



WU Ma 午馬 (1942.9.27–2014.2.4)

Actor, Director, Screenwriter, Production Coordinator

A native of Tianjin and with the original name Feng Hongyuan. He studied mechanical engineering in the Mainland and came to Hong Kong in 1960, where he found a job in a textile factory. Wu enrolled in the 1st actor training class of Southern Drama Group and immediately became an actor of Shaw Brothers (Hong Kong) Ltd after graduation. He debuted as an actor with *Lady General Hua Mulan* (1964). Wu was a character actor who specialised in portraying villains and minor characters. He first made connections with his future mentor, Chang Cheh in *The Butterfly Chalice* (1965), and went on to appear in films such as *The Knight of Knights* (1966), *The Thundering Sword* (1967), *My Son* (1970) and *A Taste of Cold Steel* (1970). In 1968, Wu started working as an assistant director to Chang in *The Golden Swallow* (1968), and later in *The Wandering Swordsman* (1970) and *King Eagle* (1971). He was promoted to director in 1972, and co-directed *The Water Margin* (1972) and *The Pirate* (1973) with Chang Cheh and Pao Hsueh-li.

Not long after his collaboration with Chang, he began his directorial career and worked for independent companies in Hong Kong and Taiwan. His directorial debut was *Wrath of the Sword* (1970), followed by remarkable titles such as *Deaf and Mute Heroine* (1971) and *Wits to Wits* (1974). In 1975, he worked again with Chang Cheh, co-directing *All Men Are Brothers* before leaving Shaws. Wu then worked for Chang's Film Co, which Chang founded in Taiwan, making major contributions to *Five Shaolin Masters* (1974) and *Disciples of Shaolin* (1975). After leaving Shaws, he expanded his acting range and became one of the most versatile actors of his time. Riding the wave of Cantonese films in the 1980s, Wu directed several box-office hits such as *Beware of Pickets* (1981), *The Dead and the Deadly* (1982), *Mr. Boo Meets Pom Pom* (1985) and *My Cousin, the Ghost* (1987). He also helped Sammo Hung in producing *The Prodigal Son* (1981), and was hired by Bo Ho Films as production coordinator. Wu took part in the production of *Lai Shi, China's Last Eunuch* (1988) and recruited many new talents, including Jacob Cheung and Mang Hoi.

Wu's acting versatility enabled him to portray both protagonist and antagonist roles in perfection. In 1987, he won Best Supporting Actor with the role Yan Chixia, a Taoist priest in *A Chinese Ghost Story* at the 24th Golden Horse Awards in Taiwan. He was active in the television industry in the 1990s and 2000s. Wu passed away in Hong Kong on 4 February 2014.