

BLOODMOON (1997):

Executive Producer: Ng See Yuen

Director: Tony Leung

Producer/Writer: Keith W. Strandberg

Cast: Gary Daniels, Chuck Jeffreys, Keith Vitali, Rob Van Dam

Locations: Wilmington, NC; New York

“In their final collaboration, Seasonal Films founder Ng See-Yuen, Producer/Writer Keith W. Strandberg developed a modern action thriller.”

Courtesy of www.kungfucinema.com

In their final collaboration, Seasonal Films founder Ng See-Yuen, screenwriter Keith W. Strandberg, and director/action director Tony Leung Siu-Hung developed a modern action thriller with a serial killer who tracks down the top champions in New York with his lethal martial arts skills and two metal fingers as his weapons.

When the moon turns red in the heart of New York City, a mysterious masked man (Darren Shaharvi) appears to take on heavyweight boxing champion Eddie Cunningham (Hakim Alston). The killer, dressed in black, has steel-toed boots and uses his kicking skills to his advantage over the boxer. Teaching him a lesson in victory, the boxer resorts to using a bench as a weapon only to get a dose of the second weapon of the masked man: two steel fingers, which he embeds in the heart of the champ, ultimately killing him.

Cunningham's death marks the fourth death in four days. Detective Chuck Baker (Chuck Jeffreys) is assigned to the case. He has been unable to figure out the connection of the four deaths and when he tends to mock the chief of police, he gets threatened with a transfer to Poughkeepsie. That night, the masked man returns and this time, he challenges bar owner Dutch (Rob Van Dam), a former toughman champion. Using his steel fingers as more of a distraction, he lets his kicking do the talking and like Cunningham the night before, kills Dutch and sends him flying out of the window.

The next day, the chief of police decides since there has been no progress in the investigation, he would like Chuck to track down Ken O'Hara (Gary Daniels), a retired expert in serial killers. At first, Chuck is not happy with the fact that he has to now work with a partner, but he doesn't even know the guy. When Ken, a divorcee, takes his daughter back to his ex-wife, he mistakes Chuck for her new boyfriend. Chuck makes the offer to Ken, who thinks hard about taking the case as his last case nearly had him in a body bag, which is why he decided to retire. Ken decides to take the case and joins Chuck, who still cannot stand him. That night, the masked man arrives and broadcasts over the Internet a swordfight between himself and Master Takeda (Ken Kensei), a respected martial arts instructor who just happens to be Ken's former teacher. When Master Takeda

recognizes the killer, the killer ends up using his steel fingers to kill the Master and slices him with his sword. When Chuck arrives at the scene, the school explodes.

With Ken and Chuck now teaming to track down the killer, they are joined by Kelly (Brandie Rocci), Master Takeda's adopted daughter. As the three get closer to the killer's track, they soon learn the connection. Two years ago, there was a special tournament called Master of Champions. All except two are dead from the tournament. One of the two has believed to have been killed in a car accident so they suspect the other man. However, all is not as it seems as Ken learns his ex-wife and daughter have been kidnapped by the killer. Now it's time for Ken to enter the final match, one in which the prize is either life or death.

Hong Kong-based Seasonal Films has come out with some of the best martial arts films in history, from THE SECRET RIVALS films (1976-77) to Jackie Chan's breakthrough films SNAKE IN THE EAGLE'S SHADOW (1978) and DRUNKEN MASTER (1978). In 1985, Seasonal broke through with crossing over to the United States with NO RETREAT, NO SURRENDER (1985), combining Hollywood style cinema with Hong Kong action choreography. After six films, Seasonal makes its final U.S.-Hong Kong crossover a routine serial killer film, but with an edge to it, courtesy of screenwriter extraordinaire Keith Strandberg.

This time around, Ng See-Yuen decided not to cast any real newcomers to the front as he did with his previous films. Instead, the lead role goes to Gary Daniels, a former British kickboxing champion who became well-known after appearing with Jackie Chan in CITY HUNTER (1992) and nailed the lead role in the live action adaptation of the popular anime and manga FIST OF THE NORTH STAR (1995). Daniels, who has both acting talent and martial arts skills to boot, plays retired serial killer expert Ken O'Hara, whose troubled past involves getting divorced and leaving the police force after almost getting killed in his last case. However, this new case offers him a chance at redemption both professionally and personally as well.

Wushu expert Chuck Jeffreys returns after co-starring as a villain in SUPERFIGHTS and plays wisecracking detective Chuck Baker. Baker tends to lighten the mood and brings comic relief in the role when he is acting alongside the likes of the late Frank Gorshin, best known for playing The Riddler on the television series BATMAN (1966-68). However, when it comes to action scenes, Chuck shows why he is a fantastic martial artist, showing his kicking skills and acrobatic skills as well. All this before he became Wesley Snipes' top fight choreographer.

The highlight reel however, comes in the form of Darren Shahlavi, a British-born martial artist who makes his American film debut in the role of the lethal masked killer. Shahlavi, who got his start in Hong Kong and even had the distinction of fighting a young Wu Jing in the finale of TAI CHI II (1995), shows off some of his best moves yet. Under the direction of Tony Leung Siu-Hung, Shahlavi shows off some impressive kicking combinations and some powerful fists as well. What is great is that this killer tends to have a philosophy about winning and utilizes it

to full advantage when he begins to attack his opponents. He has an obsession with games and considers his fight with Ken the grand championship match. Speaking of Tony Leung Siu-Hung, he once again dazzles the screens with his frenetic style of fight choreography. Despite some obvious wirework, seen in the finale, he makes the trio of Daniels, Jeffreys, and Shahlavi look fantastic in their fight scenes. In Daniels' first fight scene, look out for former karate champion Joe Hess and a brief cameo from Keith Vitali as two beach thugs who gets theirs. A highlight fight scene involves the cops fighting off the killer at Kelly's apartment and Brandie Rocci's double does a picture perfect 360-degree spin onto a table after receiving a powerful roundhouse kick from the killer. It is this fight scene that makes BLOODMOON an underrated American film when it comes to its fight scenes.

BLOODMOON would mark Seasonal's final foray into U.S. cinema, however, with the casting of veterans Gary Daniels and Chuck Jeffreys, and virtual newcomer Darren Shahlavi and the frenetic fight scenes of Tony Leung Siu-Hung, it ups the routine serial killer theme just a tad.

BLOODMOON (from www.hkflix.com)

For those with a taste for high-octane B-movies, Gary Daniels will be a familiar name. This is definitely one of his more satisfying outings, thanks to the experience and quality of the Hong Kong team behind the camera.

Keith W. Strandberg, who wrote this film, also wrote a number of other American/Hong Kong crossover fight flicks such as 'No Retreat, No Surrender' and 'King of the Kickboxers'. This movie follows very much in the same vein, being highly violent and with a heavy emphasis on Eastern style choreography. The plot itself follows the characters of Gary Daniels and Chuck Jeffreys as New York cops on the trail of a serial killer who is hunting down martial arts champions. Essentially, a very transparent excuse for a string of fight sequences, but I'm not complaining, as this is what anyone who bought the movie really wants!

In terms of choreography and action, there are a number of fight sequences, almost all involving the talented Darren Shahlavi as the unnamed killer. He is an extremely talented performer and anyone keen on the genre will have seen him before. This, like Daniels, is probably his best on-screen performance. Again, this is due to the HK choreography team who forego realism for the sake of fluid moves and acrobatic kicks. Wirework is evident, but kept to a minimum to keep the fights grounded. As mentioned, if you've already seen a 'No Retreat, No Surrender' film, then you'll know what to expect.

Recommended to all fans of Gary Daniels, and those who like their hands free action violent and acrobatic. Genre fans will also notice a few in-jokes, as well as cameos from some "famous" faces including Rob Van Dam and Keith Vitali; what greater recommendation is there!

Audience Reviews for "Bloodmoon":

Bloodmoon is simply the best Martial Arts action movie ever., March 11, 2002

By [Michael T. Sanford](#) (Hancock, MI United States) - [See all my reviews](#)

I have only seen "Bloodmoon" once but that was enough to know that it is hands down the best martial arts movie ever made. The fight coreography is superb, the plot is entertaining, and the cinematography is unmatched. It is simply the most underrated movie of all time and is a must have for any true movie fan. I would recommend it to anyone!

Perhaps THE best martial arts film ever, November 18, 2003

By ["kaluahjeff"](#) (Los Angeles, California United States) - [See all my reviews](#)

For pure martial arts/action flicks, Bloodmoon simply has to take the cake. Such a great story line, good acting, and stunning martial arts from a not so well known cast. Darren Shahlavi plays the evil ex champion who makes it his mission to kill high ranking martial arts champions one by one, and city by town. Thus enter Chuck Jeffreys, a police detective teamed up with an ex supercop played by Gary Daniels who must track down Shahlavi and bring him to justice. This is a HIGHLY underrated and overlooked movie which in production had a very limited budget, but delivers superb martial arts action, stunts, great storyline, and definately suspense to keep you in your seat within every single fightscene and obviously the final fight which is a superb climax to the film. In my opinion, Bloodmoon is one of the best martial arts films yet...

This this is one of the best martial arts movies ever., October 21, 1999

By A Customer

This review is from: [Bloodmoon \(1997\) \[VHS\] \(VHS Tape\)](#)

I love this movie so much. Gary Daniels has really out done himself this time. The fight scenes are incredible. It has a perfect blend of action and comedy. The villian is a great martial artist. You have to see this movie.