



Michael Clarke Duncan Has Died



The world has a very big hole in it today, as actor Michael Clarke Duncan has died at the age of 54.

A man with towering stature, a bigger personality and charm to match, Clarke was beloved by his fans and collaborators alike. Though he always wanted to act, he put his ambitions on hold for years to care for his family. He took early work digging ditches and working as a bouncer before finally leaving for Los Angeles in his 20s to pursue his dream.



Once there, he looked for acting gigs in adverts and also worked as a bodyguard for the likes of Will Smith, Jamie Foxx and LL Cool J. But the death of rapper Notorious B.I.G. led him to quit the protection life and concentrate full time on his acting career.

He landed bit parts here and there before his big break in Michael Bay's *Armageddon* in 1998. It was on the set of that film that he forged a close friendship with Bruce Willis, who recommended him for other movies and eventually he got a real chance to demonstrate what he could do in *The Green Mile* as John Coffey, a role that earned him an Oscar nomination and a reputation for someone who could deliver unexpected, soulful performances.

He'd go from there to the likes of *Daredevil* (where he proved to be a commanding, effective Kingpin), *Sin City* (as the tough Manute, who seemed likely to be returning for the sequel) and *Talladega Nights*, where he showed off his straight man comedy chops alongside Will Ferrell and John C Reilly.

Though he'd appeared in guest parts on TV shows in the past, he recently tried his hand at a series regular role in comedy drama *The Finder*.

Duncan was rushed to hospital in July after suffering a heart attack, and never recovered from the complications. "He was the only actor I ever knew that more often than not when fans came up to him, of any age or race or gender, they wouldn't ask for an autograph, they'd want a hug," said his long-time manager Dan Spilo in a statement confirming news of his death. "He had a heart as big as the world."

Indeed he did. Goodbye, Big Mike.

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