

Eternal Bruce Lee
The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters
January 27 – February 4, 2017

Bruce Lee (1940–1973) passed away at the peak of his career, yet decades later he remains a larger-than-life icon of global cinema. The star exhibits an impulsive, instinctual fighting style rarely seen in kung fu films, a genre that typically reveres moralistic masters who embody both bodily and mental discipline. While Lee plays characters motivated by justice and pride (both cultural and national), he often fights with absolute abandon, allowing a primordial spirit to take center stage. In his final film, *Enter the Dragon*, Lee's character describes an "emotional content" essential to a martial artist. It is this emotional content that makes him uniquely sensational. The swiftness of his movement, the power of each strike, his breathtaking mastery of the *nunchaku* (a weapon made of two sticks connected by a chain), his signature high-pitched feline shriek, and his ability to bring men of far more imposing physiques—many of them foreigners—to their knees made him an unusually thrilling performer. His charisma and preternatural physical gifts have garnered many millions of fans around the world, redefining Asian masculinity and empowering those who feel oppressed and marginalized.

Born in San Francisco and raised in Hong Kong, Lee was introduced to showbiz by his father, a Chinese opera and film actor. He appeared in more than 20 films as a child and began martial arts training at the age of 13. Lee returned to the US when he was 18, and studied philosophy and drama at the University of Washington in Seattle, where he began to teach martial arts. Before long he had earned acting roles in film and television, most memorably as Kato on the TV series *The Green Hornet*. When the series was discontinued, Lee returned to Hong Kong and was approached by legendary producer Raymond Chow to star in *The Big Boss* (1971) for Golden Harvest. The low-budget film catapulted him to instant stardom, and Hollywood took notice; *Enter the Dragon* (1973) became the first-ever Hong Kong-Hollywood coproduction. Yet in a tragedy that shocked the entire world, Lee passed away suddenly, a month before the film's scheduled release, due to a fatal reaction to a pain medication.

This series features all five films Lee starred in at his prime. It includes the North American premieres of new 4k restorations of *The Big Boss* (1971), *Fist of Fury* (1972), *The Way of the Dragon* (1972), and *Game of Death* (1978). *Enter the Dragon* (1973) is also featured, in a weeklong run.

Organized by La Frances Hui, Associate Curator, Department of Film. Special thanks to Warner Bros. and Fortune Star.