



Benny CHAN 陳木勝 (1961.10.24–2020.8.23)

Director, Producer, Screenwriter

Born in Hong Kong, Benny Chan was passionate about Hong Kong kung fu and action films since he was little. After graduating from secondary school, Chan joined Rediffusion Television (RTV) as a clerical staff member, and later worked as continuity supervisor and production assistant. In 1983, he followed Siu Sang to join Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB), where he worked on *The Return of Condor Heroes* (1983) and later became a production assistant to Johnnie To. By 1985, Chan had been promoted as producer to work on *The Flying Fox of Snowy Mountain* (1985) and *The New Heaven Sword & the Dragon Sabre* (1986). He left TVB in 1987 and joined Pearl City Video Ltd to film direct-to-video programmes. He was also executive director for *Goodbye Darling* (1987) and *Fatal Love* (1988) for Cinema City Company Limited, making this his first foray into directing films.

Chan made his film directorial debut in 1990 with *A Moment of Romance* (1990). Produced by Johnnie To, it was a box-office and critical success. He later directed *The Magic Crane* (1993), co-written (with Jobic Tsui) and produced by Tsui Hark. Under the shadow of these heavyweight producers, Chan continued to find his own style and directed different film genres including the sentimental *Son on the Run* (1991) and the comedy *What a Hero!* (1992). It was not until *Big Bullet* (1996), in which Chan was director, screenwriter (with Joe Ma Wai-ho, Susan Chan) and producer, that he established himself in contemporary action films. For the first time, Chan was nominated for Best Director at the Hong Kong Film Awards.

Between the late 1980s and early 90s, Chan continued to work in both television and cinema, producing works for Asia Television (ATV), including *Who Is the Winner* (1991). His talent was later spotted by Leonard Ho Koon-cheung of Golden Harvest (HK) Limited, and subsequently he focused exclusively on film direction. He first directed a major production of international calibre with *Who Am I?* (1998), co-directed by and starring Jackie Chan. He was then responsible for the big-budget production *Gen-X Cops* (1999). With the film featuring fresh-faced lead actors and stunning, explosive action, Chan gradually established his own style and aesthetics in modern action films. He continued with detective and crime films, including *Gen-Y Cops* (2000), *New Police Story* (2004), *Divergence* (2005), *Invisible Target* (2007), and *The White Storm* (2013), all of which were distinct for their richly detailed scenes and tight plots moving at a cracking pace. He injected comedy into his action films with works such as *Rob-B-Hood* (2006), and directed the children-friendly comedy *Meow* (2017). He also expanded his oeuvre with *Connected* (2008), a remake of the American film *Cellular* (2004), and the science fiction film *City Under Siege* (2010).

Chan was often the screenwriter and producer for his directorial works, and was a co-producer for *Final Romance* (2001) and *Little Big Master* (2015). He was nominated six times for Best Director at the Hong Kong Film Awards and finally won the award in 2022 for *Raging Fire* (2021), his last film. In August 2020, Chan died of illness in Hong Kong.
