

ONCE UPON A TIME **THE** IN SAN FRANCISCO



# BLACK HATCHET

*vs. THE BOUNTY HUNTERS*

BEFORE THE PHANTOM, SUPERMAN & BATMAN,  
THERE WAS . . .



TRACHIOTIS | GRAHAM | JEFFERSON



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, OVERVIEW & LOGLINE

THE BLACK HATCHET – PITCH DECK © Michael Trachiotis 2026

## GOALS

To option the script, sequels, comics and stories. To be hired to write and rewrite scripts. Producer role.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**TITLE:** The Black Hatchet

**SCREENPLAY:** 96 Pages

**ANIMATED COMICS/PROOF-OF-CONCEPT:** Three Comics (Adapted from the screenplay)

**GENRE:** Action/Adventure/Revenge/Martial Arts/Thriller/History/Epic

**DEMOGRAPHICS:** Adult/Female/Male/Asian/Multicultural

**BUDGET:** TBD

**SHOOT:** TBD

## OVERVIEW

Based on real people, true stories and events.

Imagine “Gladiator” with a “Fist of Fury” melded with “John Wick” running amok with two razor sharp hatchets in “Gangs of New York” except it’s the criminal, outlaw 1906 Barbary Coast.

## LOGLINE

*A ghost vigilante rises from the shadows – twin blades parched for justice, vengeance in his veins. When Hatchet Men sex traffickers abduct his sister, a scarred cowboy reborn as the Black Hatchet carves a savage path, racing against time to save her before she’s shipped to Shanghai – leaving alleys awash in blood and body parts.*

## WHY IT STANDS OUT

- **A never-before-seen world:** Rarely explored **Chinese Tong underworld** of early San Francisco
- **Signature action:** Martial-arts combat fused with savage hatchet warfare (“Hatchet Fu”)
- **Epic spectacle:** The 1906 earthquake and firestorm as a third-act apocalypse
- **Franchise-ready mythology:** The story launches toward Shanghai and a global crime empire

## A NEW ACTION ICON

- A masked vigilante with **obsidian hatchets**
- Martial arts styles rooted in **White Crane Kung Fu**
- Brutal, grounded, close quarters combat with mythic flair

## EMOTIONAL CORE

- Brother-sister bond
- Love tested by catastrophe
- Justice driven by guilt, grief, and salvation

## THEMES

- Justice vs. vengeance
- Cultural collision and shared humanity
- Survival, rebirth, and legacy

## COMPARABLES (POSITIONING)

- *The Crow* (iconic vigilante mythology)
- *Gangs of New York* (historical crime epic)
- *The Raid / John Wick* (visceral combat)
- *Fist of Fury / Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (martial artistry)
- *Gladiator/The Revenant* (historical revenge)

## SEQUELS

- *Once Upon A Time in Shanghai – Werewolf Monk*
- *Once Upon A Time in San Francisco – Green Dragon*
- *Once Upon A Time in WWI – Ghosts in the Trenches*
- *Young Black Hatchet – episodic TV series*

# SYNOPSIS

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1906 San Francisco is a city on the brink, where vice runs rampant and the Barbary Coast bleeds corruption. Malcolm Hutchins, a rugged young cowboy in his early twenties, arrives in town with his 14-year-old sister, Rose, for a cattle auction.

But as they pass through the seedy underworld of the Coast, they're ambushed by Tong Hatchet Men. Malcolm is brutally attacked and left for dead with a vicious gash across his face. Rose is gone – kidnapped for trafficking into the darkest corners of Shanghai.

Days later, scarred, broken and consumed with guilt, Malcolm retreats to his family's cattle ranch near Mt. Shasta, where he begins planning a rescue mission with his blood brother, White Crow, chief of the Okwanuchu people and master of black obsidian hatchet warfare.

Together, they prepare for Malcolm's descent into the city's criminal underbelly. But before they can act, tragedy strikes again – highwaymen torch the Hutchins ranch and burn his parents alive.

Now fueled by rage and sorrow, Malcolm becomes something else entirely and returns to the scene of the crime – reborn as the Black Hatchet, a vengeful force trained in White Crane Kung Fu by a mysterious drifter – the Werewolf Monk, a rogue Shaolin master hiding from his past.

Armed with twin obsidian blades of justice, Malcolm prowls the Barbary Coast and begins a bloody rampage through the back-alleys, opium dens, brothels, gambling halls and fight pits, dismantling the Tong's criminal empire while saving dozens of kidnapped girls in the process.

His ultimate target: The Pale Devil, an albino corporal and sadistic enforcer of the Shanghai Green Dragon Tong, plus Rose's captor, the villain who sliced his face and ordered the attack that ruined Malcolm's life. Just as Malcolm closes in, fate intervenes. An 8.3 magnitude earthquake rips through the city, followed by a four-day firestorm that turns San Francisco into an apocalyptic inferno.

Amid the chaos, Malcolm is conscripted to fight fires – and during a daring rescue of children from a burning, collapsing hotel, he uncovers a hidden trapdoor and escapes into an underground network of gold rush tunnels. In the flooded burrows, Malcolm finally confronts the Pale Devil, who is escaping to Shanghai with the wanted Werewolf monk and with three captive girls – one of them is Rose.

An epic Hatchet Fu battle erupts between Malcolm, the Pale Devil and his elite killers, while the Werewolf Monk duels alongside him. When Malcolm is nearly defeated, Rose fights back, saving her brother in a moment of fierce courage.

Malcolm and Rose narrowly escape the collapsing hideout. The Werewolf Monk is swallowed by the torrid current. Above ground, the city in ruins, still burns. Malcolm searches for his beloved Lorna, a nurse, only to find her hospital covered in bricks and a buried woman, who resembles Lorna, submerged in the rubble.

On the verge of collapsing, Malcolm gathers the strength to get Rose to safety, fleeing through the devastation with her on horseback evading gunfire and carrying her to the triage at Cathedral Hill, passing near Lorna.

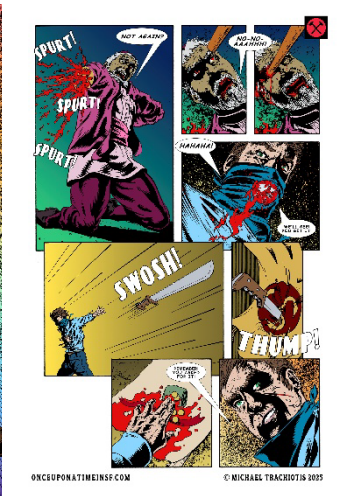
In one final act of heroism, Malcolm climbs a flaming church tower to extinguish the fire threatening to reignite the remaining city – then exhausted, he passes out and tumbles from the roof. He is saved in a dramatic rescue and awakens in Lorna's arms. Both believed the other dead. Rose close by.

But, Malcolm's mission isn't over. Beyond the Pacific lies Shanghai – and the Green Dragon Tong Lord – whose empire must fall before Malcolm, Rose and Lorna are truly free.



# SAMPLE COMICS/STORYBOARDS

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# DESIRABLE DEMOGRAPHICS & BOUNDLESS GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION

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“Once Upon A time in San Francisco – The Black Hatchet” and its sequels are Historical/Action/Adventure/Martial Arts stories with the “Hero” element that is the most popular genre in American cinema.

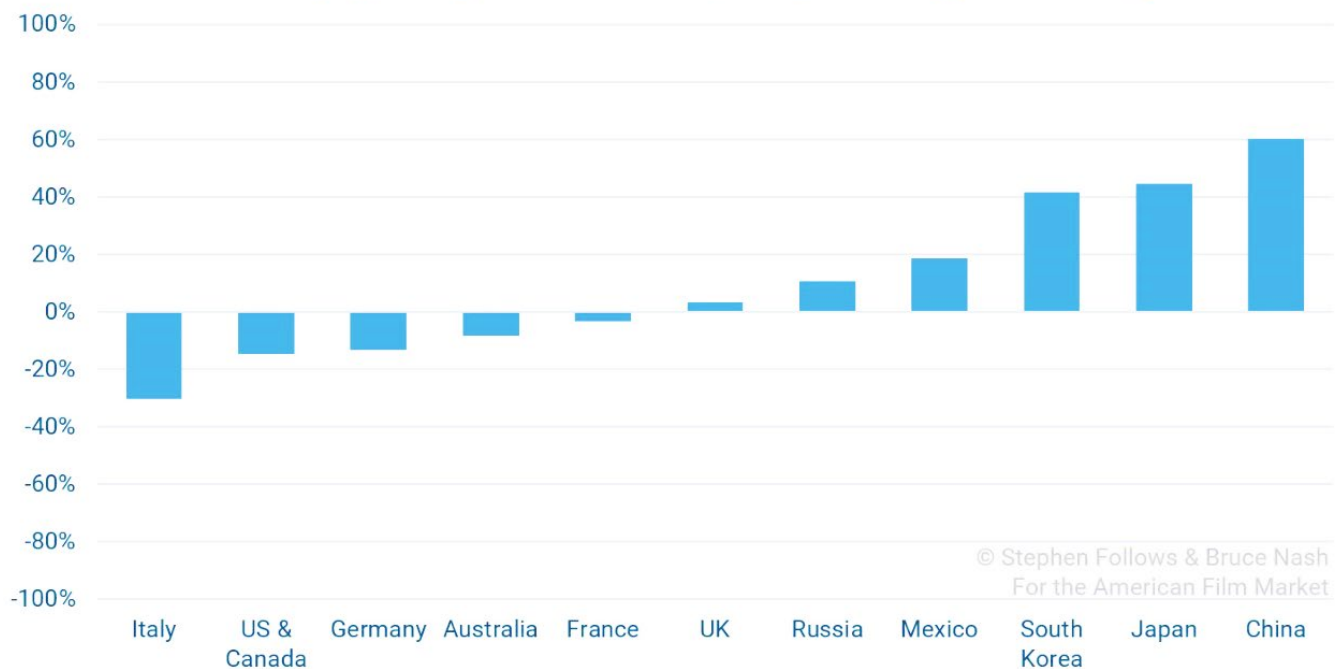
The culturally diverse cast mirrors the most sought-after age group of 18 – 34, including the Black Hatchet, his love interest Lorna and his kidnapped sister Rose who is 14. Much of the cast is Chinese (this is a key foreign audience for action film distribution, see table below), plus Native and African American characters as well as commanding female roles, especially for 1906.

According to SAWA, Global Cinema Advertising Association, “specifically, cinemagoers are younger than the population with generally half of the visits made by people in the key 14-34 demographic. Cinema going has increased against all age groups . . . with the most dramatic growth seen amongst the over 25’s.”

In addition, according to the GITNEX Market Data Report 2025, “the most popular genre of movies by American audiences for the past 22 years is Action/Adventure . . . the three highest grossing movies of all time.”

According to AMERICAN FILM MARKET “action films . . . perform disproportionality best in Asia.” In their chart (below), zero indicates the global average performance, so a positive score indicates that the genre in question performs disproportionality well in that territory.

**Relative popularity of Action films, compared to global average**

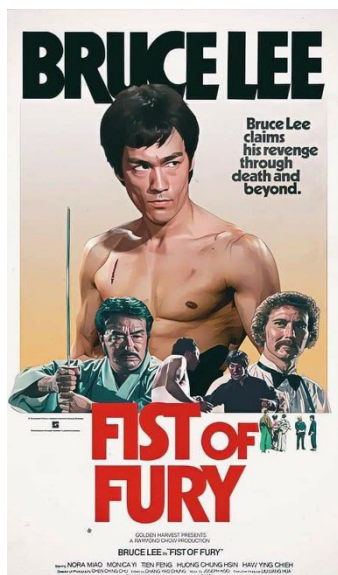
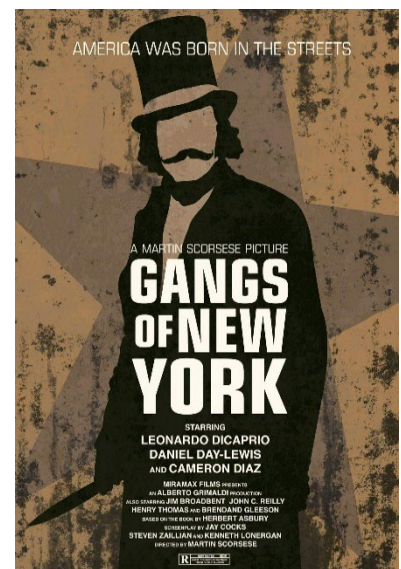
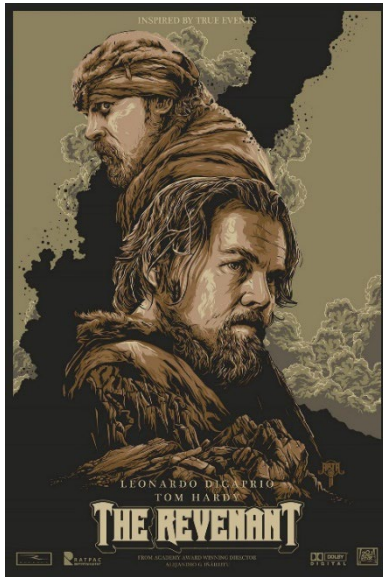


Therefore, Revenge/Historical/Action/Adventure/Martial Arts films with a cross-section of cultures and women featuring Asian characters will be eye-catching to global, and specifically, Pacific Rim audiences generating desirable distribution channels and revenues.



# COMPARABLE ACTION/ADVENTURE REVENGE FILMS

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# COMPARABLE ACTION/ADVENTURE REVENGE FILM FINANCIALS

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## DOMESTIC MARKET SHARE 2025 & TOP GROSSING COMP FILMS

[www.the-numbers.com](http://www.the-numbers.com)

### ACTION

Total Movies = 49 (January to August)

Revenues = **\$1,964,451,329**

Market Share = 33.83%

### ADVENTURE

Total Movies = 25 (January to August)

Revenues = **\$1,488,346,691**

Market Share = 25.63%

### THE REVENANT

Domestic Box Office \$183,637,894

International Box Office \$349,300,408

Worldwide Box Office \$532,938,302

Production Budget: **\$135,000,000**

### JOHN WICK CHAPTER 3 – PARABELLUM

Domestic Box Office \$171,016,727

International Box Office \$156,186,974

Worldwide Box Office \$327,203,701

Production Budget: **\$ 75,000,000**

### GANGS OF NEW YORK

Domestic Box Office \$ 77,730,500

International Box Office \$105,394,121

Worldwide Box Office \$183,124,621

Production Budget: **\$ 97,000,000**

### JOHN WICK CHAPTER 4

Domestic Box Office \$187,131,806

International Box Office \$260,184,599

Worldwide Box Office \$447,316,405

Production Budget: **\$100,000,000**

### DJANGO UNCHAINED

Domestic Box Office \$162,805,434

International Box Office \$287,036,132

Worldwide Box Office \$449,841,566

Production Budget: **\$100,000,000**

### THE EQUALIZER 2

Domestic Box Office \$102,084,362

International Box Office \$ 88,291,819

Worldwide Box Office \$190,376,181

Production Budget: **\$ 77,000,000**

### GLADIATOR

Domestic Box Office \$187,683,805

International Box Office \$263,999,794

Worldwide Box Office \$451,683,599

Production Budget: **\$103,000,000**

### QUANTUM OF SOLACE

Domestic Box Office \$169,368,427

International Box Office \$422,323,651

Worldwide Box Office \$591,692,078

Production Budget: **\$230,000,000**

### THE PATRIOT

Domestic Box Office \$113,330,342

International Box Office \$101,969,658

Worldwide Box Office \$215,300,000

Production Budget: **\$110,000,000**

### THE PUNISHER

Domestic Box Office \$ 33,664,370

International Box Office \$ 20,869,404

Worldwide Box Office \$ 54,533,774

Production Budget: **\$ 33,000,000**

### JOHN WICK

Domestic Box Office \$ 43,037,835

International Box Office \$ 32,972,675

Worldwide Box Office \$ 76,010,510

Production Budget: **\$ 30,000,000**

### THOR: RAGNAROK

Domestic Box Office \$315,058,289

International Box Office \$535,424,489

Worldwide Box Office \$850,482,778

Production Budget: **\$180,000,000**

### JOHN WICK CHAPTER 2

Domestic Box Office \$ 92,029,184

International Box Office \$ 79,288,087

Worldwide Box Office \$171,317,271

Production Budget: **\$ 40,000,000**

### V FOR VENDETTA

Domestic Box Office \$ 70,511,035

International Box Office \$ 59,703,127

Worldwide Box Office \$130,214,162

Production Budget: **\$ 50,000,000**



# UNIQUE ADVERTISING, MARKETING & BRANDING STRATEGIES

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We will **GIVE AWAY FREE INTERACTIVE, ANIMATED eCOMICS AND PROMO CARDS**, plus sell animated T-shirts, stickers and posters at comic-cons. The goal is to create brand awareness and drive people to the website for free, animated comics to build a fan base.

Using interactive technology, our groundbreaking fusion of traditional storytelling and art transforms static covers, pages, cards, panels, T-shirts, posters, cards and stickers into a vibrant, animated scene, providing fans an entirely new way to connect with our stories.

Importantly, the experience using an Augmented Reality (AR) App, will attract our key demographic of a culturally diverse affluent comic, movie and cos-play fans with disposable incomes who are avid shoppers, into fashion and technology, spend time on social media plus buy comics and frequent cinema.

This proven AR methodology will generate a grass-roots promotion that enlists fans as evangelists when they show off the AR animations to friends and families.

**FREE eCOMICS**



**eCOMICS PLAY ANIMATIONS!**



**GET PDF COMICS & LEARN MORE**

**POSTERS, STICKERS & T-SHIRTS  
PLAY ANIMATIONS, TOO!**



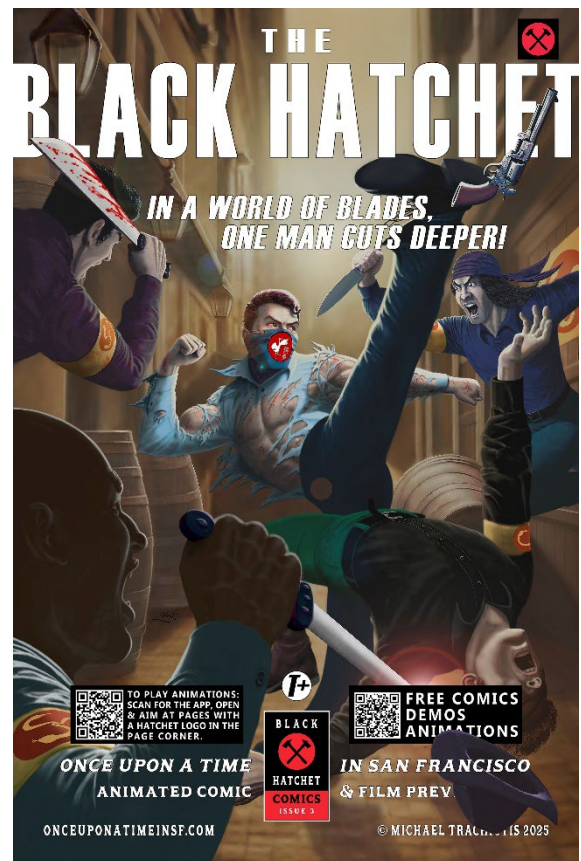
**GET THE APP, OPEN, AIM &  
WATCH ART COME TO LIFE!**

ONCEUPONATIMEINSF.COM © MICHAEL TRACHOTIS 2025

***Try it now! Get the app, open, aim at any of the art in the DECK & watch it come to life!***

# COVERS (Project Animations)

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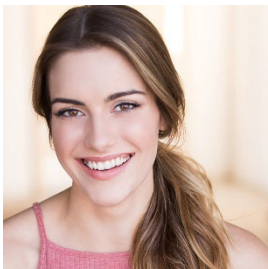
# CHARACTERS/BACKSTORIES/SUGGESTED ACTORS

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**Main BILL SKARSGARD – Malcom Hutchins Aka the Black Hatchet** – in his early 20s, is the son of Robert and Fionnsgoth Hutchins from Scotland who moved to Mt. Shasta and started a cattle ranch in the 1880's. At night as the vengeful, guilt driven and tormented Black Hatchet he hunts the back alleys of the Barbary Coast and Chinatown for his 14 year-old kidnapped sister, Rose, and the Hatchet Men who took her, defending himself with dual, Okwanuchu (Native American), black obsidian hatchets. He acquired superior hatchet warfare skills from the Okwanuchu, including their leader and his blood brother White Crow, whom he grew up with on his ranch. Because of his upbringing near the

Siskiyou Trail, Hutchins encounters many drifters seeking work and meets the exiled and outlaw Werewolf Shaolin Monk Grand Master Tai Djin who teaches him the ancient White Crane fighting style.



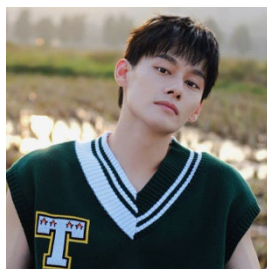
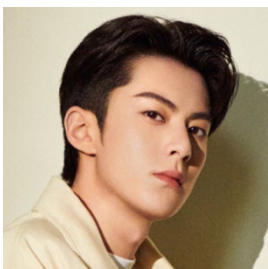
**Lead BRIANNA JOY CONNER – Nurse Lorna Van Deusen** – is a well-educated trust-funder on the lamb from an arranged marriage in New York to fulfill her dream in San Francisco of becoming doctor. She works at the Harbor Hospital next to Yerba Buena Hotel where the Black Hatchet stays and over three weeks takes care of his wounds. She realizes she's in love with him when she believes he died during the earthquake, and he believes she perished in the fire. They're reunited in the end.



**Lead JOHNNY SEQUOYA FRIEDENBERG – Rose Hutchins** – is Malcolm's kidnapped 14 year-old sister. The Black Hatchet's widowed father Robert remarried Okwanuchu Little Bird and she had Rose. Rose learned how to shoot and use a bow and arrow by 8 years-old and to hunt and defend herself, Malcolm being her mentor. they have a very strong bond. She also learned White Crane from Werewolf Shaolin Monk Grand Master and causes trouble for her captors. She never gives up hope that Malcolm will rescue her.



**PERRY YUNG – Lord Jinrong** – is the 100+ year old leader of the Mud Dragon (Gator) Tong in San Francisco who was sent by the Shanghai Green Dragon to oversee the gambling, bribes, extortion, opium and prostitution in Chinatown and Barbary Coast. Under his Green Dragon restaurant is a large opium den with dozens of stalls. His twin mixed race son's Bobby and Charlie are his minions overseeing the opium den and Hatchet Men used to kidnap young white girls for the sex trade including Rose.



**DYLAN WANG & MARIUS WANG – Bobby and Charlie – Jinrong's Twin Sons** - who run errands, oversee the Hatchet Men to kidnap run away white girls and run the opium den under the Green Dragon restaurant. The Pale Devil enforcer, along with Bobby and Charlie ambushed Malcolm and Rose Hutchins. Rose scratched Bobby's face fighting him. Charlie is an opium fiend and constantly attempts to have his way with Rose.

# CHARACTERS/BACKSTORIES/SUGGESTED ACTORS

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**ZACH RUNNING COYOTE – Okwanuchu Leader White Crow** – is the young chief of the last remaining, small tribe of Okwanuchu Indigenous people living at the base of Mt. Shasta. When Hutchins family settled, they lived in harmony with the Okwanuchu. Malcolm and White Crow were born about the same time and grew up together on the mountain and plains and are blood brothers. They both mastered wilderness living and black hatchet weaponry. The Werewolf Monk Grand Master taught him White Crane Kung Fu and how to use the hatchets as extensions of the wing tips and beaks.



**LASHANA LYNCH – Nurse Brenda Smith** – is Lorna's cynical best friend, mentor and confidant. Brenda is suspicious of Malcolm and believes he might be the man-with-no-name vigilante in the papers chopping up the Hatchet Men. Brenda tries to get Lorna to admit she likes him and suggest she goes to the Sweetwater Saloon run by her friend Jill McBain (Claudia Cardinale character from "Once Upon A Time in The West") who told Brenda a man with a scar on his face comes in nightly to drink whiskey.



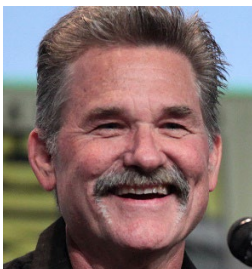
**DONNIE YEN - Werewolf Shaolin Monk Grand Master "Su Kong" Tai Djin** – is a real person who took refuge on Hutchin's cattle ranch teaching the Black Hatchet White Crane. As a reward for his mastery, the Monk gave him a black bandana with the White Crane symbol that he wears to hide his face and the ugly scar from the Pale Devil's hatchet. When growing up at the Fukien Temple, because of his animal like hair (Hypertrichosis) sightings stirred rumors he a werewolf resided in the Temple. Djin completed every branch of Shaolin training and became the Grand Master "Su Kong."



**MARK DACASCOS – The Pale Devil** – is the assassin and enforcer for the Shanghai Green Dragon who controls the San Francisco Tongs. The Pale Devil nearly killed the Black Hatchet when he sliced his face with his hatchet as Bobby and Charlie kidnapped Rose. He is assigned to eliminate the Black Hatchet and return to Shanghai with the first shipment of girls in three weeks and with the captured outlaw the Werewolf Monk. The Pale Devil and Black Hatchet meet in an epic martial arts battle in an underground tunnel hideout with Bobby, Charlie, Rose and Djin.



**ERIC BANA – Bohemian Bailey Millard** – has a panoramic view of San Francisco from his Russian Hill Spanish Villa terrace. His circle of friends included Jack London and Lionel Barrymore. It is his terrace the Black Hatchet finds solitude after a night of bloody hatchet brawls. Millard at first tries to shoot him, then befriends him and becomes an ally. It is here the Black Hatchet finds refuge after a blood splashing and limb severing hatchet fight with Jinrong and his Hatchet Men after the earthquake.



**KURT RUSSEL & SHAMIER ANDERSON – Fire Captain John Dougherty – Fireman John Wickerson** – works for Dougherty and when Dougherty enlists the Black Hatchet as a volunteer, Wickerson partners with him to catch children the Black Hatchet throws from a third story window the Black Hatchet free climbed to rescue them. Dougherty is the tough as nails leader who rallies the firemen to save the city.



ONCE UPON A TIME **THE** IN SAN FRANCISCO



# BLACK HATCHET

## SAVIOR

BLACK  
HATCHET  
COMICS  
ISSUE 1

SPECIAL  
COMBAT  
ISSUE

**FIRE IN HIS HEART!  
JUSTICE IN HIS HANDS!  
BLOOD ON EVERY STREET!**

**TRACHIOTIS I JEFFERSON**



# SET PIECES & LOCATIONS

THE BLACK HATCHET – PITCH DECK © Michael Trachiotis 2026





# COMIC CREATIVE TEAM

THE BLACK HATCHET – PITCH DECK © Michael Trachiotis 2026



**Michael Trachiotis, Creator, Producer, Writer, Artist, Animator** – Michael Trachiotis is an optioned screenwriter and an award winning short filmmaker for "Death Knocked 3 Times," a black and white short horror film that featured stop motion animation that he wrote, produced, directed and edited. Michael worked for Penny Marshall and Parkway Productions in story, script and project development. As well he has been retained to consult and strengthen scripts, screenplays, comic books, graphic novels and novels. Michael also taught screenwriting at Academy of Art University. Furthermore, he has a Bachelor of Science in Journalism (Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo – Advertising and PR), Bachelor of Arts in Cinema (San Francisco State University – Screenwriting) and a Master of Fine Arts in Motion Pictures and Television (Academy of Art University, San Francisco – Producing and Directing). Plus, he had a very lucrative AR consulting and apparel business and wrote, produced and edited AR 2D/3D films and animations for Fortune 25 companies.

**CONTACT:** 415-577-1537

[michaelxsfnative@gmail.com](mailto:michaelxsfnative@gmail.com)

## GRAPHIC NOVEL & FILM PREVIZ WEBSITE + SOCIAL MEDIA



## PBS INTERVIEW ADAPTING A SCREENPLAY INTO A GRAPHIC NOVEL & HATCHET PROJECT



### ARTISTS

Cover Artist – Moti Friedman

Page Illustrator – Noah Graham

Cover & Page Illustrator – Rahsan Ekedal

Color Modeling – Ann Marcellino

Cover & Page Illustrator – Allan Jefferson

Animators – Julian Meyer, Michael Trachiotis

Creator, Writer, Producer, Design, Color, Lettering, AR Apps – Michael Trachiotis

**PUBLISHER:** BLACK HATCHET COMICS – Michael Trachiotis



