



CHEUNG Wood-yau 張活游 (1910–1985.12.10)

Actor

A native of Meixian, Guangdong, Cheung was born in Guangzhou with the original name Cheung Kin-yu. Cheung made ends meet as a worker and theatre attendant before enrolling in the Cantonese Opera Actors Training School ran by The Chinese Artists Association in Guangzhou. Earning the recognition of Cantonese opera maestro Pak Yuk-tong, he became a principal actor upon graduation and had collaborated with celebrated opera artists such as Sit Kok-sin and Ma Si-tsang. He joined the Hong Kong film industry in 1939 and was immediately cast as the lead in his debut work, *Breaking Through the Bronze Net* (1939). Cheung later starred in over 20 titles, including *Triple Flirtation of the White Chrysanthemum* (1939), *Grave of the Sisters-in-Law* (1939), *When Will You Return?* (1940) and *Love in Another Life* (1941); and became a well-known actor before the war.

After Hong Kong fell into Japanese occupation, he returned to the Mainland and performed Cantonese operas to earn his keep. He came back to Hong Kong after the war and resumed his screen career. His two-part film series, *Crime Doesn't Pay* (1949) broke box-office records and catapulted him to mega-stardom. His prominent works from this period include *Black Heaven* (1950), *A Girl Named Leung Lang-yim* (in two parts, 1950), *Red and White Peonies* (1952), etc. In 1952, Cheung co-founded The Union Film Enterprise Ltd with numerous film workers and took part in features such as *Family* (1953), *Spring* (1953), *Autumn* (1954), *Father and Son* (1954), *Anna* (1955), *Romance at the Western Chamber* (1956), *A Beautiful Corpse Comes to Life* (1956), *Human Relationships* (1959) and *Long Live Money* (1961).

He also established Shan Luen Motion Picture Co with Pak Yin and Ng Wui in 1954, producing *Madam Wan* (1954), the company's inaugural film; and *The Great Devotion* (1960), a classic written and directed by his son Chor Yuen. He served as planning producer for Rose Motion Picture Company, co-founded by Chor Yuen and Nam Hung in the 1960s and produced films such as *Black Rose* (1965) and *Spy with My Face* (1966).

Cheung ventured into the television industry as an actor in 1976 and faded from the screen after 1982. He died of heart attack in Hong Kong on 10 December 1985.