

Jackie Chan

Chan: Hollywood Limits Asian Roles

(AP)—Martial arts star Jackie Chan claims Hollywood limits roles for Asians and says it's time he became a "real actor" by taking on roles other than as a kung fu fighter.

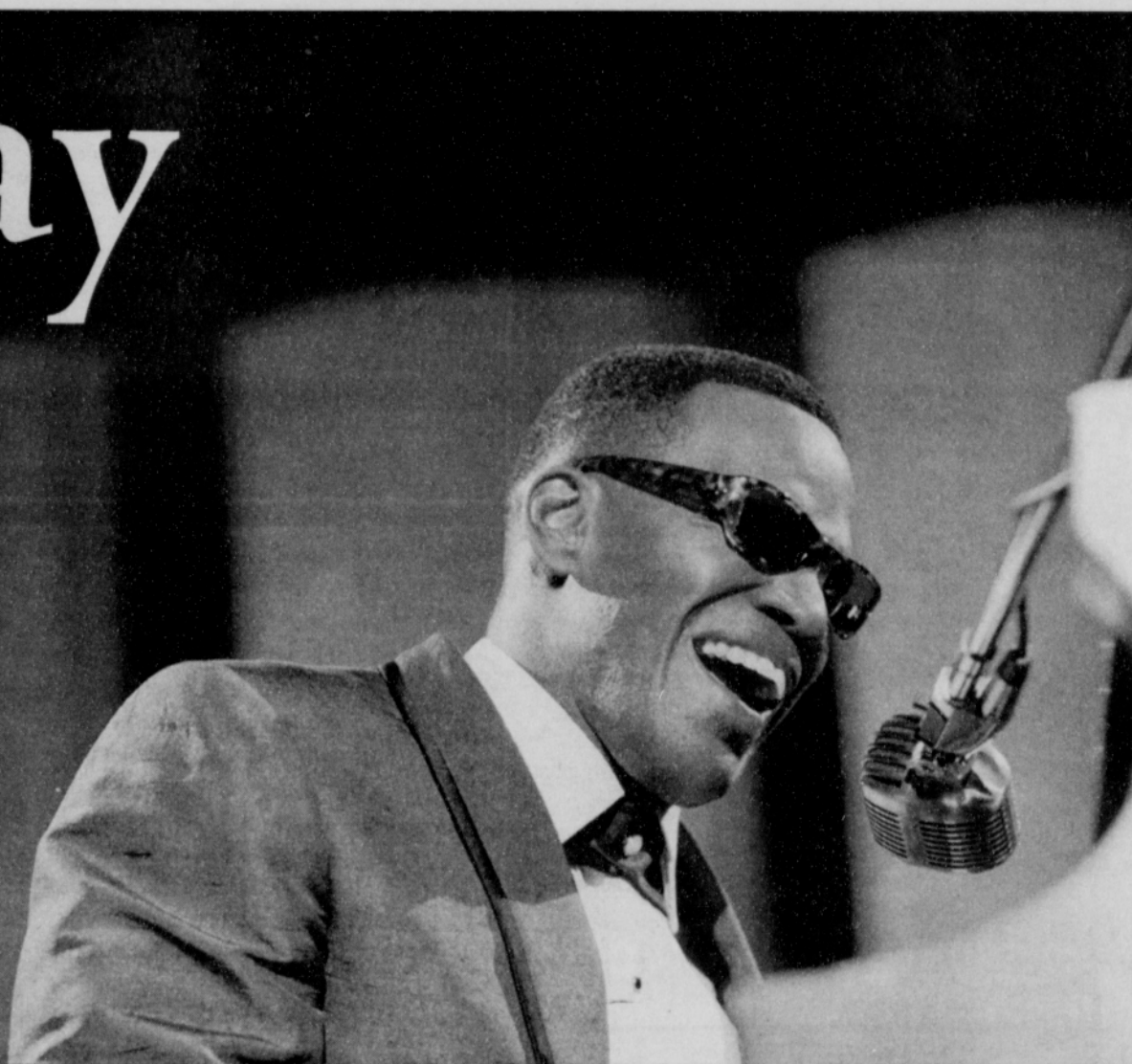
"It's all the same, cop from Hong Kong, cop from China. Jet Li, Chow-Yun Fat and we all face the same problem, our roles are limited," said Chan, 50.

Although Chan returned to the United States this year for the filming of "Rush Hour 3," he said he wants to move away from action movies.

"I've always wanted to change, to become a real actor," says Chan.

Ray

Jamie Foxx at the piano in his role as Ray Charles.



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Jamie Foxx stars as Ray Charles

Audiences will be amazed by the incredible performance Jamie Foxx gives as Ray Charles in "Ray," scheduled for released nationwide on Friday, Oct. 29.

Foxx portrayal is a tour de force, an astoundingly accurate depiction of the blind R&B legend who died in June, but not before Charles met Foxx and gave the 36-year-old actor his blessing.

The film's producer and director Taylor Hackford told Foxx his main concern was that whoever played Ray Charles would have to reveal an innate relationship to the very soul of music.

As it turns out, Foxx, similar to Ray Charles, had started playing piano at age three. In his youth, the actor led his Texas gospel church band and received a university piano scholarship.

"When Jamie told me this, I just kind of sat back and thought, 'My God,'" Hackford said. "I'd like to

say it was planned, but it wasn't."

The next test was to have Foxx and Ray Charles meet — which they did at two side-by-side pianos, while the filmmakers held their breath.

"Ray was not easy, as I've said, and when it came to music, he demanded perfection. Jamie came over and immediately started playing the piano," Hackford said. "Ray could hear at least that he could play. So

This is it. This kid can do it, see? He's the one.

— Ray Charles advocating Jamie Foxx to portray him in film.

they started playing and Jamie is playing a little funk and gospel, but then Ray goes into some jazz, some Thelonious Monk. And I'm thinking, 'Oh, no, Jamie doesn't know it.' Ray was saying, 'Come on, man, it's this' and he keeps playing this Monk phrase, only Jamie is not getting it. Then Ray gets even tougher, saying, 'Come on, man,

it's right under your fingers.' And I'm thinking, 'This could really blow up in my face.' But when Jamie finally got it, Ray, who had been pretty tough on him, said, 'This is it. This kid can do it, see? He's the one.'"

Foxx threw himself into the role. He began by adapting many of the singer's physical trademarks, from his close-cropped hair to his bodily mannerisms, born out of a combination of Charles' history, blindness and unstoppable inner sense of music.

The actor immersed himself in soul, jazz and blues recordings to set the mood; attended classes at the Braille Institute; and spent weeks during rehearsal and production walking around with his eyes sealed tight for 12 hours a day, to gain an intimate understanding of what it really means to be blind.

"The key word for me was nuance, because I didn't want to simply impersonate him," says Foxx. "Rather, I wanted to capture some part of his spirit, that's all."