

From the authorised Timothy Dalton website:

007 IN VIENNA

9 th District (Alsergrund), corner shop at Währingerstrasse 65 opposite Volksoper, take Tram 40/41/42 from U-Bahn Schottentor

The film *A View to a Kill* was the 14 th in the long running and lucrative James Bond series, based on the spy novels of Ian Fleming. However, by all accounts the film relied more on its gadgetry and special effects than the panache and daring-do of its ageing star Roger Moore. Wisely Moore sipped his last Vodka Martini and retired to a life devoted to charity work and a well-earned knighthood.

Amongst those considered for his replacement were established "action men" Mel Gibson, Tom Selleck and Don Johnson. Somewhat surprisingly it was the relatively unknown Timothy Dalton who clinched the part. Born in March 1946 in Colwyn Bay, North Wales he had played a variety of roles in films as diverse as *The Lion in Winter* , *Flash Gordon* and *The Doctor and the Devils* . Not being a typecast actor allowed Dalton to play Bond his own way - dark and introspectively.



His first outing was based on Fleming's short story *The Living Daylights* that had appeared in *The Sunday Times* on 4 th February 1962. Directed by John Glen the film premiered at the Odeon in London's Leicester Square on 27 th June 1987, attended by Prince Charles and his then wife Diana. The Vienna premiere (titled *Der Hauch des Todes* , or *Breath of Death*) followed on August 13 th at the **Gartenbau Kino** . This was of special interest to Bond's Austrian audience because much of the first half of the film uses Vienna as a backdrop, both officially and unofficially. The plot dictates that Bond is sent to Bratislava in the old Czechoslovakia to protect a valuable defecting Russian agent and to eliminate a KGB sniper he knows will be waiting there to thwart the escape. The Russian, Koskov, is in a concert hall (unofficially Vienna's **Volksoper** on **Währingerstrasse**) and Bond takes up position above a nearby bookshop, actually a sweet shop at **Währingerstrasse 65** , whose window to this day carries photographs of a saturnine-looking Dalton in *de rigueur* tuxedo and bow tie . Not surprisingly for a 007 movie, the sniper Bond lines up through the sight of his high-powered rifle turns out to be the beautiful Kara (played by Maryam d'Abo) - and of course he deliberately misses his target! Koskov is grabbed and dispatched speedily to the safety of the West via a gas pipeline, in a scene that begins at Vienna's **Reichsbrücke** over the Danube (still dressed up to mimic the Eastern Bloc) and ends at an old gasworks (in Vienna's 3 rd district of **Landstrasse**), now *officially* in Vienna. Bond and Kara, needless to say already involved romantically, remain in "Bratislava" for several street scenes shot along Vienna's **number 42 tram route** , suitably disguised with Skoda cars and Czechoslovakian shop signs (these include the **former Währing tram depot** , now a supermarket, and Kara's apartment on **Antonigasse**). The pair eventually escape in Bond's Aston Martin and finally cross the

border into snowbound Austria using Kara's cello as a sledge! After some fairly schmaltzy scenes visiting Vienna's **Schönbrunn palace** by horse-drawn *Fiaker* and riding gondola number 10 of the **Ferris wheel (*Riesenrad*)** in the **Volksprater** the film shifts location to Oxfordshire (Stonor Park to be exact), Tangiers and then finally Afghanistan.



Curiously, few of the Bond biographies, nor indeed many of the city's guidebooks for that matter, make any mention of Vienna as a film location and indeed few visitors are even aware that 007 was ever here. Coincidentally, during the writing of this book a season of Bond films was screened at the aforementioned Gartenbau Kino, and again the accompanying promotional material failed to make any reference to the fact that Vienna had provided much of the backdrop for *The Living Daylights*. James Bond returned to the screen in 1988/89 in *Licence to Kill (*Lizenz zum Töten*)* but by then Dalton was already feeling typecast and wisely moved on to theatre and television work as well as the occasional motion picture.

In this writer's mind Timothy Dalton remains the only Bond to have got close to portraying the secret agent that author Fleming had in mind - with all his vulnerabilities and contradictions; he just had the misfortune of coming along at a time when Bond was somewhat out of fashion. Six years later and the baton would be taken up with greater commercial success by the less sombre Pierce Brosnan (for the film *Goldeneye*), who notably had been considered as a replacement for Roger Moore, but was at the time contracted to his television series *Remington Steele*.

Text and photographs © Duncan J D Smith 2005 from the book *Only in Vienna - A Guide to Hidden Corners, Little-Known Places and Unusual Objects*

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.win2pdf.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.
This page will not be added after purchasing Win2PDF.