

"MONK"

Go "Bulletproof"

Dinglasan

It is, in fact, Scott's hope to show a more true-to-life side of his personality that attracted him to the role of Kar, a kung-fu film-loving loner in "Bulletproof." "The other things that I did were so far from the person that I am, which is what made them fun," he says. "But I thought that I had a little more in common with Kar, just because he's more of a real kid."

"And I'm always attracted to the flawed hero—the guy who has selfish motives and throughout the course of events really changes," he adds. "For me, this part was a huge opportunity."

As an overachieving high school athlete who once aspired to play college and perhaps professional sports, Scott's initial goal in pursuing acting was to devote himself to action films. The chance to star alongside Chow, therefore, seemed like the perfect way to realize his original intent in coming to Hollywood. "For me, this was the only movie I really went after," he says. "I never anticipated that the first couple of movies, if I [were to] ever get any movies, [would] be comedies. They were just not my thing. When I moved out to be an actor, it was movies like 'Bulletproof Monk' that I was hoping to get."

Scott's enthusiasm for the role and all its corporeal challenges is what apparently earned him Chow's "naughty" designation. "I was like, 'I'm doing every stunt, I'm doing every single thing,'" says Scott. "I'm going over the rooftop, I'm falling on my ass...and that's probably what Yun-Fat was talking about."

Chow had, in fact, expressed concern that his co-star "suffered a lot from [making] the movie"—a sympathy that seems to have extended beyond emotional into physical support.

"In a sequence where I was getting dragged on top of the roof, I screwed up my back," Scott recounts. "I didn't know it that day, but the next day we were doing a scene...and all of a sudden I had this horrible back spasm. I started toppling over and I couldn't breathe. Yun-Fat basically puts me over his shoulder, brings me to my trailer...and he and the stunt guy just started working on my back. In a day, I felt great. That's how unselfish the guy was. He took me, and he got his medicine from Hong Kong, and he just started working. That's Yun-Fat."

Scott's story, though reminiscent of the plot of "The Karate Kid," is actually much more down-to-earth than the finale of the 1984 film. "You know what it was?" asks Scott when questioned about the mystical medicine. "It was Tiger Balm!"—revealing Chow's secret to be a very accessible form of vapor rub.

Chow's back-pain remedy isn't the only thing that was never intended to be hidden from the world. Known in Asia for his versatility, Chow is hoping that Western audiences will get a chance to see his more dramatic and comedic talents. "I really want to do something very crazy, like 'Austin Powers,'" he says. "Why not? I think, for actors, [comedies] give them room to relax and enjoy themselves."

His "Bulletproof" co-star, meanwhile, plans to continue heading in the opposite direction, slowly leaving behind comedies to concentrate on action features. In addition to "Bulletproof," Scott recently completed filming on Peter Berg's Amazon adventure tentatively titled "HellDorado," which also features "The Scorpion King's" The Rock. Scott, moreover, will try his hand at producing, having reached a development deal with Universal that launched earlier this year.

Also on Scott's busy plate is the third and final installment of the "American Pie" franchise, due out in late summer. Before leaving Stiller—and teen comedies—behind him, Scott wants to ensure that the character and film series that proved so pivotal to his career ends with a bang. "We have a chance to make the third one be the best," he says. "And it closes the whole thing."

Hong Kong and Cottage Grove may be worlds away, but both cities provided the environment that served as a guiding light to the "Bulletproof Monk" stars: the cinema. "'The Longest Day,' 'The Great Escape,' 'The Godfather,' 'Apocalypse Now,'" Chow recites as some of the earliest inspirations to him. "All classics."

The big screen was also very important to Scott, who answers the question, "Did you work at a movie theatre?" with as much pride as if he had been asked about winning an Academy Award. "Yes, I did," he replies. "It was Mann Theatres in Cottage Grove. It was probably the greatest job ever."

Besides working on the marquee in the middle of Minnesota winters and purposefully loading popcorn with far too much butter, one of his most vivid memories from his time at the multiplex were the feelings he would get from watching the silver screen. "I just remember how Brad Pitt was so charismatic—and Tom Hanks and Jim Carrey. I remember thinking, 'The way these actors make me feel when I see a great movie—maybe, for some weird reason, I could do that.'"

"I just want a chance to make people feel the same way that I feel," adds Scott. "That's just something great."

"Bulletproof Monk." Starring Chow Yun-Fat, Seann William Scott and Jaime King. Directed by Paul Hunter. Written by Ethem Reiff and Cyrus Voris. Produced by Charles Roven, Terence Chang and John Woo. An MGM release. Opens 4/16.

