



FEI Mu 費穆 (1906.10.10–1951.1.30)

Director, Screenwriter

Fei Mu, a native of Jiangsu Province, was born in Shanghai. In 1916, Fei's family moved to Beijing where he studied at French higher education school. He got acquainted with Zhu Shilin in 1922 and together they started a film magazine *Hollywood*, alongside young film enthusiasts He Mengfu and Zong Weigeng. In 1924, he took up a job in the accounting office of the Mining Department. In Lincheng In his spare time, he contributed film reviews to Zhu Shilin's *Zhenguang Ying Bao* under the pseudonym Jing Lu. From 1927 onwards, he worked in Tianjin. Three years later, he quit and entered the film industry as a translator of English subtitles and synopses in Lo Ming-yau's North China Amusement Company.

In 1931, Fei started out as assistant director to Hou Yao and began to write scripts. A year later, he joined United Photoplay Service Limited as a director after returning from Tianjin to Shanghai. His debut film was *Nights of the City* (1932), followed by *Life* (1934) and *Sea of the Fragrant Snow* (1934), all three starring the legendary Ruan Lingyu. During the war years, he directed the anti-Japanese *Bloodshed on Wolf Mountain* (1936). In 1938, Fei fled to Hong Kong after Japanese forces overran much of the city of Shanghai. The following year, he returned to Shanghai and made *Confucius* (1940), the founding production of Ming Hwa Motion Picture Co.

When the foreign concessions in Shanghai fell to the Japanese on 8 December 1941, he refused to collaborate with the Japanese and shifted to theatre work, staging plays such as *Imperial Concubine Yang*, *Qiu Haitang* and *Six Chapters of a Floating Life*. In 1948, he directed *Spring in a Small Town*, now widely acclaimed as his most accomplished work and a masterpiece in Chinese cinema. That same year, he also directed *A Wedding in the Dream* (1948) starring Mei Lanfang.

Fei moved to Hong Kong in May 1949. The following year, he formed Dragon-Horse (Loon-Ma) Films with his brother Louis Fei and Zhu Shilin, financed by Wu Xingzai. He scripted *The Show Must Go On* (1952), but passed away of a heart attack on 30 January 1951, before shooting began. His daughter, Barbara Fei, also acted in films in early years and later became a renowned soprano opera singer.
