

Monday, March 16, 2009, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Ang Lee & James Schamus



Chun Kam Chuen

Presented in association with the College of Letters & Sciences' On the Same Page program.

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Taiwan-born **Ang Lee** is one of the world's most revered and honored film directors. He was won two Academy Awards (in 2006, for his Direction of *Brokeback Mountain*, and in 2001, for Best Foreign-Language Film for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*). His films have twice won the prestigious Golden Lion Award for Best Picture at the Venice International Film Festival (in 2007, for *Lust, Caution*, and in 2005, for *Brokeback Mountain*) and twice won the Golden Bear for Best Film at the Berlin International Film Festival (in 1993, for *The Wedding Banquet* and in 1996, for *Sense and Sensibility*). His most recent film, *Lust, Caution*, swept Asia's Golden Horse Awards this year, with eight wins, including Best Film; it is one of the highest grossing, most critically acclaimed films in the history of Chinese-language cinema.

Brokeback Mountain won two additional Academy Awards—Best Adapted Screenplay (Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana) and Best Original Score (Gustavo Santaolalla)—and was nominated for five more, including Best Picture. Mr. Lee also won the Directors Guild of America, BAFTA, Independent Spirit and Golden Globe Awards for Best Director, among other industry accolades. The film won three additional Golden Globe Awards, including Best Picture [Drama]; the Independent Spirit Award for Best Feature; three additional BAFTA Awards, including Best Film; and the Golden Lion Award, for Best Picture, at the 2005 Venice International Film Festival, among awards all over the world.

Additionally, Mr. Lee and the film's star Jake Gyllenhaal were honored with the Human Rights Campaign Equality Award; and *Brokeback Mountain* was named Outstanding Film [Wide Release] by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation's (GLAAD) Media Awards.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon, based on a novel by Du Lu Wang, won three additional Academy Awards—Best Cinematography (Peter Pau), Best Original Score (Tan Dun) and Best Art Direction/Set Decoration (Tim Yip)—and was nominated for six more, including Best Picture and Best Director. Mr. Lee won the Directors Guild of America, BAFTA and Golden Globe Awards for Best Director, among other honors.

Mr. Lee moved to the United States in 1978. After receiving a Bachelor of Fine Arts in theatre from the University of Illinois, he went to New York University to complete an MFA in film production. His short film *Fine Line* won Best Director and Best Film awards at the annual NYU Film Festival.

His first feature film, *Pushing Hands*, was screened at the 1992 Berlin International Film Festival and won Best Film at the Asian-Pacific Film Festival. The film was also nominated for nine Golden Horse Awards (Taiwan's equivalent of the Academy Award).

Pushing Hands was also the first film in his "Father Knows Best" trilogy, all of which starred actor Sihung Lung. The next film in the trilogy, *The Wedding Banquet*, opened following its Berlin premiere and prize to international acclaim. The film was nominated for the Academy Award and the Golden Globe Award for Best Foreign-Language Film, and received six Independent Spirit Award nominations.

Mr. Lee capped the trilogy with *Eat Drink Man Woman*, which was selected as the opening night feature for the Directors Fortnight section of the 1994 Cannes International Film Festival. Named Best Foreign-Language Film by the National Board of Review, the film was nominated for the Academy Award and the Golden Globe Award for Best Foreign-Language Film, and received six Independent Spirit Award nominations.

In 1995, he directed *Sense and Sensibility*, starring Emma Thompson and Kate Winslet. The film was nominated for seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture, and won for Best Adapted Screenplay (Emma Thompson, from the Jane Austen novel). *Sense and Sensibility* also won Golden Globe Awards for Best Picture [Drama] and Best Screenplay; and was named Best Picture by BAFTA, the Boston Society of Film Critics and the National Board of Review. Mr. Lee was cited as Best Director by the New York Film Critics Circle, the National Board of Review and the Boston Society of Film Critics.

Mr. Lee next directed *The Ice Storm*, adapted by James Schamus from Rick Moody's novel and starring Joan Allen, Kevin Kline, Sigourney

Weaver, Christina Ricci and Tobey Maguire. The film premiered at the 1997 Cannes International Film Festival (where it won the Best Screenplay award), and was selected as the opening night feature for the 1997 New York Film Festival. For her performance in the film, Sigourney Weaver won a BAFTA Award and was nominated for a Golden Globe Award, for Best Supporting Actress.

Mr. Lee's subsequent films were *Ride with the Devil* (adapted by James Schamus from Daniel Woodrell's novel, and reteaming the director with actor Tobey Maguire); *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*; the box-office hit *The Hulk* (starring Eric Bana and Jennifer Connelly); and *Brokeback Mountain*.

His most recent film, in release worldwide through Focus Features, is *Lust, Caution*. In addition to the Venice prize, the film's other honors have included Independent Spirit Award nominations for lead actors Tony Leung and Tang Wei; Ms. Tang also earned a BAFTA Award nomination, as did the film itself in the Foreign-Language Film category, from both the BAFTA and Golden Globe Awards.

James Schamus is Chief Executive Officer of Focus Features and Professor in Columbia University's School of the Arts, where he teaches film history and theory. He is a Golden Globe Award-winner and multiple Academy Award nominee for his screenwriting and songwriting (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*) and producing (*Brokeback Mountain*); among his other honors, he was awarded the prize for Best Screenplay at the 1997 Cannes International Film Festival for *The Ice Storm*.

An integral contributor to the American independent film business for over two decades, Mr. Schamus has the unique distinction of being an award-winning screenwriter and producer who is also a film executive. Focus, formed in May 2002, is a motion picture production, financing and worldwide distribution company committed to bringing moviegoers the most original stories from the world's most innovative filmmakers.

Prior to the formation of Focus, Mr. Schamus was co-president of the independent film

production company Good Machine, which he co-founded in 1991. Mr. Schamus and his partners at the company produced over 40 films during an 11-year period, in partnership with such filmmakers as Ang Lee, Todd Solondz and Nicole Holofcener. Through its financing and distribution arm, Good Machine International, the company represented dozens more filmmakers, among them Pedro Almodóvar and the Coen Brothers. Good Machine was recently honored with a 10-year retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

Mr. Schamus received Academy Award nominations in the Best Adapted Screenplay and Best Original Song categories for his work on Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. The blockbuster Good Machine feature, which Mr. Schamus co-wrote and executive-produced, won four Academy Awards.

Mr. Schamus has had a long collaboration as writer and producer with Ang Lee on 10 feature films, with the director's *Brokeback Mountain*, starring Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal, released worldwide through Focus Features. The film is Focus's all-time top-grosser, with global ticket sales of over \$180 million. *Brokeback Mountain*, on which Mr. Schamus served as a producer, won, among other honors, three Academy Awards; four Golden Globe Awards; four BAFTA Awards; and the Producers Guild of America's top prize, the [Darryl F. Zanuck] Producer of the Year Award, Theatrical Motion Pictures.

Messrs. Lee and Schamus's earlier films together include *The Hulk* (which Mr. Schamus wrote and produced); *Ride with the Devil* (which Mr. Schamus produced and adapted); *The Ice Storm* (which Mr. Schamus produced and adapted, earning him WGA and BAFTA Award nominations in addition to the Cannes prize); *Sense and Sensibility* (which Mr. Schamus co-produced); *Eat Drink Man Woman* (which Mr. Schamus co-wrote and associate-produced); *The Wedding Banquet* (which Mr. Schamus co-wrote and produced); and *Pushing Hands* (which Mr. Schamus produced).

The duo most recently reteamed on Focus's current worldwide release *Lust, Caution*, which Mr. Lee directed and Mr. Schamus co-wrote and

produced. That film won the Golden Lion Award for Best Picture at the 2007 Venice International Film Festival. *Lust, Caution* recently won eight Golden Horse Awards (Asia's equivalent of the Academy Award), including Best Film and Best Director; and was nominated for three Independent Spirit Awards, including Best Actor (Tony Leung) and Best Actress (Tang Wei).

Mr. Schamus executive-produced several Good Machine features that won the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival, including Edward Burns's *The Brothers McMullen*, Tom Noonan's *What Happened Was...* and Todd Haynes's *Poison*. Among the other films that he executive-produced at Good Machine are Paul Schrader's

AutoFocus, Gregor Jordan's *Buffalo Soldiers*, Todd Solondz's *Happiness*, Bart Freundlich's *The Myth of Fingerprints*, Cindy Sherman's *Office Killer*, Nicole Holofcener's *Walking and Talking* and Todd Haynes's *Safe*.

He currently serves on the board of directors of Creative Capital. He was the 2006 Presidential Fellow in the Humanities at the University of Chicago, and received his Ph.D. in English from UC Berkeley in 2003.

Mr. Schamus was honored with the NBC Screenwriter Tribute at the 2002 Nantucket Film Festival as well as with the Writers Guild of America, East's 2003 Richard B. Jablow Award for devoted service to the Guild.