



HSIA Moon 夏夢 (1933.2.11–2016.10.28)

Actress, Producer, Executive Producer

Born Yang Meng, in Shanghai, of Suzhou ancestry, Hsia received her secondary education at the McTyeire School in Shanghai before she followed her family to Hong Kong in 1947 and enrolled in the Maryknoll Convent School. Inheriting the love for Beijing opera from her parents, Hsia grew up passionate about the Chinese opera arts. In 1950, she was discovered and signed by Yuen Yang-an, the Managing Director of The Great Wall Movie Enterprises Ltd. Impressed by her talent, director Li Pingqian cast her as the female lead in *A Night-Time Wife* (1951). The success of her debut film paved the way for her future to stardom. She later went on to act in numerous Great Wall productions, such as *Father Marries Again* (1952), *Merry-Go-Round* (1954), *Those Bewitching Eyes* (1958) and *A Heroic Romance* (1965). She also acted in several Feng Huang Motion Picture Company's productions, including *The Wedding Night* (1956) and *Ah, It's Spring!* (1961). During this period, she made a guest appearance in *Feast of a Rich Family* (1959), the sole Cantonese production that she had ever participated in. Celebrated for her acting talent and classical beauty, particularly in period films, Hsia left behind a host of iconic movie characters, such as the courtesan in *A Torn Lily* (1953), the eponymous character of *Tung Hsiao Wan* (1963) as well as the very complex peasant-girl-turn-royal-concubine, girl Yu, in *The Peerless Beauty* (1953), penned by Lin Huan (i.e. novelist Jin Yong.) Hsia was equally adept in modern dramas; showing her acting range, she offered convincing portrayals of modern women, including such roles as the newly-wed Yong-fen who leaves Malaysia with her expat husband for his hometown in China in *Nyonyah* (1952), the bought woman Chen Bailu in *Sunrise* (1956) and the tragic widow in *Romance in the Boudoir* (1960). Despite her star status, Hsia always displayed a high level of professionalism in her preparation for a role. Prior to the filming of the Yue opera films, *The Princess Falls in Love* (1962) and *My Darling Princess* (1964), she flew to Shanghai to study Yue opera *shenduan* (stage movements) and *gongjia* (feats) at Shanghai Yue Opera Group. Having starred in more than 40 films over her career, Hsia was a frequent collaborator of director Zhu Shilin, in both Feng Huang and The Great Wall productions; such as the comedy *Husband Hunters* (1958), and tragedy *The Eternal Love* (1960), as well as *A Widow's Tears* (1956), which encapsulated the nuances of familial relationships. She turned in a powerful performance as a woman grappling with family conflicts in *Garden of Repose* (1964), also directed by Zhu. Over the years, she starred in more than 20 films produced by The Great Wall, and was dubbed as the 'Crown Princess' of Great Wall.

In 1967, Hsia withdrew from films after wrapping the production of *Oh, the Spring Is Here* (1968). She immigrated to Canada, but returned to Hong Kong only two years later, to start a business in garment manufacture that ended in 1978. Later, she re-entered the film industry and founded Bluebird Movie Enterprises Ltd. She released three films as producer, including *Boat People* (1982) and *Homecoming* (1984). Both films were rigorously produced and emotive works winning a total of 11 Hong Kong Film Awards. Hsia passed away in Hong Kong on 28 October 2016.
