



BIOGRAPHY

Ke Huy Quan
Freddy Wong

Born in Saigon, Vietnam to Chinese immigrants, Ke is the seventh of nine children. When Ke was just seven years old, his parents made the difficult decision of splitting up their family to escape a tumultuous post-war Vietnam. After a failed attempt, in 1978 the family succeeded in making it out, albeit divided. Ke, along with his father and five other siblings, ended up in a refugee camp in Hong Kong. They were there for one year before being reunited with the rest of the family and granted asylum in the United States. In 1979, they settled in Chinatown, Los Angeles.

Fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese, Ke spoke little English but soon acclimated himself to life in America. In 1983, while Ke was busy being a kid, unbeknownst to him, the search was on for a Chinese boy to star alongside Harrison Ford in a sequel to the highly successful film, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Unable to find who they were looking for, an open casting call was held at an elementary school in a place none other than

Chinatown, Los Angeles. Ke tagged along with his little brother to the audition with no intention of trying out himself. A casting director noticed him and invited him to read for the part. He would later read again, but this time for Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, and Harrison Ford. Despite having no acting experience, he walked into the room and came back out, landing the role of a lifetime as Short Round. Ke's next destination—Sri Lanka, to film *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. Bitten by the acting bug, in his follow up movie, Ke joined an enviable group of young misfits still beloved by generations today, known as *The Goonies*.

He continued acting, globe-trotting from Taiwan to Japan. He starred in the Taiwanese film *It Takes a Thief* and the Japanese film *Passengers*, opposite singer Honda Minako. Ke's other notable credits include *Encino Man*, *Breathing Fire*, and television shows "Nothing is Easy" with Elliott Gould and "Head of the Class." Working since he was eleven, opportunities for Asian actors became limited as Ke got older.

He decided to press pause and return to the real-life classrooms of USC, where he studied film and earned his Bachelor of Arts degree.

After graduating from USC, Ke began working again, but this time behind the camera. He worked as an Assistant Action Choreographer collaborating with Action Director Corey Yuen on *X-Men* and *The One* with Jet Li. He later went on to work for one of Asia's most influential



filmmakers Wong Kar Wai, assisting in project development and even as an Assistant Director on Wong's film, *2046*.

Ke's love for acting did not wane; however, jobs for Asian Actors in Hollywood remained few and far between. This all changed in 2018 when *Crazy Rich Asians*, featuring an all-Asian cast, took the box office by storm, opening new doors for Asian actors. Ke, recognizing Hollywood's acknowledgment of the importance of Asian representation, took this as his cue to return to his roots. He decided to step back in front of the camera, auditioning and landing the role of Waymond Wang in the Russo Brothers/A24 feature, *Everything Everywhere All At Once*, starring opposite Michelle Yeoh. Ke's performance in the critically acclaimed film marked his return to acting in a major role in more than 20 years. The film, written and directed by the Daniels, went on to become A24's highest-grossing movie worldwide to date.

You can catch Ke next in the Disney+ Original series *American Born Chinese*, based on the genre-hopping graphic novel by Gene Luen Yang.