



CHAN Koon-tai 陳觀泰 (b. 1945)

Actor, Director, Executive Producer

A native of Guangdong born in Hong Kong, Chan Koon-tai has started practicing the martial art of Tai Shing Pek Kwar Moon (monkey and axe hammer style) at a young age. He became a firefighter after graduating from secondary school in 1963. He quitted the job to join the film industry in 1967. Chan later won the lightweight champion at the First Southeast Asia Kung Fu Tournament in 1969. He acted in *Wong Fei-hung Bravely Crushes the Fire Formation* (1970), and served as martial arts choreographer for *Cold Blade* (1970). He was soon scouted by director Chang Cheh. Having joined Shaw Brothers (Hong Kong) Ltd, Chan played the leading role in *Boxer from Shantung* (1972), which sold over HK\$2 million and shot Chan to fame after John Chiang and Ti Lung. One after another, Chan starred in high-grossing films by Chang, such as *Four Riders* (1972), *The Blood Brothers* (1973) and *Iron Bodyguard* (1973). Supported by Shaws, Chang founded Chang's Film Co., and started filming titles in Taiwan; Chan acted in features made by other directors while remaining with Shaws. After appearing in gangster blockbusters *The Teahouse* (1974) and *Big Brother Cheng* (1975) directed by Kuei Chih-hung, Chan became a household name as the main character Big Brother Cheng; he also excelled in kung fu films *Challenge of the Masters* (1976) and *Executioners from Shaolin* (1977) directed by Lau Kar-leung.

After completing *The Iron Monkey* (1977), a film that he directed and starred in, Chan had a dispute with Shaws over the terms of the contract. It was later resolved in 1978 and he returned to Shaws, followed by popular works such as *Killer Constable* (1980). Chan made a debut appearance in *Blowing in the Wind* (1980), a TV drama of Rediffusion Television (RTV) in 1980; his portrayal of the drug lord was a huge success. He appeared in films for other production companies in the 1980s, after his contract with Shaws expired. In 1990, Chan founded J & J Film Company and produced four films, including *Sleazy Dizzy* (1990) and *Blood Stained Tradewind* (1990), before stepping away from cinema and ventured into business. He made a comeback in 2000, and occasionally appears in action films such as *Dragon Tiger Gate* (2006), *Gallants* (2010), *Once Upon a Time in Shanghai* (2014) and *The Master* (2015).