



Mona FONG 方逸華 (1934–2017.11.22)

Producer

With the original name Lee Mong Lan, Fong was born in Shanghai to a family from Nanhai, Guangdong province. She attained junior secondary school education. She later adopted her mother's surname, Fong and came to Hong Kong with her mother in the late 1940s. Fong was fond of western music and soon became a songstress in cabarets. In 1952, Fong met Run Run Shaw in Singapore and became associated with him for over half a century. With good vocal skills, she was invited to perform in nightclubs in the US and had produced records in Manila, the Philippines. Fong later signed contracts with Pathé (the predecessor of EMI) in Hong Kong and the UK respectively, and put out albums of Mandarin and English pop songs. She also sang the theme songs of several Shaw Brothers (Hong Kong) Ltd films such as *The Blue and the Black, Part One* (1966), *Swan Song* (1967) and *When the Clouds Roll By* (1968), which became very popular. Fong further appeared in *The Lark* (1965) and performed 'The Wedding' in the film.

In 1969, when Shaws began filming *Love Without End* (1970), a member of the Shaw family resigned from the purchasing department. Run Run Shaw then invited Fong to head the department. Held in high regard by Shaw, she was promoted to the props department. After Raymond Chow's resignation from Shaws to establish Golden Harvest (HK) Limited, she officially became Run Run Shaw's right-hand person, playing a role in many of Shaws' major business decisions. Fong headed the production department since 1973 and decided to tighten up production costs. Shaws had started making profit since then, producing celebrated works such as *The House of 72 Tenants* (1973), *Killer Clans* (1976), etc. She was also credited for the return of a number of filmmakers to Shaws. For example, Li Han-hsiang's homecoming in the 1970s was the result of her mediation. Fong also recruited new talents for Shaws, such as Ann Hui, who directed *Love in a Fallen City* (1984). Fong joined Shaws' board of directors in 1981. In 1982, Run Run Shaw's sons Vee Meng and Harold (aka Vee Chung) withdrew from the company's business in Hong Kong, leaving Run Run Shaw and Fong as the major shareholders and decision makers of Shaws.

Fong helped Run Run Shaw manage his entertainment empire over the years. In October 1988, Fong became the director of Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB) and later the senior executive director of Shaws in 1990. Fong married Run Run Shaw and became his second wife on 6 May 1997 in Las Vegas. Fong was appointed deputy chairperson of TVB in October 2000 and assumed the role of managing director in May 2006 until her retirement at the end of March 2012 to become a non-executive director. She passed away on 22 November 2017 in Hong Kong.