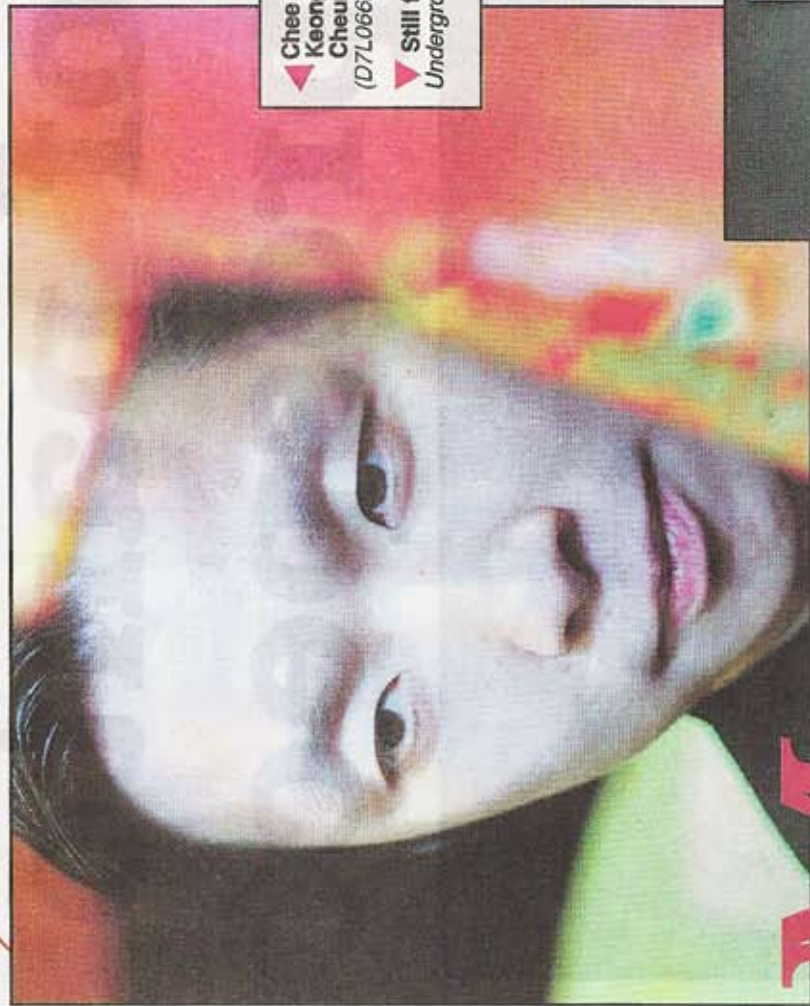


Arts

With Adrian Mullen

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◀ Chee Keong Cheung. (D7L066MH1)
▶ Still from *Underground*.

SINCE my last chat a couple of years ago with Chee Keong Cheung, he's been pretty busy jetting across the planet.

The Lancaster-based moviemaker has become quite a mover and shaker in the film world, spending his time between Hollywood and Hong Kong.

In 1999, Chee founded Intense Productions, a production and facilitation company based in the UK.

His idea was to produce and facilitate diverse, innovative and commercially-successful productions from short films, music videos, documentaries to feature films, combining both established and up and coming talent. And he has.

To date, Chee and Intense have collaborated on more than 50 productions, and received international awards and nominations, working with international filmmakers from the UK, Hong Kong, Ireland, America, Canada, South Africa, India, Australia, Norway and Greece.

Rubbing shoulders with some of the industry heavyweights, his latest film packs a mighty punch.

Written, produced and directed by Chee, *Underground* follows the story of 12 fighters

who compete in an illegal underground tournament for the prize of £500,000.

Chee worked with renowned fight arranger and stuntman Dave Forman of *Batman Begins*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, and *The Last Samurai* fame.

Underground stars Danny John-Jules (*Blade II*, *Red Dwarf*), Joey Ansah (*The Bourne Ultimatum*) and Mark Strange (*Batman Begins*, *Displaced*), three times World Kickboxing Champion Nathan Lewis, who was in *Fight School* and *Batman Begins*, and Sophie Linfield, who appeared in *Football Factory* and *The Monk*.

Meanwhile, never one to let the grass grow under his feet, Chee's next feature is the epic action drama *Bodyguard: A New Beginning* as writer, director and producer.

A UK/Hong Kong co-production, he said he was fortunate to put together an impressive cast, including some well-known names - Asian actors Cary Hiroyuki-Tagawa (*Memoirs of a Geisha*, *The Last Emperor*, *Mortal Kombat*), Richard Ng (*Winners and Sinners*, *My Lucky Stars*), Carl Ng (*Boarding Gates*), Sing Fu On (*John Woo's The Killer*, *God of Gamblers*), and rising talent Vincent Sze (*SPL*, *Dragon Tiger Gate*, *Invincible Target*).

British actress Stephanie Langton, who was in the West End production of *A Few Good Men* and the BBC's *Jekyll* takes the lead female role.

A New Beginning tells the story of Leung, the bodyguard of a Hong Kong Triad boss, Wong, who is sent to the UK to protect a woman whose identity is only known by his boss.

The film is scheduled for worldwide release this year.

And if that's not enough... Chee is developing the film drama *Dreams* with British producer Tim Hampton, who just happened to be the former vice-president of 20th Century Fox, as well as John Stephenson, who was the creative director of Jim Henson's *Creature Shop*.

For more on Lancaster's own 'Steven Spielberg' see *Adrian Mullen Puts You in the Picture*, by logging on to www.thewestmorlandgazette.co.uk following Leisure and Entertainment.



Man on the move