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### Assassin

Written by: [Michael Den Boer](#) on June 3rd, 2013



**Theatrical Release Date:** Japan, 2011

**Director:** Gô Ohara

**Writer:** Gô Ohara

**Cast:** Ryoma Baba, Yuki Kubota, Sayuri Iwata, Kohei Otomo, George Takahashi

**DVD released:** May 21st, 2013

**Approximate running time:** 101 minutes

**Aspect Ratio:** 1.78:1 Anamorphic Widescreen

**Rating:** NR

**Sound:** Dolby Digital Stereo Japanese

**Subtitles:** Non-Removable English

**DVD Release:** Asian Media Rights

**Region Coding:** Region 1 NTSC

**Retail Price:** \$16.95



**Synopsis:** Two assassins find themselves in the cross-hairs of those who pay them, when the befriend a woman that their organization wants dead.

Just when you thought that every avenue had been explored within the Yakuza genre, along comes a film like *Assassin* that gives a the genre a much needed revamp.

So what does this remodeling really entail? In place of the all too familiar Yakuza genre stereotypes is a melding of two other just as familiar genres, the film's visuals owe a great debt to the Film Noir genre that rose to prominence in the 1940's Hollywood cinema and tone wise the film draws its inspiration from Hong Kong cinema's Heroic Bloodshed film's that exploded onto the scene in the late 1980's. This meshing of two familiar genres actually suits the

story at hand really well. With the heart of this film revolving around two characters, who as young boy's formed a bound that will take them all the way to hell and back.

The action set pieces are all first rate. Pacing is pitch perfect with each new revelation given just the right amount of time to resonate. All the main



characters are well rounded and their motivations are always crystal clear. Performance wise the entire cast are superb, especially Ryoma Baba and Yuki Kubota, in the roles of Ryo and Shunichi, the two childhood friends that are now assassins.

Another performance of note is Sayuri Iwata ('*Hell girl*') in the role of Rio Kasuga, this film's main female character. It is refreshing in a film dominated by male characters, seeing a female character as developed and strong as the one she portrayed in this film.



When compared to what has come before it and the genres from which it's draws its inspiration. The end result is not the type of film that is going to start a new revolution, that will spring forth countless imitators. And in the case of this film, that is not necessarily a bad thing, since this film should be judge on its own. Ultimately *Assassin* is a riveting crime drama that never strays to far away from its strengths, murder, mayhem and melodrama.



#### The DVD:

Asian Media Rights presents *Assassin* in an anamorphic widescreen that retains this film's intended aspect ratio. The source is used is in good shape, as colors and flesh tones look accurate, black levels fare well and details look crisp throughout.

This release comes with one audio option, a Dolby Digital stereo mix in Japanese and non-removable English subtitles have been included with this release. Dialog always comes through clearly, everything sounds balanced and robust when it needs too.

This release comes with no extra content and a static menu that offers up two options, play movie or chapter selection. Overall Asian Media Rights gives *Assassin* gets a strong audio / video presentation.

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