



CHEUNG Yam-kwai 張任貴

Actor, Stage Director

A native of Chaoyang, Guangdong, Cheung Yam-kwai's father was the eldest brother of Cheung Muk-chun, the leader of Xintiancai Chaozhou Opera Troupe. Cheung Yam-kwai grew up in the troupe with his younger brother, Cheung Yam-shing, and the two were both apprentices. Following the War of Resistance against Japan, Cheung came to Hong Kong with his two uncles, Cheung Muk-sang (also known as Cheung Tai-kwan) and Cheung Muk-chun. In the 1960s, he began acting in Chaozhou-dialect opera films along with Xintiancai, working as stage director in productions such as *The Stepmother* (1960), *A Wronged Daughter-in-Law* (produced by Tor Ying, 1960), *Unchanged Hearts* (1961), *Judge Bao's Encounter with the Deposed Empress* (aka *Black Judge*, 1961) and *Justice and Revenge* (1962). He was stage director, music accompanist and co-star in *Phoenix Ornament* (1961). He also was one of the music accompanists on *Madam Lan Ching* (1962), followed by stage director and actor credits in *The Sit Family* (1962) and *The Chaozhou Female Top Scholar* (1962) that same year.

From 1962, Cheung began focusing on acting, playing the comic relief in films such as *The Misplaced Love-Token* (1962), *The Sword of Emerald Frost* (1962), *Fairy Pearl* (1963), *The Murder Case During the Lantern Festival* (1964), *An Arduous Search for Husband's Remains* (aka *Chrysanthemum*, 1964), *Hibiscus Fairy* (1964), *Mantrap* (1965), *Two-Year-Old Husband* (1965), *The Nymph of River Lo* (1966), *The Heroic Pair* (Part 1 & 2, 1967), *The Escapees* (1967) and *The Execution* (1967). Many of these roles were villainous, such as the female matchmaker character in *The Misplaced Love-Token* and *The Sword of Emerald Frost*. In *Mantrap*, Cheung had a larger role as a greedy and cowardly prisoner escort. Cheung appeared in over 30 Chaozhou-dialect films in total, making significant contributions as a musician, stage director and actor.