



HO Moon-hwa 何夢華 (1929.6.8–2009.5.19)

Director

Born in Shanghai of Guangdong descent, Ho graduated from Shanghai Municipal Experimental Drama School. His teachers included several leading Chinese playwrights of the time, such as Tian Han, Pan Jienong and Cao Yu. Ho took part in the production of *Head of Street, End of Lane* (1948) in Shanghai, but decided to move to Hong Kong in 1948. With the referral of his former teachers, he joined Yung Hwa Motion Picture Industries Ltd as a screenwriter and assistant director. Director Yan Jun saw his talent and took him as his assistant director. They collaborated on *Miss Kikuko* (1956) and *The Valley of the Lost Soul* (1957). Ho's directorial debut was a Motion Picture and General Investment Co Ltd (MP & GI) production, *The Wild Girl*. The film was not released until 1960, after *An Appointment After Dark* (1958), the first film that he directed for Shaw & Sons Ltd. After watching the preview of *The Wild Girl*, Run Run Shaw signed him as a director for Shaws. He later worked in long-term for Shaw Brothers (Hong Kong) Ltd. During his first few years with Shaws, Ho made mainly contemporary titles, such as *Day-Time Husband* (1959), *Enchanting Melody* (1959), *The Secret of Miss Pai* (1960) and *East Flows the River* (1960). He was once borrowed by Sixi Film Company to film *The Model's Romance* (1959). Ho continued to work for Shaws until 1980.

Ho called himself a commercial director who had shot films of various genres. His 1967 melodrama *Susanna*, starring Li Ching and Kwan Shan, won Best Film at the 14th Asian Film Festival. With the success of *The Monkey Goes West* (1966), he churned out a number of period fantasy films adapted from the Chinese literary classic *Journey to the West*, including *Princess Iron Fan* (1966), *The Cave of the Silken Web* (1967) and *The Land of Many Perfumes* (1968). He then switched to making *wuxia* titles, with popular works such as *The Jade Raksha* (1968), *Killer Darts* (1968), *Lady of Steel* (1970), *The Lady Hermit* (1971), *The Flying Guillotine* (1975) and *The Dragon Missile* (1976); *The Flying Guillotine* was regarded as his best work. He had also filmed a few 'sex and violence' titles such as *Kiss of Death* (1973), and *Black Magic* (Part 1 & 2, 1975-76); criminal stories such as *The Criminals* (1976), as well as an adventure film loaded with special effects, *The Mighty Peking Man* (1977). His last film for Shaws was *Swift Sword* (1980). After leaving Shaws in 1980, he went to Taiwan to shoot *Mr Kwong Tung and the Robber* (1980), produced by Sun Ma Si-tsang's Wing Cheung Enterprise Company. He retired from filmmaking shortly after and immigrated to Canada in 1994. He later returned to Hong Kong and passed away on 19 May 2009.