



## CHOR Yuen 楚原 (1934.10.8–2022.2.21)

### Director, Screenwriter

A native of Meixian, Guangdong, Chor was born in Guangzhou with the original name Cheung Bo-kin. He graduated from the Faculty of Chemistry at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou. Under the influence of his father Cheung Wood-yau, a famous Cantonese film actor, Chor began working as a screenwriter and assistant director for Cantonese films in 1956. He joined Kong Ngee Motion Picture Production Company in the following year, learning screenwriting and directing under Chun Kim. He co-directed *Blood Stains the Valley of Love* (1957) with Chun and later made his individual directorial debut *The Natural Son* (1959). Chor rose to fame in 1960 with *The Great Devotion*, which depicted the wretched conditions of the lowest social strata. He then started shooting for other production companies, and became the backbone of major emerging directors in the 1960s. Chor was a prolific filmmaker of versatile styles, with famous melodrama (*wenyi*) titles such as *A Man's Betrayal* (Part One and Two, 1962), *Rose in Tears* (1963), *The Mad Woman* (1964), *Winter Love* (1968), *The Youth* (1969) and *The Prodigal* (1969). Among them, *Rose in Tears* was the inaugural production of Rose Motion Picture Company (founded by Chor and his wife, Nam Hung). Chor also filmed numerous comedies, including *The Diary of a Husband* (1964), *The Precious Mirror* (1967) and *The Pregnant Maiden* (1968); and directed contemporary heroine features such as *Black Rose* (1965), *Spy with My Face* (1966) and *To Rose with Love* (1967). When Cantonese cinema fell into decline in the 1960s, Chor had already directed over 70 Cantonese films. At the end of 1968, he joined Cathay Organisation (HK) (1965) Ltd and shot four titles, including *Cold Blade* (1970), his first Mandarin *wuxia* film that set his aesthetic, sensational and romantic film style.

Chor joined Shaw Brothers (Hong Kong) Ltd in 1971 and directed the well-received, rather unconventional *wuxia* film *Intimate Confessions of a Chinese Courtesan* (1972) (scripted by Chiu Kang-chien) and the contemporary Cantonese satire *The House of 72 Tenants* (1973), breaking box-office records and revitalising Cantonese cinema. Starting with *Killer Clans* (1976) and *The Magic Blade* (1976), he utilised the Shaws' studios and shot a series of popular *wuxia* films combining romantic and *wenyi* elements, setting the trend of adapting Gu Long's *wuxia* novels in Hong Kong and Taiwan television and film industry. Chor directed 18 films based on Gu's works, including *Clans of Intrigue* (1977), *Death Duel* (1977) and *The Sentimental Swordsman* (1977), with many penned under the pseudonym Chin Yu. He won Best Action Film Director for *Murder Plot* (1979) at the 25th Asian Film Festival. Chor left Shaws when the company ceased production in 1985, formed Rical Production Co. Ltd and shot titles including *Last Song in Paris* (1986). He later filmed *That Enchanting Night* (1987) and *The Diary of a Big Man* (1988) for other companies. Chor directed over 120 films throughout his career, with *Blood Stained Tradewinds* (1990) as his last work. Chor joined Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB) in 1991 as an actor and retired in 2004. He received the Professional Achievement Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Hong Kong Film Awards respectively in 1998 and 2018. He passed away in Hong Kong on 21 February 2022.

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