is a celebrity in Japan in the unique category of the "gaijin tarento," or "foreign talent."

Dreyfuss is well-known in Japan for her work on the television series *Strange Discoveries*, *Ryu's Bar*, and *Sense and Nonsense*, in the TV dramas *Don't Steal My Heart*, *Towards You*, and *Interactive Suspense*, and in the feature films *Faraway Sunset* and *Legal Aliens*. She is also a published author, photographer and television reporter.

Dreyfus also co-starred in the French feature films *Jean Moulin* (2002) and *Bathory* (2000) (a lesbian vampire drama). In the US she appeared in David Lynch's original ABC pilot version of *Mulholland Drive*, and had the recurring role of India Reyes in the popular syndicated series *The Crow*.

GORDON LIU (“Johnny Mo”)

Gordon Liu is one of the most recognizable and popular stars of Old School, Shaolin-style martial arts movies, a mainstay for over a decade at Hong Kong's legendary Shaw Brothers studio. Liu's close-shaven image as a stalwart martial monk, defending the downtrodden from imperialistic Manchu oppressors, was firmly established in his brother Liu Chia-liang's international hit *The 36th Chamber of Shaolin* (1978), known in its dubbed American version as *The Master Killer*.

Born in Guangdong (Canton) China, Gordon Chia-hui (known as Lau Kar-fei in his native Cantonese) was adopted as an infant into the fabled Liu Family of martial arts specialists, a clan that traces its pedigree in Hong Gar style kung fu all the way back to turn-of-century master (and frequent film subject) Wong Fei-hong. Liu was educated at English schools in Hong Kong and worked as a file clerk before joining the movie industry in the 1960s, to work with his brothers Liu Chia-yung, Liu Chia-jung, and Liu Chia-liang as a martial artist and stuntman.

Liu had his first major role in 1974 in Chang Cheh's *Shaolin Martial Arts*, and when Liu Chia-liang left his post as Chang's fight choreographer to direct on his own, Gordon became his favorite leading man. At Shaw Brothers, Gordon Liu starred in such classic Liu Chia-liang films as *The Challenge of the Masters* (1976), *Shaolin Challenges Ninja* (1978) and *Legendary Weapons of China* (1981), in addition to *The 36th Chamber* series of three films.

Gordon Liu is also a very deft and gifted comic actor, as witness his performances in Liu Chia-liang's landmark kung fu comedies *Dirty Ho* (1979) and *Return to the 36th Chamber* (1980). He has also directed several films, including the highly regarded *Shaolin and Wutang* (1984), a revisionist look at one of 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). With his brother, Liu Chia-liang, Gordon Liu recently completed the first new period martial arts film to be produced by Shaw Brothers in over two

decades, *Drunken Monkey*, an upcoming international release from Celestial Pictures and Miramax. BE SURE TO CHECK THIS!

Liu will also appear in *Kill Bill (Vol. 2)*, in a larger role, as the legendary “white eyebrow” kung fu master Pei Mei, who trains The Bride in Shaolin-style kung fu.

THE CRIME COUNCIL:

JUN KUNIMURA (“Boss Tanaka”)

Tanaka is a familiar face to Asian cinema fans from his appearances in several Hong Kong movies: *Somebody Up There Likes Me* (1991), Tony Au’s *Au Revoir Mon Amour* (1991), and John Woo’s *Hard Boiled* (1992). He also appeared in Ridley Scott’s *Black Rain* (1989, a gangster dram filmed in Japan. Kunimura has starred in a number of Japanese films, including the 1997 Cannes Prize winner *Moe No Suzaku*, Hideo Nakata’s *Chaos* (1999), *Tomie: Forbidden Fruit* (2002), and two films by the current Japanese *enfant terrible* Takeshi Miike, *Audition* (1999) and *Ichii: The Killer* (2001).

KAZUKI KITAMURA (“Boss Koji”)

A prolific character actor, Kazuki Kitamura has appeared in dozens of Japanese-language films including *Closing Time*, *Lunatic*, *Ley Lines*, *Sunflower*, and *Rendan*. His episodic television credits include roles in NHK’s *Regatta*, *Limit*, *Net Violence*, *Utsu Bara*, and *Hojo Tokimune*.

AKAJI MARO (“Boss Ozawa”)

Primarily a stage performer and dancer, Akaji Maro founded a theatre production group in 1964, Jokyo Gekijo, which became an influential school for actors and performance artists. In 1972, Maro established Dairakudakan, and became well known for his work as a dancer, actor and director. Dairakudakan has performed more than 50 works in 25 cities in nine countries, and received the Japan Dance Critics Association’s “Best Company” Award in 1974, 1987, 1996, and 1999.

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 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 for several 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 practice scenes for his acting classes.

After laboring for 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 to be 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 project imaginable: a story of a heist in which the robbery occurred off screen, pages and pages of dialog requiring only a single set. It was intended to be a super-cheap 16 mm with Tarantino and his Video Archives buddies playing all the parts.

Luckily, an 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 eventually a decent production budget.

Shot in less than a month in 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.

And 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 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 based on Elmore Leonard's 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. 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 a fresh corpse, *Pulp Fiction*. In the "Man From Hollywood" section of *Four Rooms* he was a blow-hard movie director. He also played bandit George Clooney's loony brother, Richard Gecko, in Robert Rodriguez's *From Dusk Till Dawn*, played 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 produced 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 Julia Sweeny's concert film *God said, 'HA!* (1999).

In 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*, which has been announced as a Miramax project for 2004.

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*, *Kill Bill – Vol. 1* and the upcoming *Kill Bill – Vol. 2*. 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, and Brian Koppelman and David Levien's *Knockaround Guys*.

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* for Sam Raimi's Renaissance Pictures. The shoot was a crash course in the hard realities of production. "It was the kind of thing," he says, "where you know you've survived the worst. It will never be this difficult again."

A year later, Bender met Quentin Tarantino at a BBQ at Scott Spiegel's house. The director had decided to make *Reservoir Dogs* on his own as a super low-budget, black and white, 16mm movie. Bender loved the script and said "Give me a month to set this up as a real movie." It was Bender who made *Dogs* possible by securing the involvement of actor Harvey Keitel.

Tarantino and Bender formed a production company together, A Band Apart, in 1993. The firm has produced films in which Tarantino was involved either as the director or as an actor

or both, including *Four Rooms* (1995), Robert Rodriguez's *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996), and several projects with other filmmakers, including *Fresh* and *Good Will Hunting*. Bender was 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 *The Great Raid*, with director John Dahl, and *Havana Nights: Dirty Dancing 2* and is currently in pre-production on *Casas de Carton*, a Spanish language film to be directed by Luis Mandoki. In 2004 he will produce, for A Band Apart and Miramax, Quentin Tarantino's epic war movie *Inglorious Bastards*.

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 could 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 there spent five years booking bands like 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 Tribeca, was named for the brothers' parents, Max and Miriam. The company's first release was the Monty Python cum 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 Jordan's *The Crying Game*, along with Quentin Tarantino's startling directorial debut, *Reservoir Dogs*, 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: *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 release, 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. Their sharp eye for high-quality material suitable for pick up has made them a leading distributor of films produced all over 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), 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.

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 worked 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*, an upcoming film biography starring Leonardo DiCaprio as billionaire Howard Hughes.

Additional credits include *Wag the Dog* (1997), *The Horse Whisperer* (1998), and *The Four Feathers* (2002).

SALLY MENKE (Editor)

Kill Bill marks 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 *D.C. Smalls* (2001).

YOHEI TANADA (Production Designer—Japan, China)

Who designs conventional sets and also anime and video games, and is also an acclaimed book designer, perfect to create the mix of traditional Asian and pop-modern that *Kill Bill* required. Tanada is famous in Japan 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.

Tanada 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 in 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 city Yen Town for Shunji Iwai's *Swallowtail Butterfly* (1997) garnered a Japan Academy Award nomination, and while working on a film in Hong Kong he worked on book design project with director Wong Kar-wei and cinematographer Christopher Doyle.

Additional credits include Isao Nakae'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 2002.

DAVID WASCO (Production Designer—United States, Mexico)

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

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 great 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.

Through their film work, 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.

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 home upon 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, Master Yuen began directing films for innovative 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). 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 completed work on the *Matrix Reloaded* and *The Matrix Revolutions*, both of which will be released this year.

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*. His most recent album is 2001’s *RZA as Bobby Digital: Digital Bullett*.

PRODUCTION I.G (Animé Sequence Production)

One of the top studios in the field of animé (Japanese animation), Production I.G. was founded in 1987 by two legendary figures in the field, producer and director Mitsuhsa Ishikawa and character designer Takayuki Goto. Known for coupling meticulous technical quality with unsurpassed imaginative flair.

After producing several groundbreaking projects in collaboration with other companies, including the theatrical features *Ghost in the Shell* (1996), the Original Animation Video (QAV) *Mobile Police Patlabor* (1990), and the fan-favorite TV series *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (1995), I.G. moved into original production with the feature *Jin-Roh: The Wolf Brigade* (1998), the CGI-hybrid OAV *Blood: The Last Vampire* (2000) and the series *Kaidomaru*.

In addition to its feature, original video, and television work, Production I.G creates games for Sony Playstation, Namco, Sega Saturn, and Microsoft Xbox. The company’s most ambitious current project is the theatrical sequel *Innocence: Ghost in the Shell*.

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—with *Kill Bill (Vol. 2)* co-star Michael Jai White in the title role. They have also worked on James Cameron's *Aliens* (1986), Steven Spielberg's *Amistad* (1977), Rob Reiner's *Misery* (1990), 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*.