



Simon YAM 任達華 (b. 1955.3.19)

Actor

Born in Hong Kong, Yam started out as a model before acting for Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB). His role in the TVB series *CID* (1976) brought him recognition, and he proceeded to take part in other popular television dramas such as *A House is Not a Home* (1977), *The Shell Game* (1980) and *Police Cadet II* (1985). He switched to Asia Television Limited (ATV) after shooting *War of the Dragon* (1989). In that time, he also appeared in films occasionally, including *Hot Blood* (1977), *House of the Lute* (1980) and *Goodbye Mammie* (1986).

At the end of the 1980s, Yam started concentrating on film acting. The gangster and cop-and-robber genres were in vogue those days, and he was cast as the villain in films including *Burning Ambition* (1989) and *Return Engagement* (1990), often playing the head of gangs. He gave a breakthrough performance in John Woo's *Bullet in the Head* (1990) as Lok, playing a suave and sentimental Vietnamese assassin.

In the early 1990s, the dashing handsome Yam starred in a number of films about gigolos, including *Hong Kong Gigolo* (1990) and *Gigolo and Whore* (1991), which achieved moderate box-office success. He was then often cast as the male lead in films including *Love Among the Triad* (1993), *The Tragic Fantasy—Tiger of Wanchai* (1994), *Legendary Couple* (1995) and *Because of Lies* (1995). Although the films may differ in genre, he often portrayed serial killers, gangsters and robbers.

Starting from the second half of the 1990s, Yam began to cut down on his acting commitments, going for quality of performance rather than quantity. He took part in many Milkyway Image (HK) Limited productions directed by Johnnie To. In *PTU* (2003), he is the no-nonsense captain of the paramilitary PTU. Not soon afterwards, he played the explosively violent gang boss who maintains a placid exterior in *Election* (2005). In *Sparrow* (2008), he is the leader of a pickpocket gang that recalls the elegance of yesteryear, a role that he discharged with great finesse. Having earned great reviews for his roles, he proved to be a master of his craft with even more diversified roles, including the policeman who encountered one outlandish event after another in *Exodus* (2007), directed by Pang Ho-cheung; and the repressed and unemployed boor driven to tragic ends in Ann Hui's *Night and Fog* (2009). He won Best Actor at the 29th Hong Kong Film Awards for his role in *Echoes of the Rainbow* (2010).

In 2013, Yam made his first co-directorial debut with the ghost story *Tales from the Dark* (2013), directing the segment *Stolen Goods*. He continued to give notable performances in *The Midnight After* (2014) directed by Fruit Chan, *The Tenants Downstairs* (2016) by Taiwanese director Adam Tsuei, and *Chasing the Dragon II: Wild Wild Bunch* (2019) co-directed by Wong Jing and Jason Kwan.