



CHUK Ching-yin 竺清賢 (1900–1981)

Recording Technology Developer, Producer, Director

Chuk Ching-yin was born to a family from Ningbo, Zhejiang, and studied at Shanghai Jiao Tong University. In 1925, he worked as cinematographer for Chenzhong Company's silent film *Regrets* (1925). Later he joined Xinren Film Company as camera assistant and bought their cameras after its closure and began shooting for small film companies. He founded Hehe Film Company and produced *A Difficult Couple* (1928). In the early 1930s, he successfully developed the 'Ching Yin Sound Recording System', also known as 'Ching Yin Tung', which became one of the three major domestic recording equipment for sound film at that time and was used in the production of *Fallen Angel* (1932). Due to difficulties in business operation, he turned to making Cantonese supernatural films in response to the demands of the Southeast Asian market, including *Memorial at the Pagoda* (1934), which was released later in Hong Kong.

In 1935, Chuk relocated his company, Nanyue Film Company, from Shanghai to Hong Kong and successively released well-received works like *Penalty* (1935) and *Loverboy* (1935), which gave the company a solid foundation. Chuk then expanded the company's Lee Gardens Hill film studio site. Thereafter he released various types of films, such as the horror film *An Evil Thought* (1936), the urban fantasy *Femme Fatale* (1938), while also making films for other companies, such as *The Witty Patriarch* (1937), starring Ma Si-tsang, and *A Mysterious Night* (1937), which featured an ensemble cast of more than 50 stars. In 1938, Nanyue was restructured and Sit Kok-sin joined its management, while starring in the company's extravagant musical film *Eighth Heaven* (1939). Nanyue became one of the three major film production companies in Hong Kong before the war. Chuk mainly served as producer for Nanyue's films, only occasionally taking part in sound recording work. The only film he directed during this period was *The Sun Rises Again* (1937).

Chuk joined forces with film industry representatives to head north in 1937 to petition the Central Film Censorship Committee against the Nationalist government's ban on Cantonese films. He made plans during this time to establish a studio in Shanghai for Mandarin films, which did not come to fruition, but managed to set up a collaboration with Hsin Hwa Motion Picture Company to shoot the Mandarin film *My Son Is a Woman* (1938) in Hong Kong. Later, Nanyue also completed the filming of *Sable Cicada* (1938) for Hsin Hwa in Hong Kong, which became the first Mandarin movie filmed in Hong Kong to be screened in the city. He produced Mandarin films such as *The Perfect Beauty* (1940) and *Revolt of the Fishing Folks* (1940), and invited Butterfly Wu to star in *Rouge Tears* (1938), which was made into Mandarin and Cantonese versions.

Chuk made films in different regions abroad in the hope of expanding his film business. For example, he went to modern-day Vietnam in 1938 to produce the Vietnamese film *Realm of Ghosts*, directed by Chan Pei, and shot the Minnan-language film *Film Bible* in Manila, Philippines. He sold the Nanyue studio in 1941 and planned to build a film studio in Java, Indonesia. Later, he moved to Indonesia and passed away there in 1981.
