



LAM Kar-sing 林家聲 (1933.1.18–2015.8.4)

Actor

Born in Hong Kong with the real name Lam Man-shun, Lam is a native of Dongguan County, Guangdong Province. He developed a keen interest in Cantonese opera as a boy. When he moved to Guangzhou with his family, he and his elder sister Lam Kar-yeen enrolled in Tang Chiu Lan Fong's Cantonese opera school to be trained in traditional *paichang* (formulaic scenes) and stage Mandarin. Lam also learned *zhangban* (principal percussion) from Lee Hoi-yung. In addition to learning martial arts and musical instruments over the years, Lam also trained under maestros including Wong Chi-wan, Wong To, Wong Yuet-sang, Zhou Wenwei and Wan Chunming. He was trained in both the Northern and Southern schools of martial arts.

As a child prodigy, Lam portrayed the role of Wu Song at the tender age of nine. He made his debut at the age of 12 and later adapted the name 'Kar-sing', suggested by cultural figure Lui Tai-lui, at the age of 14. When Lam was 16 years old, he became *zhangban* for Sit Kok-sin based on the recommendation by Law Lai-ming and Cheung Yuet-ye. Sit subsequently taught him singing and acting skills, and accepted him as a disciple. Since 1949, Lam had been involved with various opera troupes including Tai Fung Wong and Sin Fung Ming. His career flourished both in Hong Kong and overseas in the following 20 years. He founded three opera troupes—one of which, the Chung Sun Sing, is still the most famous and longest-lasting to date.

Lam's screen debut was in *An Orphan Raised on Love* (1947). He played his first leading role in *Why Not Return?* (1958). Between 1947 and 1967, he had appeared in more than 300 movies. His most famous opera works were adapted for the screen, including *Drums Along the Battlefield* (1963), *The Revenge Battle* (1964) and *Uproar in Jade Hall* (1967). His last screen appearance was in *Madame Lee Sze-sze* (1967).

In 1976, Lam produced a series of 26 Cantonese opera performances with Rediffusion Television (RTV). In 1993, Lam retired from the stage after 38 farewell performances and immigrated to Canada. He founded the Lam Kar Sing Foundation in 1994 to promote Cantonese opera and to nurture new talents. Lam returned to Hong Kong in his later years. Although he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, he remained dedicated and attended activities to promote Cantonese opera. Lam passed away in 2015.

In 1981, Lam was awarded a meritorious title by the British-Hong Kong Government. He was awarded the Bronze Bauhinia Star in 2005 and Silver Bauhinia Star in 2011 by the Hong Kong SAR Government. In 1983, he was awarded the Top Ten Artists Award organised by the *Overseas Evening News*. Lam was conferred Honorary Fellow and Honorary Doctorate by the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts in 1999 and 2010 respectively. In 2000, he was awarded Xiqu Life Achievement Award by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council. Lam was also awarded Life Achievement Award by the Chinese Operas Performance Academy Award in 2010.
