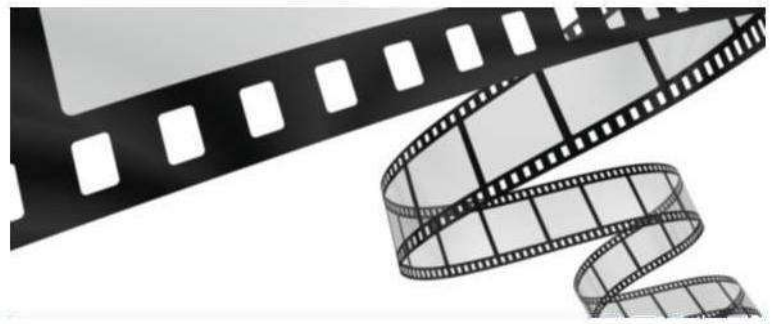


# CHELMSFORD FILM CLUB

An Independent film society based in Chelmsford

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## ***A Simple Life (Tao jie)***

**(Hong Kong, 2011)**

**Running time: 118 minutes**

**Director: Ann Hui**

**Screenplay: Susan Chan, Roger Lee**

**Cinematography: Yu Lik-Wai**

**Cast: Andy Lau (Roger); Deanie Ip (Ah Tao); Qin Hailu (Ms Choi, care home manager); Wang Fuli (Roger's Mother); Eman Lam (Carmen, Roger's assistant); Hui Pik-Kei (Aunt Kam); Elena Kong (Aunt Kam's daughter); Anthony Wong Chau-Sang (care home owner)**

An elderly woman is cared for by a member of the family she has served all her life. The film's events are based on the experiences of real-life Hong Kong film producer, Roger Lee, who co-wrote the screenplay with Susan Chan.

*A Simple Life* is directed by Hong Kong filmmaker Ann Hui. Although not widely known beyond Hong Kong she has been active in the industry for more than thirty years, often exploring domestic dramas and associated social issues. Given its subject matter one might expect *A Simple Life* to be a sentimental work but, with its detached, observational style, is in fact refreshingly lacking in this quality. Moreover, it isn't really concerned with the telling of story at all but rather in exploring character and events through a series of episodes that we recognise as closer to our own experiences, and with its unhurried pace and frequent digressions away from the main events, *A Simple Life* might be less a drama than a genuine mirroring of how things are. Comparisons with *Poetry* (seen in our 2012/13 season) and *Amour* (later this season) seem appropriate since, like those films, *A Simple Life* gazes unflinchingly at illness and old age, but it is also warm and often unexpectedly funny.

The main players, Andy Lau and Deanie Ip, are both excellent, giving subtle, understated performances. Technically, too, the film is about as good as it gets. Cinematography (digital), editing and sound recording are all first-rate, achieving an all-important authenticity.

*Jon Wisbey*

### **Our previous presentation**

Based on the feedback slips returned on the night, you rated ***Caesar Must Die***, screened on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 4.5 stars out of 5. Please visit the current season page at <http://www.chelmsford-filmclub.co.uk> to read all the feedback comments. You can still provide feedback on this, or any other film, by visiting the Discussions page (<http://www.chelmsford-filmclub.co.uk/discussion/>).

**Our next presentation: *Barbara*, Monday 3 March, 8 pm.**