



The Top 10 WORST NAMED Martial Arts Films!

The late 1970's and early 80's were somewhat of a golden age for the martial arts film. After the success of Bruce Lee, and with the arrival of VHS video came the proliferation of literally hundreds upon hundreds of Asian language films to the UK. But these were the days before subtitling and most of these found themselves dubbed into English with comedy lip synching and some of the most dubious voice acting since... well ever.

Best of all it was next to impossible to market films called **Lan Tou He** or **Onna Hissatsu Ken**, so a trend developed... a trend that saw some of the most battling yet distinctly amusing films names ever created. Out went **Lao Tou Quan Tou Da Man Tou**, in came **Against Rascals with Kung Fu**.

The titles were often a cross between the literal translations from Cantonese to English, a general combination of words like **Ninja** or **Kung Fu** or just simply the

mad rumblings of a mad video distributor.

Having recently picking up a copy of the Bruce Le starring "Re-Enter The Dragon" it took me back to these simpler times and I decided that, with help from the World Wide Web and a hearty chunk of nostalgia, I'd try and work out which were the worst EVER titled martial arts movies.

And here they are. In no particular order (for each on its own merits it as bad as the next)... the Top 10 WORST Named Martial Arts Films... EVER.

8. **Dirty Ho (Lan Tou He) - 1981**

Shaw Brothers' most unfortunately titled film, it stars Gordon Liu and features prolific Hong Kong star Yue Wong in a story that sees our hero Liu hiding his skills for the bulk of the movie's running time.

7. **Woman Certain Kill Fist (Onna Hissatsu Ken) - 1974**

Thankfully this is better known by the far cooler moniker of **Sister Street Fighter**. However you may know it better as by its loony bootleg name **Fighter Female Fighting Fist in Danger**

6. **Kill Without Compensation 1970**

No translation here. This is the film's actual name and comes care of director **Fung Wong** who helmed over 88 films between 1960 and 1980, including the equally poorly named **The Mad Monk Strikes Again** and **A Stomach of Crazy Tricks**.

5. **Bruce Is Loose (Qing Long Ke Zhan) - 1977**

Allegedly starring one of the many Bruce Lee clones of the 70's, **Bruce Le** (who in fact is only on the US VHS cover) this is actually not a bad little Martial Arts film.

10. **Tough Beauty and the Sloppy Slop (No Hoi Wai Lung) -1995**

Or to give it its literal translation **Angry Sea Mighty Dragon** this disjointed and rather oddly named film apparently is saved by its climactic fight scene. Well thank God for that!

9. **Kung Fu Leung Strikes Emmanuelle**

(Ai Man Niu Huo Bing Gong Fu Liang). - 1982

With a plot that can best be summed up as "kung fu champ John is given the chance to train CIA agents in martial arts by using self-hypnosis" it isn't surprising that this 1982 John Liu movie is little seen. And with alternative titles like **Ninja in the Claws of the CIA** and **Made in China** well little more needs to be said....

NEWS AND RUMORS

SENI08 - The first ever public screening of highly anticipated British action revenge thriller **TEN DEAD MEN** will take place at Europe's largest martial arts and combat sports show **SENI08**.

As well as **TEN DEAD MEN** **Seni08** will also feature exclusive screenings based around a 'Best Of British Film' day which will include **SUCKER PUNCH** featuring **Danny John Jules**, **Gordon Alexander** and **Ian Freeman**, and **UNDERGROUND** starring **Freestyle legend Nathan Lewis** and **Joey Ansah** (**Bourne Ultimatum**).

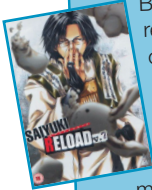
Check out the trailer for new Hong Kong action movie **CHOCOLATE**. This is looking VERY Special (www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ITbFcHWJEo)

UFC champion **Rich Franklin** is the next MMA star to get is how movie and will be starring in **WEAPON**, a production of Canada's **Peace Arch Entertainment**...

Shochiku has recently been finishing off on a new **Zatoichi** based movie **ICHI**, that will see the famous blind sword hero re-imagined as a woman...

Modern Life? have launched their new website at www.mod-life.net...

ANIME CORNER



By far the best of this month's anime releases **Saiyuki Reload Vol. 7** collects the final three episodes of the surreal, stylistic action series in which the gang face defeat at the hands of 'God' and his army of demonic cuddly toys. There is some classic medieval violence in Berserk Vol. 3 when Guts and Chaska are separated from their group, although dubious gender politics often get in the way of the action.

In **Elemental Gelade Vol. 5** hero Cou develops a relationship with stranger Viro, causing tension amongst the others in this enjoyable adventure with thinly disguised adult themes. Also released this month, tensions between the Vatican and the Empire escalate in innovative sci-fi vampire epic Trinity Blood Vol. 4 and space cowboys in giant robots prepare for their final battle in Gun Sword Vol. 6.



4. **Dumb Boxer - 1973**

No not a biopic of Chris Eubanks, but instead a little seen Taiwanese fight movie.

3. **Bruce Vs. Bill (Long Hu Zheng Ba) - 1981**

Alas not a fanboy-pleasing Bruce Campbell Vs. Bill Dukes action movie, Bruce Vs Bill is instead an 1981 movie that sees Bruce Lee sent to retrieve a key to a safe containing a million dollars.

2. **Shaolin Chastity Kung Fu (Shao Lin Tong Zi Gong) - 1981**

Sounding like an insane American College Fraternity this is in fact a 1981 movie starting Tyrus Bromley as Fu Manchu.

1. **Deep Thrust: The Hand of Death (Tie Zhang Cuan Feng Tui) - 1972**

Hmm... adult entertainment, or kung fu actioner? I'll let you decide...

There were many more choices but these, for me, were the best. Or worst.

Thanks very much to KarateParty.org for their original research and the IMDB for their extensive database.

Phil Hobden

DVD REVIEWS - I AM OMEGA - PLAYED - DEADLY DUO

I am Omega

I Am Omega is basically a micro budget rip off of I Am Legend produced by the L.A based production company called The Asylum, starring Mark Dacascos in the Will Smith role. The film rattles on quickly enough and doesn't have the appalling CGI monsters of its blockbuster counterpart. What it does have is pretty awful physical make-up effects instead. However, as bad as the make-up is, the infected in I Am Omega are 100 times more convincing than in I Am Legend. Dacascos turns in a strong central performance, which is vital as he basically IS the movie, barring a female character introduced later in the film (again, a much better role than in the blockbuster version) and a couple of crammed-in but fun villains. The action is fairly sub-par, a gunshot here, a kick or punch there. It is not poorly executed, but simply too sparse given the martial arts abilities of the film's leading man, as demonstrated in a pretty decent training scene early in the film. Although I would not recommend the film, I Am Omega is still fairly inoffensive fun. Despite being clearly shot on a shoestring over a couple of weeks the film is reasonably well put together and doesn't outstay it's welcome. This cannot be said for I Am Legend which falls to pieces two thirds of the way in and wasn't brilliant to begin with.

Reviewed by Ross Boyask

ACTION RATING 1/5 FILM RATING: 2/5



Played

Ray (Mick Rossi) is a small time thief who gets fingered by a corrupt policeman (Vinnie Jones) for his part in a warehouse robbery gone wrong. 8 years later he is released from prison and is given a chance for revenge. With a cast boasting the likes of Gabriel Byrne, Val Kilmer, Patsy Kensit, Anthony LaPaglia and Bruno Kirby, you would be forgiven for thinking that Played has all the hallmarks of a good film - sadly you would be wrong. Its not the plot or the acting that's at fault, but Sean Stanek's direction. It looks like the entire movie was shot using the cheapest camera money could buy, whilst being operated by a GCSE Film Studies student and then edited by his stoned girlfriend. No word of a lie, this has to be the worst directed and edited all star movie in the history of cinema. Why in the name off all things holy did a such a well known cast sign on to work with a director this bad is a mystery that I fear will never be solved. Sean Stanek - you are officially the world's worst director! Oh yes, and if Vinnie Jones is reading this review I have a word of advice for him - the jokes over mate, the cheeky hard-man image isn't funny anymore - it wasn't a nightmare - you really cant act. Also to Val Kilmer - get a new agent son, you were in Top Gun for Chrissakes! Avoid like the plague!

Reviewed by Will Strong

ACTION RATING 0.5/5 FILM RATING: 0.5/5



FEATURED REVIEW - DEADLY DUO

From what this reviewer could gather, hundreds of years ago in feudal China, the Mongols have invaded and kidnapped Prince Kaan who is the son of the emperor. A daring mission is undertaken (led by 70's martial arts superstars David Chang and Ti Lun) to rescue the Prince and strike a devastating blow against the invading Mongol army. Cue massive sword fights, fisticuffs, a lot of shouting and copious amounts of bloodletting.

I approached this in the way I always do with any 1970's Chinese made film - with a sense of utter dread. The dubbing is usually out of synch and voiced by really bad American actors, they drag on for hours, are usually overly deep and meaningful and not geared for viewing by people outside of China.

However - this film may just be the one to change my opinion as Deadly Duo is - shock - a pretty damn good movie. Directed by Chang Cheh and produced by the legendary Shaw Brothers (the inspiration for Tarantino's Kill Bill saga), running at a mere 95 minutes, and jam packed with more fights than a Glasgow nightclub at chucking out time, one just couldn't help but enjoy it.

For a start - its well made, the production values, whilst somewhat outdated, are top notch, the costumes and weapons spot on for the era it is set in, and the acting is more than passable.

The best bits of course are the action scenes, all of them superbly choreographed and dazzling to the eye. If you love to see tooled up Samurai knocking seven bells out of each other, lots of blood, multiple tear ups, sword fights, punch ups, heads getting kicked in and general violent mayhem then this is the film for you.

Every weapon from swords, spears, crossbows, knives, even giant razor sharp cymbals are on display here. - in fact its a wonder that no one was killed during the making of this film as, to be honest alot of the scraps looked like complete free for all! One sequence in particular had at least 50 - 60 people simply going hammer and tong at each other.

Ok it isn't Kurosawa, John Woo or even Takeshi Miike. There are faults - its really badly dubbed and I would have much preferred to have seen it in the original Mandarin with subtitles. Not only that but the story is very difficult to follow and for at least the first half of the film I simply had no idea what was going on. Not only that, but the editing is a bit poor and could have been alot better in several places.

Quibbles aside though, I've got to say that on the whole Deadly Duo is a very enjoyable film indeed and is certainly a great deal better than the utter crap than Seagal and Van Damme have been inflicting on us of late. So if you are a real martial arts junkie then you could alot worse than this.

Recommended

Reviewed by Will Strong

ACTION RATING: 5/5 FILM RATING: 4/5

