

CJ Entertainment presents

A Teddy Zee Production

A FILM BY MICHAEL KANG

WEST 32ND



Starring

**John Cho
Jun Kim
Grace Park
Jane Kim
and
Jun Ho Jeong**

35mm Color Dolby 5.1
Running time: 91 minutes

***2007 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL
World Premiere – World Narrative Competition***

PRESS CONTACTS DURING 2007 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL:

FAT DOT

Tel: 212.691.4224

Weiman Seid (WeimanSeid@fatdot.net)

Jenny Lawhorn (JennyLawhorn@fatdot.net)

Steven Carbajal (StevenCarbajal@fatdot.net)

WEST 32ND

THE CAST

John Cho.....	John Kim
Jun Kim.....	Mike Juhn
Jun Ho Jeoung.....	Jin Ho Chun
Grace Park.....	Lila Lee
Jane Kim.....	Suki Kim
Lanny Joon.....	Saeng
Dante Han.....	Danny
Chil Kong.....	Park
Hans Kim.....	Kyuc
Haerry Kim.....	Mama San
Joe Forbrich.....	Frank Ferenti
Manny Siviero.....	Stunt Coordinator

Writing credit:

Screenplay by Edmund Lee and Michael Kang

THE FILMMAKERS

Michael Kang.....	Director
Teddy Zee.....	Producer
Miky Lee.....	Producer
Jamin O'Brien.....	Executive Producer
Ted Kim.....	Executive Producer
Joo Sung Kim.....	Executive Producer
Sabine Schenk.....	Co-Producer
Joon Hwan Choi.....	Co-Producer
Susan Shopmaker.....	Casting Director
Simon Cuoll.....	Cinematographer
David Leonard.....	Editor
Carol Strober.....	Production Designer
Anu Schwartz.....	Art Director
Kitty Boots.....	Costume Designer
Robin Urdang.....	Music Supervisor
Nathan Larson.....	Composer
David van Slyke.....	Sound Designer
Pic Agency.....	Title Design

WEST 32ND

LOGLINE

A young lawyer gets mixed up with Korean gangsters in New York City when he tries to help a young client.

SYNOPSIS

When John, an ambitious young lawyer, takes on a pro bono case to exonerate a fourteen-year-old boy from a first-degree murder charge, he finds a world he never knew existed in the underbelly of Manhattan.

Infiltrating the knotty and complex realm of organized crime to search for clues, he meets his match, Mike, a rising soldier in the syndicate. Recognizing John's determination and daring, Mike brings John into his confidence, furtively drawing him into his own plans to rise within the underworld. Though they become fast friends, they just as quickly end up trying to use each other as they discover they'll both do anything to win.

WEST 32ND

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

By Michael Kang

Ever since moving to New York City in 1989, I have been interested in the Korean American community and my relationship to it. I grew up in the suburbs of New England and my exposure to the Korean community was mainly through the church and through the scattered amount of Korean friends of my parents. When I moved to New York, I found a rich Korean community that both attracted me and alienated me. "West 32nd" came from wanting to explore this relationship.

The initial inspiration for the story came from an actual case I had heard about through a friend who worked for a non-profit organization that helped Asian American youth. The case involved a murder that occurred in New York in which a young boy was forced into a confession for a crime he did not commit. Around the same time, I had met my writing partner Edmund Lee who was a reporter at the Village Voice. He had been working on an expose of Korean American gang culture. After discussing the topics, the match seemed perfect.

I have always loved crime dramas. The challenge for me was tackling this form while maintaining what I find key in all good stories e.g. a deeper exploration of characters. First and foremost the film is a crime story, but the heart of the drama comes from maneuvering through this genre from a unique and personal perspective.

From my own sense of alienation from the community, the character of John Kim was born, a 2nd generation Korean American lawyer who is desperate to get acceptance in the mainstream white culture. John's drive to succeed sends him into the darker underworld of Korean American gang culture. Completely alien to this world and at the same time inherently linked to it, John must confront his own sense of identity.

To counter-balance John, Mike Juhn, a mid-level gangster who is equally driven to find his own place in the criminal world, was created. Despite being steeped in Korean culture, Mike is still without a sense of his own place in society.

These two characters become dependant on one another as their relationship deepens. At times, they try to work together but ultimately they come to a tragic impasse. This becomes a metaphor for the deeper issue of resolving the relationship between the 2nd Generation and 1.5 Generation Korean Americans and ultimately their relationship to Korean culture as a whole.

Stylistically, the film pays homage to classic 1970's films like "Serpico" and "Dog Day Afternoon." With the changing landscape of New York over the past two decades, I felt that the gritty urban experience that made those films so rich only truly still exists in the outer boroughs and specifically Flushing, Queens. In addition, the emergence of new Korean cinema with films like "Oldboy" and "A Bittersweet Life" has inspired a bold aesthetic angle in capturing the New York Korean community. My goal is that this film can act as the bridge between Korean and American cinema.

WEST 32ND

WRITER'S STATEMENT

By Co-Writer Edmund J. Lee

As a reporter for The Village Voice in the late Nineties, I uncovered a story about a pair of Korean New York City Police detectives who were beating up Korean teens in Flushing, Queens. It was a difficult story to prove, but I was able to interview a number of Korean kids who claimed they were beat up in the interrogation room by these detectives. The police said it was all part of their efforts to clean up an emerging gang element in the Korean and Chinese communities. The teens, of course, said there was no such thing.

As I dug deeper, I discovered that there was, indeed, more to these detectives, who, like me, were second generation Korean Americans. When pressed, sources confessed that there was, in fact, a sprouting Korean gang element in New York, which was loosely tied to the underworld back in Korea. Even more shockingly, it was revealed to me that the two detectives were somehow connected to that system.

After years of tracking down sources, conducting interviews, and even speaking to the detectives themselves, I discovered a deep and intricate system of Korean organized crime in the city. They were not nearly as well organized as the usual mob outfits, but that was partly by design. I also became aware that, despite what mainstream America perceived about Korean immigrants, all was not well within. Korean teens were, indeed, being targeted by said crime groups and were drawn into their ranks.

This was not a story I could prove. There were no paper trails and sources were few and far between. But it was a story that I desperately wanted to tell.

One summer, as part of an article I was researching on Asian American filmmakers, I contacted Michael Kang, who was then directing film shorts and showing them in New York. We hit it off, having similar backgrounds and impressions of moviemaking. In the course of our discussions, I mentioned the difficulty I was having trying to nail down a story on Korean organized crime. He suggested we turn it into a movie.

Though I was hesitant at first, the more I considered the notion, the more I realized that a fictional account would somehow make for a more compelling story. We did not set out to do a documentary; we wanted to fashion a real narrative, a compelling drama that followed a movie format but which would be unique in its details -- details that would ring true, and not just to Korean moviegoers, but to anybody interested in a good old-fashioned detective story.

After going through many drafts, and after Mike had already cut his first feature film, The Motel, which debuted at the Sundance Film Festival, we finalized a script of the story I had researched years ago, West 32nd. This movie is not based on a true story, but it is rooted in everyday reality. It is a story that delves into the conflict between a person's selfish motives and his need for human contact. It is a New York story, a needful tale about Korean American life.

WEST 32ND

Cast Bios

John Cho (John Kim)

It's not every day that an unknown actor lands a role that will allow him to deliver a line that enters into the public lexicon and still manages to avoid the "Where's the beef?" syndrome of being forever linked with the resulting catch phrase, but with his role as the "MILF" guy in the breakout comedy *American Pie*, actor John Cho somehow managed to do just that. With stage skills that aren't limited to Shakespeare (Cho spends his off-time touring with his band *Left of Zed*) and a killer sense of comic timing onscreen, the fresh-faced Korean actor has transcended his status as Asian-American "It" boy to become one of the most promising stars of his generation. A move from Korea to Los Angeles found young Cho's interest in acting piqued when he began studying English literature at the University of California, Berkeley, and after taking to the boards in a Berkeley Repertory Theater production of *The Woman Warrior* (which would subsequently move to Boston's Huntington Theater and Los Angeles' James Doolittle Theater), the up-and-coming talent made his screen debut in director Justin Lin's decidedly bizarre 1997 feature *Shopping for Fangs*.

Subsequent years found Cho essaying supporting roles in such high-profile features as *Wag the Dog* and *Bowfinger*, with his breakout role in *American Pie* preceding roles in such widely seen films as *Bowfinger*, *American Beauty*, *Evolution*, and the Chris Rock comedy *Down to Earth*. Though the roles may not have offered Cho the most memorable parts, they kept him familiar with audiences until he reprised his most famous role to date in the hit sequel *American Pie 2*. In 2002, Cho truly got to show his talent onscreen with a substantial role in *Shopping for Fangs* and director Lin's critically acclaimed indie effort *Better Luck Tomorrow*. Following a crew of high-school-aged Asian-Americans who use their reputations as studious bookworms to mask their criminal activities, the movie proved without a doubt that Cho had what it took to make it in film. More supporting roles in *Big Fat Liar* and *Solaris* were quick to follow, and after rounding out the "American" trilogy in *American Wedding*, it was burger time for Cho as he played one of the titular characters (opposite Van Wilder's Kal Penn) in the 2004 comedy *Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle*. (Jason Buchanan, *All Movie Guide*)

Jun Sung Kim (Mike Juhn)

Jun Sung Kim is making his U.S debut starring in the gritty, chilling gangster drama, *West 32nd*. The groundbreaking investment made by CJ Entertainment to expand its touch into America has brought together an impressive group of artists spanning Korea and America. Jun's considerable crossover appeal due to his multi-ethnic, multilingual background made him the ideal choice to star in this movie.

Jun was born and raised in Hong Kong and he is fluent in Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, and English. He attended Wake Forest University majoring in philosophy and worked as a stockbroker before becoming an actor.

Jun's initial foray into acting came when a friend asked him to join the production of 'The Rocky Horror Picture Show' playing in Korea. The experience affirmed his passion for acting and performing therefore setting him on his journey to pursue acting full-time.

Grace Park (Lila Lee)

Grace Park is a Canadian-American actress of Korean descent. She is best known as Boomer (and the various iterations of Number Eight, a humanoid Cylon) on Battlestar Galactica, as well as Shannon Ng in the Canadian television series teen soap Edgemont.

Born in Los Angeles, California, Park and her family moved to Canada when she was 22 months old. Grace Park graduated from Magee Secondary in 1992, holds a degree in psychology from the University of British Columbia and speaks English and Korean, along with some French and Cantonese. She was named #93 in Maxim Online's 2006 Hot 100 List.

Park has a role in the movie West 32nd, a gritty, crime thriller dealing with NYC's Korean underworld.

She appeared as Lt. Sandra Telfair in Electronic Arts' Command & Conquer 3: Tiberium Wars, along with her Battlestar Galactica co-star, Tricia Helfer.

Jane Kim (Suki Kim)

In addition to co-starring in West 32nd Street, Jane has completed the film Shanghai Hotel. Jane co-stars in Tie a Yellow Ribbon directed by Joy Dietrich. At the end of last year, Jane co-starred in Feel with Billy Baldwin. That same year, she appeared in Cutting Room Floor.

She began her acting career with parts on The Sopranos, Law and Order SVU, Third Watch, Guiding Light and As the World Turns. She was asked to screen test for the soap opera, "Passions" in L.A., but declined so she could focus on film.

She began working professionally in 2003 in New York. She's been seen in Crest white strips, Motrin, Nokia, Tylenol, Payless Shoes, Flumist, Aquafresh and etc. She began working as a print model and has booked many national campaigns. She has been seen in Clinique, Nike, Avon, Aveda, Garnier Nutrisse, Loreal, Koleston (European hair coloring), Tag Body Spray, Redken Hair, Nestle, American express, Verizon and etc.

She attended NYU Tisch School of the Arts and Stella Adler Conservatory with scholarships.

WEST 32ND

Filmmaker Bios

MICHAEL KANG (Director)

Michael Kang is a Korean American filmmaker. His feature film directorial debut "The Motel" which was produced by Indie veteran director Miguel Arteta (Chuck & Buck, The Good Girl) premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and an internationally premiered at the Pusan Film Festival. The film is currently available on DVD through Palm Pictures. "The Motel" is the recipient of the Humanitas Prize as well as three top jury prizes from the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival, The San Diego Asian Film Festival and The Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival . The film was also awarded the 2003 Sundance/NHK International Filmmaker's Award. In addition, Michael was a fellow at the Sundance Filmmakers Lab in 2002. Michael was honored with a residency at the prestigious MacDowell Colony. Most recently, Michael was awarded a fellowship with the ABC/DGA New Talent Television Directing Program. He also received the 2002 Geri Ashur Award in screenwriting through the New York Foundation for the Arts.

TEDDY ZEE (Producer)

Teddy Zee is President and founding partner of Ironpond, an entertainment company specializing in bringing Hollywood filmed entertainment to China and Asia while bringing Asian content to the world. Previously, he served as a top-level studio executive at Columbia Pictures and Paramount Pictures, presided over two very successful and prolific studio-based production companies, and ran his own independent television and movie company.

Despite the pressures of big box office returns and finding franchise movies, Zee championed Asian, Asian American, and minority talent. Zee was the first to introduce Chow Yun Fat to Hollywood. His project CHARLIE'S ANGELS was a feature film-spring board for Lucy Liu. He worked with Hong Kong filmmakers John Woo, Stephen Chow and Ringo Lam long before it was fashionable. Zee promoted the directorial debuts of Antoine Fuqua and Alice Wu as well as giving Jennifer Lopez and Damon Wayans their first starring movie roles.

2005 marked Teddy Zee's 20th anniversary in the film industry, a year in which HITCH and SAVING FACE were released. Both were produced by Zee, who served as President of Overbrook Films. HITCH, a Columbia Pictures release starring Will Smith, Eva Mendes and Kevin James was one of the year's biggest hits, earning over \$360 million in worldwide ticket sales. In addition, SAVING FACE, the independently produced feature

starring Joan Chen was picked up by Sony Pictures Classics and won the prestigious Audience Award at the 2005 Golden Horse Awards, Taiwan's Oscar equivalent.

Zee is Executive Producer of PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS, a project he found and brought to the attention of Will Smith.

Zee is the Executive Producer and on-air host for the AZN TV talk show, DIM SUM WITH TEDDY ZEE. The show's pilot featured conversations with Daniel Dae Kim from the hit ABC series LOST. Zee's other show for AZN is a documentary that follows the exploits of four Asian American high school seniors as they chase their dreams of getting into Ivy League colleges. The show will air this Fall.

Zee was President of Davis Entertainment where he was Executive Producer on LIFE OR SOMETHING LIKE IT, the New Regency release starring Angelina Jolie and was involved in the Jennifer Love Hewitt comedy HEARTBREAKERS.

Prior to heading up Overbrook Films and Davis Entertainment, Zee was Executive Vice President, Production, at Columbia Pictures where he oversaw such films as *CHARLIE'S ANGELS*, *REPLACEMENT KILLERS*, *ANACONDA*, *FOOLS RUSH IN*, *DEVIL'S OWN*, *CABLE GUY*, *FIRST KNIGHT*, *MY GIRL*, *MO MONEY*, *HERO*, *SLEEPWALKERS* and many more.

Zee began his career with NBC and has also held positions at Touche Ross and Paramount Pictures, where he was Senior VP of Production. While at Paramount, he championed such films as *INDECENT PROPOSAL*, *STAR TREK VI*, *COUSINS* and *PRESIDIO*.

Zee graduated from the School of Industrial & Labor Relations at Cornell University and earned an M.B.A. from Harvard University.

Most recently, Zee served with Kelly Hu as co-chair of the Remy Martin sponsored 2006 Asian Excellence Awards, televised by AZN-TV. PBS' Los Angeles affiliate, KCET honored him as a "Local Hero" for his contributions to Asian Americans in film. He was a Juror at the 2005 Louis Vuitton Hawaii International Film Festival and the 2006 VC Film Festival in Los Angeles.

Zee is a long-time member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences (the Executive branch of the Oscars' organization), a former member of the Executive Board of the Asian American Policy Review at Harvard's JFK School of Government, on the Board of Coalition for Asian Pacifics in Entertainment (CAPE), and a member of the Producers Guild of America (PGA).

Jamin O'Brien (Executive Producer)

Jamin O'Brien has been in the film business since graduating from the University of California at Santa Barbara. His company, John Doe Entertainment, is dedicated to fostering new talent and unique stories. He has played a vital role in several successfully distributed independent films including: *Hurricane Streets* by MGM, *Desert Blue* by Samuel Goldwyn, *Stardom* by Alliance Atlantis and *Things Behind the Sun* by Showtime. The past year marks his first experience working on a studio movie as a Producer on the MGM release *Into the Blue*. More recently he Co-Produced Susan Seidelman's breakout *Boynnton Beach Club* for Roadside Attractions/Samuel Goldwyn and premiered Morgan J Freeman's latest, *Just Like the Son* starring Mark Webber, Brendan Sexton and Rosie Perez at last year's Tribeca Film Festival.

Edmund Lee (Writer)

As a reporter for the *Village Voice* in the late Nineties, Edmund Lee investigated the rise of Korean crime groups in New York that emerged in the wake of the Chinese Tongs that fell in the Eighties. But the larger story behind these crime groups would find further exposure on screen in *West 32nd*. Inspired by the true-life workings of this hidden subculture he wrote the script with Michael Kang. It is a New York drama about acceptance and betrayal, ultimately, a needful tale about Korean American life.

His writing has also appeared in the *New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *Vibe Magazine*, and the *New York Daily News*. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife and daughter.

CJ ENTERTAINMENT



CJ Entertainment is a leading producer and distributor of entertainment products and services in Korea. The company started its business in entertainment by investing \$130 million in the establishment of DreamWorks SKG in 1995 and became a major shareholder in partnership with Steven Spielberg, Jeffrey Katzenberg, and David Geffen. CJ Entertainment's operations include motion picture production and distribution in Korea and abroad. CJ Entertainment participates in production of Korean film and

distribution of Korean film, DreamWorks film and other foreign film.

With consistent market share of around 30 percent of the Korean film market by investing in 15-18 quality Korean titles in diverse genres annually, CJ Entertainment has collaborated with major Korean film production companies. Some of the box office hits tucked in CJ Entertainment's belt are "Joint Security Area," which became the all-time number one film in Korea, "Warrior" by Sidus Films, "The Way Home" by Tube Pictures, "Memories of Murder" by Sidus Films and "Once upon a Time in High School" by Sidus Film. The company has also been involved in the distribution of DreamWorks's films such as "Prince of Egypt," "American Beauty," "Gladiator," "A Beautiful Mind," and "Shrek 1&2". Enjoying its well-earned position as one of Asia's leading distributors of quality Korean and international motion pictures, CJ Entertainment plans to pursue further expansion to provide a wide range of entertainment products.

Acting as a media & entertainment business arm of the CJ Group, CJ Entertainment also focus on developing a strong media & entertainment business portfolio. CJ already established a leading position in Korean film distribution, theater, and cable TV program provider industry and expanded its business into other secondary windows for film exhibition and other entertainment business such as on-line game. CJ Entertainment plans to pursue synergy between existing business and other necessary expansion to provide wide range of entertainment products to the customers.