



CHEUNG Ying-yin 張應炎 (b. 1936.10.21)

Actor

Cheung Ying-yin was born and raised in Chaoyang, Guangdong. He joined the Zheng Yutianxiang Chaozhou Opera Troupe at the age of 13, specialising in *xiaosheng* (young civil male) roles. Six months after joining, the troupe disbanded due to famine. Cheung returned to his hometown and began performing shadow play in the Chaozhou dialect. In 1950, Cheung moved to Hong Kong and started out in Bayin Shadow Play Troupe. The following year, he joined Xintiancai Troupe which put on shadow play shows, training under Cheung Muk-chun and other masters in the group. When Xintiancai became a Chaozhou opera troupe, Cheung was already too mature to play *xiaosheng*. While he made the transition to play *laosheng* (old male) characters, he also worked behind the scenes as a Chaozhou-dialect dubbing actor and singer, specialising in dubbing famous Cantonese opera figures such as Law Kim-long, Mak Bing-wing and Lan Chi Pak. In 1960, he made his first acting appearance under Xintiancai in *The Stepmother* as a *laosheng* character. He then acted as *xiaosheng* role with Tsang Shan-fung, *huadan* from Thailand, in *A Wronged Daughter-in-Law* (produced by Tor Ying, 1960). Cheung mainly played *laosheng* roles thereafter, especially adept at portraying loyal government ministers and righteous officials. His performances as Judge Bao in *Judge Bao's Encounter with the Deposed Empress* (aka *Black Judge*, 1961), as Liu Ze, an old adherent of Han Dynasty in *Prince Lau Chiang* (1962) and as Hai Rui in *The Execution* (1967), all resonated with audiences. He also played villains, mastering both *xiaosheng* and *laosheng* roles; for example, he successfully created iconic characters such as the lustful scoundrel in *Justice and Revenge* (1962), the snobby father-in-law in *The Red-Haired Steed* (1963) and emperor Cao Pi in *The Nymph of River Lo* (1966).

Cheung starred in over 60 films in the span of his career, most of them collaborations between Xintiancai and film companies such as Tor Ying Film Co, Bian Sing Motion Picture Co, United Motion Picture Production Co. and Chiu Ngee Motion Picture Production Company. He collaborated with other troupes as well, such as Lingdong Chaozhou Opera Troupe on *Han Yu Caught in Snowstorm* (1962) and *Hai Rui Thrice Tries a Wronged Woman* (1963). He was also cast in *Third Madam Teaches Her Son a Lesson* (1963), produced by Siu Lun's Ching Shan Film Co. Cheung began acting in Chiu Ngee productions as an independent actor in 1964.

He continued to perform with Xintiancai on stage across Southeast Asia after Chaozhou-dialect films hit a lull. Cheung also worked as a director later in his career. Cheung now lives in retirement in Hong Kong, but he continues to make periodic appearances overseas at Chaozhou opera events.