



CHEECH MARIN

BIOGRAPHY

Best known as one half of the hilariously irreverent, satirical, counter-culture, no-holds-barred duo of 'Cheech and Chong,' Cheech Marin is a paradox in the world of entertainment. As an actor, director, writer, musician, art collector and humanitarian, he's a man who has enough talent, humor, and intelligence to do just about anything. As a multi-generational star -- or as Cheech jests, "People know me from the womb to the tomb," - he attracts fans through his comedy and films, as well as his children's' projects. To this day, 'Cheech and Chong' films are the number one weekend video rentals.

Now in the works for Cheech is an addition to the Cheech & Chong film franchise (New Line), with the script being penned by both Cheech and Tommy Chong. The last feature in the franchise was released more than 20 years ago ("Cheech and Chong's The Corsican Brothers"). The untitled film will catch up with the wacky stoner personas in the present day. Cheech was last seen in the Revolution Studios feature **CHRISTMAS WITH THE CRANKS** starring Tim Allen. Next up for Cheech is the new Miramax Film, **UNDERCLASSMAN** starring Nick Cannon. He teamed up once again with well-known director Robert Rodriguez in two feature films: **SPY KIDS 3-D** and **ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO** with Johnny Depp, Antonio Banderas and Salma Hayek. Other notable film credits include **TIN CUP**, **PAULIE**, **THE GREAT WHITE HYPE**, **PICKING UP THE PIECES** and Robert Rodriguez's **SPY KIDS 2**, **FROM DUSK TILL DAWN** and **DESPERADO**.

Cheech is in high demand these days making the transition from film to television. For the last few years he co-starred with Don Johnson in the CBS one-hour drama **NASH BRIDGES**, now in syndication. Currently, he is returning to CBS in a recurring role on **JUDGING AMY**.

With his entry into the "kids set," Cheech's 'littlest' fans only know him because of his work in children's music and animation. In the animated film world, Cheech will lend his voice alongside Placido Domingo to the first Hispanic themed and produced animated film, **SIAN KA'AN**. The film will be directed by Raul Garcia ("Rugrats in Paris"). He became known to an international children's audience when he provided the voice of 'Banzai,' one of the dastardly hyenas in **THE LION KING**, as well as the streetwise Chihuahua in Disney's **OLIVER AND COMPANY**. Cheech's voice was heard as 'Lencho the Flea' on the CBS show, **SANTO BUGITO**.

Currently, Cheech's vision of Chicano art and expression are being brought to life in a blockbuster museum exhibit duo collectively entitled, **CHICANO**. Cheech's own personal Chicano art collection, one of the largest in the world, forms the core "Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge". This unprecedented exhibit will visit 13 U.S. cities within the next five years. So far the exhibition has had a very successful launches in San Antonio at the San Antonio Museum of Art, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, N.M., the El Paso Museum of Art in El Paso, Texas, the Indiana State Museum in Indianapolis, Ind., the Golden State at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in San Diego, Calif., Minneapolis/St. Paul Minn., and the next stop will be in Chicago at the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum June 14th – September 4th.

Cheech was the recipient of the 2000 Creative Achievement Award from the Imagen Foundation. In addition, he received the 1999 National Council of La Raza/Kraft Foods ALMA Community Service Award for his work on behalf of the Latino community.

Due to his phenomenal success of his first bilingual children's album, **MY NAME IS CHEECH, THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER**, his next release will be **MY NAME IS CHEECH**,

THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER "COAST TO COAST". According to Cheech, "The music speaks directly to kids in an intelligent way--they're fun, but educational." In fact, the record impressed the Los Angeles Unified School District that they are using one of his songs to teach kids about how to mix and use colors. The second album will feature a bus trip from Los Angeles to Miami, and through a combination of Latin rhythms, the music will address such issues as using rewards and lessons on how to get along.

Cheech was born in South Central L.A. and raised in Granada Hills, a suburb of the San Fernando Valley. He has always loved music. "As a little kid, I was a singer and recorded albums. I was always in bands--you name it, I sang it --R&B, jazz, funk, I did it all," he says. After attending Cal State Northridge to study English, he left eight credits short of a degree to "pursue pottery and avoid the draft."

Moving to Vancouver, British Columbia as a political refugee, Cheech soon met Tommy Chong who owned a topless club. He worked there for nine months combining music and improvisational comedy. "It was great--you could call it modern day burlesque," he quips.

Eventually Cheech and Chong teamed up and moved back to Los Angeles. They performed their stand-up/music act at clubs all over L.A. until they were discovered at 'The Troubador' by music industry magnate Lou Adler. "The rest," as Cheech says, "is history."

Cheech and Chong were a critically acclaimed duo for 15 years, but have worked separately for the past ten years. They teamed together for eight feature films: the first, **UP IN SMOKE**, was the highest grossing comedy of 1978, topping \$100 million at the box office. That followed with **CHEECH AND CHONG'S NEXT MOVIE**, **CHEECH AND CHONG'S NICE DREAMS**, **THINGS ARE TOUGH ALL OVER**, **CHEECH AND CHONG: STILL SMOKING**, and **CHEECH AND CHONG: THE CORSICAN BROTHERS**. They also made guest appearances on **YELLOWBEARD** and Martin Scorsese's **AFTER HOURS**.

After splitting with Chong, Cheech wrote, directed, and starred in Universal's hit comedy, **BORN IN EAST L.A.** Other film and television credits include **CISCO KID, RUDE AWAKENING, FATAL BEAUTY,** and **SHRIMP ON THE BARBIE.**

As for the future, Cheech hopes to continue acting, writing, and directing. He also desires to become more involved in animation projects. "I love animation because it is such a pure form of acting, created just by the voice," he says. When he is not working, Cheech devotes a great deal of time to such organizations as El Rescate and the Inner City Arts Council.

Additionally, Cheech develops his own scripts and actively works to build his collection of Chicano art, which is the largest owned by a private citizen. Cheech also has a line of three gourmet hot sauces on the market that are in the words of Cheech – ‘Whatappenin!’

However, the best times for Cheech are those hanging out with his wife, a painter, and their three children. The family divides their time between homes in Los Angeles and Park City, Utah.