

**STRAND
RELEASING**

presents

TWILIGHT'S KISS

A FILM BY
RAY YEUNG

Starring Tai Bo and Ben Yuen

PRESS NOTES

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Berlin International Film Festival
Busan International Film Festival
Frameline International Film Festival
San Francisco Film Festival

Country of Origin: Hong Kong
Format: DCP/2.35/Color
Sound: 5.1 Surround
Running Time: 92 minutes
Genre: Drama
Not Rated
In Cantonese with English Subtitles

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LOGLINE

Now in their twilight years, two men must choose between their desires for each other or the families they have proudly created.

SYNOPSIS

TWILIGHT'S KISS (SUK SUK) presents the story of two closeted married men in their twilight years. One day PAK, 70, a taxi driver who refuses to retire, meets HOI, 65, a retired single father, in a park. Despite years of societal and personal pressure, they are proud of the families they have created through hard work and determination. Yet in that brief initial encounter, something is unleashed in them which had been suppressed for so many years. As both men recount and recall their personal histories, they also contemplate a possible future together.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Today in Hong Kong the LGBT community is generally more open and the society is more accepting of gay rights. However, older gay men have not been able to enjoy these changes due to their adherence to strict traditional cultural values and close family ties. From the viewpoint of the younger and more westernized generation, these men seem repressed, sad and lacking in the courage to be themselves.

Many of these older gay men, who had abandoned their own natures and desires to fulfil their duties as sons continuing the family name, have established close and rewarding blood ties to the families they created. Some of these ties might be full of tension and lacking warmth, but some are close with mutual respect and appreciation. For these men, the 'love' from their families is the only reward they had, their life's ultimate goal and achievement. Therefore to 'come out' as an older man is a betrayal of their lives' work and self-sacrifice.

Due to their individual circumstances, both Pak and Hoi have difficult decisions to make; Pak seems naive and hesitant at the beginning but slowly sheds his tentativeness until the final moment; Hoi seems self-assured on the outside but traditional and conservative when it comes to the church. Their apparent surface differences in experiences and attitudes hide a surprising similarity in values and views. The final question is whether they can embrace their true selves and fall in love or go back to the security, comfort and social acceptance of their families.

Suk Suk (Twilight's Kiss) is essentially a love story about two men falling in love for the first time in their 70s. However, the film will portray the dilemmas these characters face and the struggles they encounter without judging their choices. The story shows the care and love they receive from their families, and why it is hard for them to be who they truly want to be.

On a more abstract level, the film examines the idea of 'what is home?' Does the concept of home only apply to families? Can it also apply to a place where one feels most 'at home' and comfortable? Where is home? Is it in the house you share with your immediate family? Or is it with like-minded people who share the same space without putting up any pretence?

In order to explore this concept of 'home', I have put the characters in different settings, to reflect and question where they feel most 'at home.' Take Pak, our main protagonist, for example. He lives with his wife for over 40 years and they have built a family together. He goes home for dinner every night and is 'king of his own castle.' However, he has hidden a secret from his wife throughout their lives together and never truly feels himself there.

Pak spends most of his life in his taxi. He treats his car like his home; it is the only place where he can truly be himself. The taxi is his sanctuary, his place of work and also his means to seek

pleasure. So, is his taxi truly his home?

Hoi, the other main character, lives with his son, but there is a considerable emotional distance between them. The relationship is somewhat cold and there is an elephant in the room, which neither would ever address. Hoi's son keeps asking his father to be a better Christian, maybe he hopes his father will return to God's home and become free of sin and forgiven?

For Hoi he is possibly more relaxed with his friends at the Mature Tongzhi Society. Or perhaps when he is in the gay sauna where the men can be free for a short moment? The gay group raises the question of an old people's home for gay men, is this the ideal home they all crave for?

Suk Suk (Twilight's Kiss) intends to reflect the condition and explore the difficulties of these gay men; and open a dialogue with the public regarding their circumstances and needs.

RAY YEUNG | BIOGRAPHY

Ray Yeung's first feature film, *Cut Sleeve Boys*, premiered at the Rotterdam International Film Festival in 2005. The film won Best Feature at the Outfest Fusion Festival in Los Angeles and Best Actor for Chowee Leow at the Madrid Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

Regent Releasing distributed *Cut Sleeve Boys* in the U.S. The movie was theatrically released in various cities across America including Chicago and Los Angeles. It was also released in cinemas in Thailand, Taiwan and the Philippines. The movie is available on Netflix in the US and UK; the DVD was released in France, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines, United Kingdom and America.

Ray's second feature, the award-winning *Front Cover* premiered at the Seattle International Film Festival 2015, and was in Competition at the Chicago International Film Festival. It was the Closing Film for the Asian American International Film Festival in New York in 2016. *Front Cover* won Best Screenplay at the FilmOut San Diego LGBT Film Festival, Jury Award for Best Domestic Feature at the Outflix Film Festival in Memphis and Audience Award at the Boston Asian American Film Festival.

Strand Releasing is the distributor for *Front Cover* in North America. The film enjoyed a theatrical release in New York City, where the run was extended for two additional weeks. It was also released in Los Angeles, where the run was extended for a second week. *Front Cover* then opened in San Francisco, Honolulu and Washington DC. The cinematic release in North America made *Front Cover* eligible to be considered for 2016 Best Picture at the 89th Academy Awards.

Sahamongkolfilm International Co, Ltd. released the movie in four cinemas in Bangkok for two weeks.

Edko Films released *Front Cover* in Hong Kong in both IFC Palace Cinema and Broadway Cinematheque. The film played for three months, including screening during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Ray has also written and directed eight short films, *Yellow Fever*, which won Best Short at the Madrid Lesbian and Gay Film Festival and is being distributed by Frameline Distribution in the US and the British Film Institute in the UK. *Yellow Fever* is feature in a DVD compilation titled *Asian Queer Shorts*, distributed by Frameline Distribution. Other shorts include *A Bridge to the*

Past, which was commissioned by the London Arts Council and *Paper Wrap Fire*, which won Best Short at the New Hampshire Film Festival.

Ray has also directed two plays, which were staged in London and Hong Kong: *Banana Skin*, written by Ray, and *The Third Sex*, written by his long-time collaborator Chowee Leow.

As a director and art director for television commercials, Ray has worked for clients including 7-Eleven, Coca-Cola, McDonald's and HSBC.

Ray is a Columbia University MFA graduate. He is the Chairman of the Hong Kong Lesbian and Gay Film Festival since 2000, currently the longest running lesbian and gay film festival in Asia.

RAY YEUNG | FILMOGRAPHY

- 2019** *Twilight's Kiss (Suk Suk)* - Feature
- 2015** *Front Cover* - Feature
- 2012** *Paper Wrap Fire* - Short
- 2011** *Entwine* - Short
- 2010** *Derek and Lucas* - Short
- 2009** *Homecooking* - Short
- 2008** *Doggy... Doggy* - Short
- 2005** *Cut Sleeve Boys* - Feature
- 1998** *Yellow Fever* - Short
- 1996** *A Bridge to the Past* - Short
- 1995** *A Chink in the Armour* - Short

MICHAEL J. WERNER | PRODUCER

Michael J. Werner is a long-time, experienced, multi-faceted film industry executive having served in a variety of roles including Producer, Executive producer, foreign sales agent, financier and distributor. He has served on numerous industry and Festival advisory bodies/boards in Asia including, Hong Kong's HAF and Asian Film Awards, Screen Singapore, Busan, Singapore's MDA, and the Macau International Film Festival and Awards. He is a voting member of the Motion Picture academy in the US (Executive Branch). Michael was one of the partners in the pioneering sales company, Fortissimo Films, until his departure in 2016.

MICHAEL J. WERNER | SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2013** *The Grandmaster* by Wong Kar Wai
- 2010** *Norwegian Wood* by Tran Anh Hung
- 2008** *Tokyo Sonata* by Kiyoshi Kurosawa
- 2006** *I Don't Want to Sleep Alone* by Tsai Ming Liang
- 2006** *Shortbus* by John Cameron Mitchell
- 2006** *Syndromes and a Century* by Apichatpong Weerasethakul
- 2006** *Invisible Waves* by Pen-Ek Ratanaruang
- 2004** *Mysterious Skin* by Gregg Araki

2003 *The Tulse Luper Suitcase: Antwerp* by Peter Greenaway
2002 *Springtime in a Small Town* by Tian Zhuang Zhuang
2002 *Vampire Hunters* by Tsui Hark
2002 *Party Monster* by Fenton Bailey & Randy Barbato
2000 *The Goddess of 67* by Clara Law

TERESA KWONG | PRODUCER

Teresa Kwong is a promoter, curator and producer for film and media arts. She has been producing feature films with independent filmmakers in Hong Kong and China since 2006. She was selected to participate in the renowned Produire au Sud Workshop 2008 - Nantes (France) and Rotterdam Producer Lab 2013 for co-production. Projects she produced include *Addicted to Love* (directed by Liu Hao, 2010), *Big Blue Lake* (directed by Tsang Tsui Shan, 2011), *Flowing Stories* (feature documentary by Tsang Tsui Shan, 2014), *Dot 2 Dot* (directed by Amos Why, 2014) and *Napping Kid* (Amos Why, 2018).

SANDY YIP | PRODUCER

Sandy Wai Shan Yip has media experience in the fields of journalism and finance. She has also been a supplement journalist and an editor. Her involvement in film production started in 2008. Her projects include *A Decade of Love: Microsex Office*; *All About Love*; *Love Is The Only Answer*; *A Simple Life* and *Kung Fu Killer*. Film project that have been produced in recent years include: *Napping Kid*, *Pandora's Box* (Online-TV drama) and *Our Time Will Come*.

CHOWEE LEOW | PRODUCER

Chowee Leow has worked as an actor and has been Ray Yeung's producing partner since their first feature together *Cut Sleeve Boys* (2005) which he also starred in. This was followed by *Front Cover* (2015) and several short films including *Paper Wrap Fire* (2012), *Entwine* (2011) and *Doggy Doggy* (2008). He was the associate producer on *The Blue Mansion* (2009) and co-producer on *Revenge of the Pontianak* (2019) both directed by Glen Goei. Chowee was the subject of a documentary *Deconstructing Zoe* (2016) directed by Rosa Fong and has toured globally with his one man show *Occasional Orchid*, directed by Ivan Heng.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

TAI BO | PAK

Tai Bo (Cheung Ka-Nin) is an established actor both in Hong Kong and Taiwan. He started his career in Hong Kong and has appeared in many productions during the 80s and 90s, most notably in his collaborations with Jacky Chan in *Police Story* (1985), *Project A2* (1987), *Police Story II* (1988) and *Drunken Master II* (1994). In 1984 he was nominated for Taiwan Golden Horse Award for his performance in *Gung Buk*. He won the Golden Horse Award for Best

Supporting Actor for *The Cabbie* in 2000. For the same role he was also awarded the Taipei Film Award. In 2007 he won the Taiwan Golden Bell Award for the television series *Sweet Relationship*. Tai Bo has a memorable role in Hou Hsiao-Hsien's *A City of Sadness* (1989).

BEN YUEN | HOI

Ben Yuen (Yuen Fu-Wah Ben) started his career in theater. He was a resident actor for Chung Ying Theater Company during the 80s and 90s. Ben has appeared in many theater productions including local plays as well as classics. In 1997 he won the Hong Kong Federation of Drama Best Supporting Actor Award for *Professional*. He returned to study in the HK Academy for Performing Arts in 2009 and graduated with a Master Degree in Directing. Ben has also worked extensively in films, he has appeared in Stephen Chow's *King of Comedy* (1999), Ann Hui's *Night and Fog* (2009) and Wong Kar-Wai's *2046* (2004). Ben won the Golden Horse Award and Hong Kong Film Award for Best Supporting Actor for his role in *Tracey* (2018). He also received a Best Supporting Actor nomination at the HK Drama Awards for his role in the comedy play *Beyond Relationships*.

AU GA MAN PATRA | CHING

A veteran stage actress in the Hong Kong theater scene, Patra has appeared in a variety of roles in numerous productions with different theatre troupes in Hong Kong. She was awarded Best Actress by the Hong Kong Federation of Drama Societies three times for her work in *Shirley Valentine* (1994), *Sentimental Journey* (2000) and *Oscar et la dame Rose* (2008). *Sentimental Journey* broke HK records with its 100 performance run. It was remounted for a six-week revival in 2005. Patra continues to be active in the theater scene and can be seen in four productions in 2019.

LO CHUN YIP | WAN

Lo Chun Yip (Siuyea) graduated from City University Hong Kong with a degree in films. He is an independent filmmaker as well as an actor. He has directed seven shorts, which have screened and won awards in film festivals throughout Asia. His first feature documentary *Days After n Coming* (2011) was shown in both HK Indie Film Festival and HK International Film Festival. He has been acting since 2011 and has appeared in films such as *Beside(s) Happiness* (2011) and *No. 1 Chung Ying Street* (2018), which he received critical praises.

KONG TO | CHIU

Although known for his work as a TV actor, Kong actually started his career in Chinese opera. In the early 1960s, he performed with the Fu-Shan Cantonese Opera Troupe. In 1964, he joined Su Luen Film Company and appeared in over 15 films during that era. He switched to television in the mid-70s and has appeared in over 100 TV series; including successful shows such as *A House Is Not a Home* (1977) and *My Date with a Vampire* (1998). After 35 years of working with ATV, Kong retired in 2013 and now only participates in projects he is passionate about.

LAM YIU SING | EDMOND

Lam was discovered in a football pitch when he was 17 years old. His first role was *High Noon* (2008). From then on he has appeared in films including *Dream Home* (2010), *Love in a Puff* (2010), and *Diva* (2012). Lam's breakthrough role came in 2016, when he was cast as a young baseball player in *Weeds on Fire*. This low budget independent film was a box office success. Since then, Lam has had major roles in features such as *House of Rising Sons* (2018) and *Theory of Ambitions* (2019).

PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

CHANG SUK PING WILLIAM | EDITING SUPERVISOR

William is a veteran Hong Kong Film editor, costume designer, production designer and art director. He has collaborated with many significant Chinese film directors such as Wong Kar-Wai, Chen-Kaige, Tsui Hark, Zhang Yimou and Stanley Kwan. He has won numerous international awards for Best Art Direction, Best Costume Design and Best Editing. William is the editor of *Chungking Express* (1994), *Happy Together* (1997), *Lan Yu* (2001) and *2046* (2004). He was awarded the Cannes International Film Festival Technical Grand Prize for *In The Mood For Love* (2000); and in 2015 he received an American Academy Award nomination for Best Costume Design for Wong's *The Grandmaster* (2013).

POON YICK SUM ALBERT | PRODUCTION DESIGNER AND COSTUME DESIGNER

Albert was born in Hong Kong and finished his education at the Emily Carr University of Art and Design in Canada, majoring in painting. He was nominated for the Hong Kong Film Awards for Production Design and Costume Design for *Ordinary Heroes* (in competition - Berlin Film Festival directed by Ann Hui). For the same film, Albert won the Golden Horse Awards in Taiwan. In 1999, he was nominated for the Technical Grand Prize for *Love Will Tear Us Apart* (in competition at the Cannes Film Festival directed by Yu Lik Wai). He was worked extensively as a production designer; films include *The Way We Are* (Winner of Best Director - Hong Kong Film Awards directed by Ann Hui). Albert's directorial film debut *Still* (2004) was featured in the Torino International Film Festival in Italy.

MING KAI LEUNG | CINEMATOGRAPHER

Ming Kai Leung has shot more than a dozen features and numerous shorts around the world. Features include Sylvia Chang's *Murmur of the Hearts*, which opened the Hong Kong International Film Festival; Anocha Suwichakornpong's *By The Time It Gets Dark* (Locarno and Toronto International Film Festivals; four different Thai Best Picture of the Year awards; a Thai nomination for Best Cinematography); and Johnny Ma's *Old Stone* (Berlin, Toronto International Film Festivals; a Canadian nomination for Best Cinematography). Ming Kai

competed in the debut feature section of Poland's Plus Camerimage, the International Festival for the Art of Cinematography. While attending the Busan Asian Film Academy, he won the Best Performance Award, as well as Technicolor's post-production package. He received his MFA in film from Columbia University in New York, where he won the school's Best Cinematography award three times. Ming Kai previously attained a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Hong Kong.

VERONICA LEE | FILM COMPOSER

Veronica Lee graduated from the Music Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She has been involved in music composition for movies, advertisements, live stage performances, concerts, etc., and is currently one of the music producers at Click Music Hong Kong. She has composed for numerous feature films, including *The Empty Hands*, *Napping Kid*, *Diva* and *Ming Ming*. Her work on *The Midnight After*, secured the "Best Original Film Score" award at the 34th Hong Kong Film Awards. Veronica has worked together with many famous Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop singers. She is an active member of the independent music industry and has formed her own band to further create music of different genres.

NEW VOICE FILM PRODUCTIONS, LTD.

New Voice Film Productions Ltd. is a newly established independent film company based in Hong Kong committed to seeking excellence and original voices in independent film. Specializing in development, production and financing of independent feature films and shorts, the New Voice brand was founded in 2012 in New York City by Writer/Director/Producer Ray Yeung and his producing partner, Stan Guingon, as New Voice Production Inc. New Voice has produced the award-winning feature film *Front Cover* and 5 short films. The New Voice brand was brought to Hong Kong in order to convey stories rarely explored in film and to express them from a truly unique perspective.

CAST

**Pak
Hoi
Ching
Wan
Chiu
Edmond**

Tai Bo
Ben Yuen
Au Ga Man Patra
Lo Chun Yip
Kong To
Lam Yiu Sing

CREW

**Directed by
Written by
Cinematographer
Production Designer
Costume Designer
Editing Supervisor
Editor
Composer
Producers

Executive Producers**

Ray Yeung
Ray Yeung
Ming Kai Leung
Poon Yick Sum Albert
Poon Yick Sum Albert
Chang Suk Ping William
Chan Chui Hing Nose
Veronica Lee
Michael J. Werner, Teresa Kwong,
Sandy Wai Shan Yip, Chowee Leow
Ray Yeung, Stan Guingon

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