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# Bruce Lee At 75



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By Alexander Baron

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The martial artist Bruce Lee died before most of the people on this planet were born, and that probably includes you. Nevertheless, in his short life he created an enduring legacy which will outlive us all.

Lee Jun-fan was born in Chinatown, San Francisco on November 27, 1940, the son of a famous actor, so it was on the cards that he would follow a similar path. In fact he made his big screen debut as a babe in arms in the 1941 film *Golden Gate Girl*. Lee did not excel academically, and was in danger of becoming a juvenile delinquent in spite of his privileged upbringing, but after attending school in Hong Kong he graduated from Edison Technical School in Seattle then enrolled at the University of Washington, by which time he was already proficient in the martial arts. He was far from the first person to introduce this discipline to the West, but without him it would never have taken off the way it did. He even founded his own style, *Jeet Kune Do* – the way of the intercepting fist.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3JDzxfSg>

His big break came in 1966 when he appeared as Kato alongside Van Williams in the TV series *The Green Hornet*, then in 1971 he was the star for the first time, in *Tang Shan Da Xiong*, which was released a decade later in the US as *The Big Boss*. Although it is safe to say *Enter The Dragon* was his biggest film, the 1971 film *Way Of The Dragon* contains what is arguably **his greatest fight scene**, in which he reluctantly kills a worthy opponent who prefers an honourable death to an ignominious defeat. Sadly, he did not live to see the US release of *Enter The Dragon*, August 19, 1973; he died from a freak reaction to a headache pill on July 20 that year. The curse continued when his son Brandon, who had followed the same path as a martial artist and actor, was killed in a freak firearms accident on a film set; he was just 28 years old.

For many people, Bruce Lee was more than an actor and martial artist, he provides a philosophy of life and living. The **Bruce Lee Foundation** was set up in 2002 to preserve and expand his legacy. His posthumous birthday is being widely celebrated, especially in the US and Hong Kong.

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