



NG Cho-fan 吳楚帆 (1911.7.4–1993.2.22)

Actor

A native of Panyu, Guangdong and with the original name Ng Kui-cheung, Ng was born in Tianjin to a family of Fujian origin. Ng was raised by his mother because of his father's early death. He studied at St. Paul's College in Hong Kong but dropped out at 15 when his mother died. He once worked as a salesman and textile factory worker. Enthusiastic about drama, he joined Chung Sing Benevolent Society to learn Cantonese opera. In 1932, he performed at his alma mater's fundraising play for the victims of the Northern China flood and gained the recognition of Lo Ming-yau, owner of the United Photoplay Service Limited. Thereby he ventured into the film industry and debuted on screen with the silent feature *Midnight Thrill* (1932), followed by the sound film *Lifeline* (1935) that brought him to stardom. Ng later starred in Lee Tit's *Song of Life* (1937), a critical success which won him the title 'Movie King of South China'.

During Japanese occupation, Ng fled to Macao with his fellow film and theatre workers and settled in Guangzhouwan, where he formed a theatre troupe to make ends meet. He returned to Hong Kong after the war and starred in his first Cantonese title *My Love Comes Too Late* (1947). To promote quality films with appropriate themes, he launched the 'Cantonese Film Clean-up Movement' with a number of like-minded film workers, which paved way for the establishment of the South China Film Industry Workers Union. In 1952, he co-founded The Union Film Enterprise Ltd with his filmmaker friends and served as president of the company, making it his calling to raise the standard of Cantonese cinema. His prominent works for Union Film include *Spring* (1953), *In the Face of Demolition* (1953), *Eternal Love* (1955), *Autumn Comes to Crape Myrtle Garden* (1958), *Money* (1959), and *Under Hong Kong's Roof* (1964). Ng was selected by the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China as one of the 'Best Five Actors' for his performance in *Spring*.

He also established Hwa Lien Film Co with Lee Sun-fung in 1955 and acted in *It was a Cold Winter Night* (1955), *The Orphan* (1960) and *Father is Back* (1961), etc. He later set up New Tide Film Co and released a Cantonese widescreen colour feature *A Sorrowful Millionaire* (1963). Apart from acting, he was also the instructor of Union Film's training class, responsible for nurturing new talents. Ng retired after shooting *Who's the Real Murderer?* (1966). He had made cameo appearances in television series in the 1970s. He released his autobiography *Ng Cho-fan: An Autobiography* in 1956.

In 1983, he migrated to Canada where he passed away on 22 February 1993. Ng was honoured posthumously with the Special Commemorative Award at the 12th Hong Kong Film Awards the same year.
