

MOVIES

A younger Jackie Chan returns in 'Supercop'

Jackie Chan finds himself in a unique and enviable position. While most actors grow older with each film, the 43-year-old martial arts superstar will actually grow younger with his next few releases. Ancient Hong Konger's surprise success with "Rumble in the Bronx" earlier

this year has prompted not only a multi-picture contract to make new films in America, but the resurgence of earlier Hong Kong hits. "Supercop," which opened last week, was actually made back in 1992. And while it's not one of his most fluid bits of work, it delivers what Chan fans crave: death-defying stunts performed by the master himself.

I first caught "Supercop" in a Cantonese-language version from my local Asian video store. The plot, in which Chan goes undercover to infiltrate a gang of drug smugglers, didn't make much sense then and slapdash

dubbing (with Chan doing his own vocal work) hasn't improved it much. However, the film was known overseas as "Police Story 3," with Chan reprising his role as a hot dog Hong Kong police officer assigned to the toughest cases.

Here the job involves breaking out of prison and fighting bad guys atop a speeding train. Sure, "Mission Impossible" did some of the same things, and with considerable more pizzazz, but Chan is out there risking his neck with each challenging stunt. He makes sure the cameraman gets a shot of his face in

virtually every shot during the stunt scenes so that we know it's really him in one of "Supercop's" most harrowing stunts. Chan is suspended from a rope ladder beneath a helicopter high above the city. The helicopter dips to place him within the path of a speeding steam train.

The movie continues to display Chan's formula for success, mixing comedy with heart-pounding action. Though he has made over 30 movies, success in America eluded him until earlier this year, when the 1995 action comedy "Rumble in the Bronx" brought favorable comparisons to Bruce Lee and Buster Keaton.

In "Supercop," Chan actually shares some of the limelight with co-star Michelle Yoh, who has established herself in Hong Kong as his female counterpart. She has perhaps the film's two best stunts, riding a motorcycle

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

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Action thriller: Michelle Khan in "Supercop," a cops and robbers thriller, which also stars Jackie Chan.

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