



**CHUN Kim 秦劍** (1926–1969.6.15)

**Screenwriter, Director**

With the original name Chen Jian, Chun was also known as Chen Ziyi. His father passed away before he was born. A native of Xinhui, Guangdong, he completed secondary education in Hong Kong. Chun joined the film industry in 1944 as a continuity to Cantonese film director Wu Pang. In 1948, he wrote his first screenplay, *Two Dragons Chase After a Pearl*, and co-directed *Separated too Soon* in the same year with Ng Wui. As screenwriter, he was sometimes known as Sima Choi-wah or Madam Chan Ching. He scripted most of his own films. His individual directorial debut was *For My Country* (1949), followed by *Infancy* (1951), and a number of others, which were all poorly received. It was not until 1953 that *A Son Is Born*, a serious drama on education and youth problems, struck success. *A Mother Remembers* that was made in the same year, established him as a major director. Chun worked in the vein of the realist traditions of Cantonese cinema and directed many outstanding works. Among them, *Autumn* (1954), *Parents' Hearts* (1955) and *My Intimate Partners* (1960) not only marked the pinnacle of his career but were regarded as classics of Cantonese cinema. Some of his Cantonese masterpieces included *Like the Clouds' Swift Passage* (1954), *Mutual Understanding* (1954), *The Cuckoo* (1954), *The More the Merrier* (1955), *The Rouge Tigress* (1955), *A Posthumous Child* (1956), *The Whispering Palms* (1957), *Autumn Comes to Crape Myrtle Garden* (1958), *Blossom in Rainy May* (1960) and *How to Get a Wife* (1961).

At the start of his career as a director, Chun made only one Mandarin film, *Sweet Seventeen* (1954), starring Jeanette Lin Tsui. It earned her the nickname 'Student Lover'. Later the two got married. He joined Shaw Brothers (Hong Kong) Ltd in 1965 and switched to making Mandarin films. His first production for Shaws was *Pink Tears* (1965). During his four years with Shaws he made nine films, including *Till the End of Time* (1966), *Four Sisters* (1967), *Farewell, My Love* (1969), *River of Tears* (1969) and *Unfinished Melody* (1969). None of these did as well as his Cantonese productions. In 1967, his marriage with Lin came to an end. While shooting *River of Tears* in 1969, beset by work, financial and family troubles, he hanged himself in the Shaws' dormitory. He was only 43 at the time of his death.

Chun excelled in filming melodramatic *wenyi* films, with a number of tragedies related to the 'old society'. He also shot many romance and contemporary comedies. Chun had set up and managed different film companies, including Lingfeng, Hongmian, Artland, Kong Ngee, Sun Ngee, Guoyi, etc. He also trained up directors Chor Yuen, Lung Kong and actors such as Patrick Tse Yin, Patsy Kar Ling and Nam Hung, who rose to fame at Kong Ngee and Jenny Hu of Shaws.

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