



FESTIVAL DE CANNES

OFFICIAL SELECTION
COMPETITION



my magic

A FILM BY
ERIC KHOO

ZHAO WEI FILMS IN ASSOCIATION WITH INFINITE FRAMEWORKS PRESENT A FILM BY ERIC KHOO BOSCO FRANCIS JATHISHWERAN "MY MAGIC" SEET KENG YEW JASON LIM KALAISELVI GRACE DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ADRIAN TAN
EDITED BY SIVA CHANDRAN LIONEL CHOK MUSIC BY KEVIN MATHEWS CHRISTOPHER KHOO SOUND DESIGN BY KAZZ WRITTEN BY ERIC KHOO WONG KIM HOH PRODUCED BY TAN FONG CHENG
PRODUCERS WONG KIM HOH FREDDIE YEO GARY GOH ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS CHEW TZE CHUAN NICHOLAS LIM FELICIA TAN EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JAMES TOH JACQUELINE KHOO MIKE WILLUAN DIRECTED BY ERIC KHOO



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PRESENT

MY MAGIC

A FILM BY **ERIC KHOO**

SINGAPORE / 75' / 35 MM / 1:85 / DOLBY SR / COLOUR / 2008

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*Rue Latour Maubourg runs adjacent to the Hotel Martinez. It is two blocks up the Croisette from the Carlton Hotel in the direction of the Hotel Martinez.

PLEASE NOTE: High definition images can be downloaded from the 'press' section of <http://www.wildbunch.biz>

SYNOPSIS

Francis (*Bosco Francis*) is a man at the end of his tether. The former magician often takes solace in the bottle and barely ekes out a living as a cleaner in a nightclub. He has a 10-year-old son he loves desperately, but sorrow, guilt and constant inebriation have made him an ineffectual father. The son (*Jathishweran*) is a stoic 'old soul' who has learned to bury his affection for his old man and to cope with his chaotic life.

A broken spirit and a single parent, Francis hopes to redeem himself and win his son's love and respect. He makes a painful - and bizarre - return to magic. An unexpected incident one night sets father and son on the road. In a dilapidated building, these two wounded souls come to terms with their love - a love which is as deep and acute as their grief.

CAST

<i>Father</i>	Bosco Francis
<i>Son</i>	Jathishweran
<i>Big boss</i>	Seet Keng Yew
<i>Club owner</i>	Jason Lim
<i>Woman at bar</i>	Kalaiselvi Grace
<i>Pawn shop owner</i>	Ng Sway Ah
<i>Young wife of magician</i>	Preetha Damodaran
<i>Young magician</i>	Krishnamurthi A/L Shanmugam
<i>Magician's assistant</i>	Leslie Sim
<i>Noodle stall man</i>	Sanwan Bin Rais
<i>Henchman 1</i>	Sunny Pang
<i>Henchman 2</i>	Willie Toh
<i>Bartender 1</i>	Indhiran S/O Regasamy
<i>Bartender 2</i>	Subramanian
<i>Boy at prata shop</i>	Amos S/O Marimuthu
<i>Cleaner at club</i>	Lim Poh Huat
<i>Chicken stall owner</i>	Loo Geok Leng
<i>Spice stall owner</i>	Fatima Azar Binti Ismail
<i>Young bullies</i>	K Aravinn
	Durges S/O G. Segar
	Selvaraj S/O Sivan
	Abdhul Malik Bin
	Mohamed Farid
<i>Big boss's companion</i>	Maria Concepcion G. Baluyut
<i>Mother at shopping centre</i>	Ann Anbarasi G
<i>Boy at shopping centre</i>	Prasantino S/O Thiruselvan

CREW

DIRECTED BY	Eric Khoo	ONLINE EDITOR	Pinky Calica-Vierra
SCREENPLAY	Eric Khoo	COLOURIST	Yazmin Mat Rahah
	Wong Kim Hoh	GRAPHICS	Liew Chee Ming
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY	Adrian Tan	POST-PRODUCTION SOUND	Muse Pte Ltd
EDITORS	Siva Chandran	PRODUCERS	Tan Fong Cheng
	Lionel Chok		Wong Kim Hoh
ORIGINAL MUSIC	Kevin Mathews		Freddie Yeo
	Christopher Khoo		Gary Goh
PERFORMED BY	Jonathon Soh - <i>piano</i>	ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS	Chew Tze Chuan
	Christopher Khoo - <i>piano</i>		Nicholas Lim
	Krsna Tan - <i>sitar</i>		Felicia Tan
	Govinda Tan - <i>tabla</i>	EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS	James Toh
	Raghavendran S/O Rajasekaran - <i>flute</i>		Jacqueline Khoo
	Chan Xiang Yi - <i>back-up humming</i>		Mike Wiluan
SOUND DESIGN	Kazz		
ASSISTANT AUDIO ENGINEER	Chan Xiang Yi		
AUDIO POST PRODUCER	Syereen A Sengari		
FOLEY, MUSIC & FILM AUDIO EDIT & MIX	Kazz		
MUSICAL ARRANGER	Kevin Mathews		
GAFFER	Bert Tan		
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Lydia Cheriyan		
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Nicholas Lim		
CAMERA OPERATOR	Dean Sam		
CAMERA ASSISTANT	Alvin Tan		
GRIPS	Jay Yao		
	Jonathan Lim		
	Leslie Sim		
	Pang Jimin		
SOUND RECORDIST	Kuah Kim Peow		
BOOM ASSISTANT	Lai Jia Hong		
LOGGER	Kevin Nguyen		
ART DIRECTOR	Jeremy Chua		
ART DEPARTMENT ASSISTANT	Chia Jia Hui		
PRODUCTION STILLS PHOTOGRAPHER	Rory Daniel		
MAKE-UP ARTIST	Haslina Ismail		
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT	Daniel Ng		
CONTINUITY/MAKING OF	Eden Cai		
PRODUCTION DRIVERS	Chan Hwee Heong		
	Anson Oh		
	Ramli		
PRODUCTION ACCOUNTANTS	Christopher Lim		
	Eric Ng		
	Mary Kee		
POST-PRODUCTION	Infinite Frameworks		
POST-PRODUCTION PRODUCER	Jeffry Mamat		
TRAILER EDITOR	Rayner Lim		

BACKGROUND

Eric Khoo's new movie MY MAGIC addresses issues of love, life, family ties, redemption and magic. The filmmaker describes it as his most personal piece of work to date. *"I'm a dad myself and for the longest time, I've wanted to do a movie about a father and son, the obstacles in their relationship, and how they get together despite the difficulties,"* says Khoo, whose four boys are aged between 8 and 14. It is also inspired by lead actor Bosco Francis, a real-life magician whom he has known for more than a decade. The director says: *"This guy is larger than life. I wanted to do something with him, and for him."*

Khoo roped in journalist Wong Kim Hoh to work with him on the script. The two old friends have collaborated on Khoo's last two projects: BE WITH ME, a moving omnibus feature which opened the Directors' Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival in 2005; and NO DAY OFF, a short film about the trials and tribulations of a maid, which has been shown to critical acclaim in various festivals. *"Kim Hoh and I have been talking about the project for some time but we were sidetracked by other ideas."*

However, in late 2007, Khoo started reading Cormac McCarthy's THE ROAD, a Pulitzer prize-winning novel about the adventures of a man and his son in a post-apocalyptic world. *"The book inspired me to nail the project down,"* Khoo says. He did, within two short weeks. *"It was my fastest shoot to date. Kim Hoh was in India for work but I'd send him ideas and he'd flesh them out. We finished the script in a couple of days,"* he adds.

In the meantime, he had already assembled a crew including Adrian Tan, the cinematographer who lensed BE WITH ME. Workshops were also arranged for Bosco and Jathis, the young actor playing his ten-year-old son. *"The workshops were crucial because I wanted them to establish a rapport and to be comfortable with each other. They were fantastic. Jathis was a godsend, he was so natural,"* says the director. Bosco, meanwhile, was Khoo's 'Rock of Gibraltar'. *"Many of the stunts he performed*

in the movie are real. Bosco wouldn't have it any other way. We had to shoot most of them in one take, because I couldn't afford to have him injured."

Although a 12-day shoot was planned, MY MAGIC wrapped in just nine days. *"The cast and crew were just so good. They ran with me."* From the outset, Khoo wanted MY MAGIC to be a *"small, sensitive project. I didn't want to go big and be extravagant with the execution. I wanted it to be intimate, personal and subtle."*

Shooting it, however, was not without its challenges. A major one was language. The movie is shot mostly in Tamil, a language alien to Eric Khoo and Kim Hoh, who wrote the script in English. *"Since both Bosco and Jathis are Indian, I wanted them to speak in their mother tongue because it is more authentic,"* says the director, whose previous movies were mostly shot in a mixture of English and Chinese dialects. Fortunately he had a 'saving grace': supporting actress Grace Kalaiselvi, who became the film's resident translator.

The hardest part of the shoot, however, was the ending. Khoo says: *"I wanted MY MAGIC to be layered, and to spring surprises. The ending is the most important. It is what will take the film to another level so we spent a lot of time conceptualising it, and getting it right."* He adds: *"Many of us are judgmental. If there is one lesson I hope viewers will take with them after watching this movie, it is that things and people are sometimes not what they seem."*

BIOGRAPHIES

BOSCO FRANCIS - *Father*

Bosco Francis is one of a handful of professional magicians in Singapore. A former labourer, his interest in this mysterious craft was piqued when he was picked to be the stage assistant for a touring American magician in the 1960s. It grew into an obsession. He pored over books and made numerous trips to India to hone his craft.

Today, he performs throughout Asia; his repertoire includes glass chewing, fire eating, illusions and levitation. Many of the 'painful' acts performed in MY MAGIC are real because Bosco refused to have it any other way.

Khoo says of his leading man: *"He is a true professional. He has never acted before but his performance and his presence are truly mesmerising."*

Bosco jests: *"Delivering the lines is trickier than performing the stunts. With stunts, it's all about mind over matter."*

JATHISHWERAN - *Son*

Jathis, 14, never knew he had a talent for acting until his teacher sent him to an audition for a play when he was 10. Not only did he ace it, he also landed leading roles in two productions put on by the theatre company, playing 'The Devil' in one and folk hero 'Ali Baba' in the other.

TV drama roles soon followed, and he has since played an assortment of characters - from a gangster to a disabled child. He has also hosted a children's health programme on TV.

Of his experience on MY MAGIC he says: *"I learnt so much, not just magic but how to act. Eric treated me like an adult and I felt like an adult. This is the most fantastic experience of my life."*

ERIC KHOO - *Director*

MY MAGIC is Eric Khoo's latest full-length feature, following 2005's BE WITH ME, the critically-acclaimed drama which opened Directors' Fortnight in Cannes that year. The film has since gone on to reap a slew of international awards including Best Director at the Torino Film Festival, the Sabam Prize for Best Screenplay at the Flanders International Film Festival and FIRPRESCI Jury Best Film Prize at the Stockholm International Film Festival.

Khoo is credited for reviving Singapore's film industry 10 years ago with his provocative MEE POK MAN which picked up prizes at festivals in Singapore, Pusan and Fukuoka. His sophomore feature 12 STOREYS (1997) was critically lauded all over the world and became the first Singaporean film to screen at the Cannes Film Festival. In addition, Eric has produced several feature films and TV series. He was awarded the Singapore Cultural Medallion (2007) and Youth Award (1999) by the Singapore government for his dedication to filmmaking and contributions to society. Eric runs his own production company, Zhao Wei Films, based in Singapore.

WONG KIM HOH - *Scriptwriter*

Khoo co-wrote MY MAGIC with Wong Kim Hoh, a senior journalist with Singapore's biggest newspaper, 'The Straits Times'.

Long-time friends, the duo have also collaborated on BE WITH ME, as well as NO DAY OFF, a short film about the life of an Indonesian maid in Singapore. Commissioned by the Jeonju Film Festival in 2006, the latter has screened in various festivals including Locarno and Vancouver. Kim Hoh also penned the award-winning interview series A LIFE LESS ORDINARY which profiled colourful Singaporeans from all walks of life in The Straits Times. One such subject was Bosco Francis.

Singaporean cultural critic Alvin Pang wrote: *"News features like Wong Kim Hoh's A LIFE LESS ORDINARY have thrown up more intriguing real-life personalities than your average Hollywood script."*

ADRIAN TAN - *Director of Photography*

Adrian Tan is one of the top TV commercial directors in Singapore. He was responsible for the startlingly beautiful visuals of BE WITH ME, which nabbed the Best Cinematography Award in the Stockholm International Film Festival. His attention to detail and sumptuous visual sense have earned the former stills photographer tremendous respect in the Singapore advertising industry. His list of blue chip clients includes StarHub, Citibank and Mercedes. Adrian also directed BRIDGE, an episode from the Eric Khoo-produced TV series SEVENTH MONTH.

TAN FONG CHENG - *Producer*

Tan Fong Cheng cut her teeth in the industry producing TV commercials before rising through the ranks to become Divisional Director of production house Moviola in Shanghai. In 2001, she decided to concentrate on movies and came on board Zhao Wei Films. Since then, she has produced many of the company's most noteworthy TV series as well as films including Khoo's BE WITH ME and NO DAY OFF, and Royston Tan's 15 and 881.

JAMES TOH - *Executive Producer*

James Toh first collaborated with Eric Khoo on the screenplay for the critically acclaimed 12 STOREYS in 1997. A former management consultant, he is now a partner in Zhao Wei Films, and has produced many of Zhao Wei's films, including Royston Tan's 4:30 (2006) and 881. James has written numerous scripts for TV and the stage, as well as produced Singapore's first Chinese musical, DECEMBER RAINS. Through his White Paper, submitted in 1998, he was instrumental in lobbying the government to start a Singapore Film Commission to fund local films.

KEVIN MATHEWS - *Original Music*

Kevin Mathews has scored several Eric Khoo projects, including BE WITH ME, MEE POK MAN, 12 STOREYS and ONE LEG KICKING. A lawyer by day and composer by night, he has a band called Groovy People.

CHRISTOPHER KHOO - *Original Music*

Chris is just 10, and is the third of Eric Khoo's four sons. A piano lover, he has been keenly interested in MY MAGIC from day one, reading every page of the script as it was being written. So fascinated was he by the story that he composed the film's gorgeously evocative central theme LONELY BOY in just one night, later refining it with Kevin Mathews. Chris hopes to write more pieces for his dad's movies in the future.