



PLAYING
with
FIRE

A short film by Kevin Tsai



Logline

In one afternoon on the block, we follow a Chinese American young man as he navigates through his neighborhood environment and his immigrant mother's household.

Synopsis

Jon and Daveon, aimlessly existing in their mid-20s, are childhood friends who grew up together in the same neighborhood. Jon lives alone with his single mother (Mama Huang), who is a Chinese immigrant. Daveon is a single father living with his aunt (Auntie Carol) - they raise his daughter (Harley) together.

Both friends are at personal crossroads in their lives, yet share the moment together. Jon faces family pressures to enroll in an out-of-state education program, though he prefers to stay back as his environment is all that he knows. Daveon is saving money so he can move out and raise his daughter in a better environment. In between jobs, and in an attempt to make more money, Jon and Daveon start flipping used t-shirts and splitting the profits under the table.

Though this endeavor only concerns the two friends, judgements are made from both of their families. Jon feels pressured into picking a side.



Cast

Kevin Tsai is [Jon](#)

Akeem Lovell is [Daveon](#)

Rose Yao is [Mama Huang](#)

Adara Alston is [Auntie Carol](#)

Aksana Antonius is [Harley](#)



Production Credits

Written and Directed by
Kevin Tsai

Produced by
Kevin Tsai

Director of Photography
Katiana Weems

1st Assistant Director
Alex Smithline

2nd Assistant Director
Natalie Richard

Camera Operator
Katiana Weems

1st Assistant Camera
Aislyn Murray

2nd Assistant Camera
Astrid Qui

BTS Documentation
Kyle Williams

Production Designers
Taylor Jordan
Raven Robinson

Art Assistant
Jeremy Jung

Wardrobe and Styling
Kevin Tsai

Makeup
Ariana Rahaei

Gaffer
Alexis Miranda

Key Grip
Lauren Jevnikar

Best Boy Swing
Jeremy Jung

Script Supervisor
Evan Hill

Story Consultant
Kyle Williams

On-Set Sound Mixer
Qicheng Yang

Boom Operator
Timmy Ok

Editor
Kevin Tsai

Sound Editor
Kevin Tsai

Colorist
Kevin Tsai

Music by
J-Rax
Elijah Armaan
Siyaka
J. Rabon
Gianni

Supporting Cast
Taylor Williams
Siyaka Taylor-Lewis
Ariana Rahaei
Gianni Villegas
Kyle Williams



Technical Specs

Duration

14 minutes

Language

English

Mandarin Chinese

Format

Digital

2K

1.78:1

Special Thanks

Vasilios Papaioannu

Kelly Gallagher

Emily Vey Duke

Robyn Antonius

Stefanie Lin

Josh Sabillon

Ramzi Market

Shot in Syracuse, NY.



Director's Bio

Kevin is Japanese / Taiwanese American filmmaker, photographer, and actor. Born in Los Angeles and raised in Rowland Heights, Kevin is not only the first in his family to pursue art as a career, but also the first to break generational curses embedded in the family lineage. His work is heavily influenced by Chinese martial arts, west coast hip hop, and the LA fashion and skate scenes. Kevin believes that mass media is the most effective way to normalize and empower yellow and brown bodies. He also relies on creating images to further explore his own identity while in his 20s, living in a politically charged America. Kevin is currently graduating from Syracuse University with a BFA in film, having studied in the College of Visual and Performing Arts. He has also studied film at FAMU in Prague, Czech Republic. Kevin has independently directed and produced numerous short films, documentaries, and even webisodes. He hopes to continue creating work independently.

Contact

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