

# Chan redeems Hong Kong cinema

By Jessa Bohrer-Clancy  
Freelance Reporter

It's good to know that in the world of the action film, at least one of the two giants of the Hong Kong cinema didn't sell out.

John Woo's *Broken Arrow* wasn't just broken. It was downright limp. Woo came out of Hong Kong like a typhoon, threatening to turn the

traditional American action film on its pathetic head.

Instead he made *Broken Arrow*.

Woo managed to fool the movie critics into thinking it was great, but if you compare it to his previous masterpieces, *Broken Arrow* was boring, trite and contrived.

Don't get me wrong — I'm not trying to play up the "cooler than thou" syndrome by saying that Woo is a sellout and he sucks

because everyone loves him.

No, I'm just pissed because I wasted three bucks on a crappy film when I was expecting so much more from a director who is capable of so much more.

But enough of that. I'm just glad Jackie Chan is still the same as he ever was, if not better now that most Americans can finally appreciate his work.

He is still insane, and he is still brilliant.

Chan is perhaps best known for the amazing stuntwork in his films. And he does every stunt himself. Judging from his previous work, Chan must possess more lives than nine of those proverbial cats.

Not only is his stuntwork fantastic, but his mastery of martial arts is incredible. Van-

Damme, Seagal, Norris? Weenies.

The only individual who could compare to Chan is Bruce Lee. But that would be like comparing Satriani to Hendrix; both are incredible, it's just that one of them is a god.

Chan also has a rare comic ability that conjures up images of Charlie Chaplin with a hell of a flying kick.

So of course, you're probably asking yourself, "If he's so great, then where's he been?"

Good question. He tried to break into the American cinema in the 1980s with *The Big Brawl*, but we were too busy watching *Top Gun* to notice. So he went back to Hong Kong, and the art house circuit would occasionally get a hold of one of his films.

Chan finally made it back to the states with *Rumble in the Bronx*, although it was filmed in Vancouver, B.C. with about two minutes of stock footage from New York. But who cares?

And if you're looking for an intricate plot and character development, go read some of that Jane Austen crap.

The film is also dubbed. Why, who knows? Half the actors are speaking English anyway, but the dubbing just adds to the zany feel of the film.

The stunts are amazing. Chan is hilarious and the fight scenes are breathtaking. Perhaps the funniest aspect though, is that Chan on occasion tries to be serious and gives the bad guys lessons in morality — after he kicks the crap out of them — and states that he wishes they could all just get together and drink tea.

It doesn't work in the manner Chan intended, but it's a riot all the same.

Skip *Broken Arrow* if you haven't seen it yet, and if you've already wasted money on it, redeem yourself by seeing *Rumble in the Bronx*.

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## Playhouse: Theater generates little profit

Continued from Page 1

No big money is generated by the Pocket shows, which typically run for one weekend before giving up the stage to another play the next week.

The Pocket has other objectives, says Siouxsie Suarez, co-chair of the Playhouse board. The Playhouse, which has been around since the 70s, has always known what it wanted to accomplish.

"Our purpose is to perform theater for students by students," Suarez said.

Indeed, the theater's primary claim to fame is that everything is done by students, from the sets and lights to the acting and directing. Often-

times, students even write the plays.

"[The Pocket] allows students to do what graduate students and faculty usually do," Suarez said.

Being involved in a Pocket show can be very rewarding, said co-chair Kevin Trudeau. "People can do things they couldn't do anywhere else on campus," he said.

Indeed, it would be hard to find George Costanza in a toga or Homer Simpson as a troubled English monarch anywhere—except the Pocket.

True to form, the theater blended contemporary television with classic plays last weekend in *Star Trek: The*

*Chekov Generation and Other Tales from the Video Void*. Besides *Oedipus George* and *Homer V*, such bizarre hybrids as *Our Town 90210* and *Waiting For Beavis* were brought to life.

With an original script by graduate student Heather Lindsley and directed by Suarez, *Chekov* seemed to epitomize all the Pocket can offer to students: original theater and the opportunity to participate in it.

"[The Pocket] is like a little treasure the University is lucky to have," Suarez said. "But it's also one that many students aren't aware they have."

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